

# **Kenosis and Identities: Pneumatological pointers**

by

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that **Kenosis and Identity: Pneumatological Pointers** is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the thesis a methodology of understanding and explicating Christian faith consistent with the mystery of the simultaneous close connection and radical difference of God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmos environment is been mapped out. The theanthropocosmic principle as an expression of the mystery functions as the heuristic key in opening up the notion of kenosis (and incarnation) of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit within the scope of the enduring interaction of <God...human beings...physical-organic cosmos>. The Spirit in the kenotic sense of the word connects and differentiates the overall processes of being and becoming, here and there, now and then of the mystery of the 'presences' of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world in being there (**Dasein**), being thus and thus (**Sosein**) and being dynamically actual (**Aktsein**). God acts in terms of the Spirit's operational kenotic presence within the margins of the creatureliness of people and the natural cosmic world as the kenotic clothing of God. A dynamic interpretation of the integral and differential character of being and becoming suggests that making sense of the dynamics of the formation of identities and identification is an ever ongoing endeavour. It implies a continuous process of negotiation whilst experiencing various continuums, remaining open-ended in an ever-increasing sense of wonder and mystery of "exitus a Deo-reditus in Deum".

### **Keywords:**

Kenosis, identity, incarnation, pointer, clue, sense making view, consensual negotiation, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, Spirit, *Dasein*, *Sosein*, *Aktsein*, Christology, Christcentric, Pneumatology, Pneumacentric, creation, reconciliation, renewal, fulfilment, Being, being there, being thus and thus, being actual, Commonwealth or Kingdom of God, W Heisenberg, M Büber, D Bonhoeffer, E van Niekerk, Hans Küng, Existentialism, twosome, threesome, foursome, theology, anthropology, cosmology, logos, trinity.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Chapter 1: Perhaps it is true!

1.1	Dilemma: Problem or mystery?	1
1.2	All embracing commitment to God, humanity and the natural world	4
1.3	A perspective of faith as one amongst many	7
1.4	Telling of stories...and dancing	9
1.5	Faith and Experience	12
1.6	The field and statement of the thesis	14
1.7	Intersecting continuums	18
1.8	Pentecostalism and ecumenical experience	20
1.9	The grand acts of God as widest and deepest background of the study	21
1.10	Contrariness of 20 <sup>th</sup> century Pentecostal trajectories	22
1.11	Provisional markers <i>en route</i>	25

### Chapter 2: A faith theoretical approach

2.1	A faith theoretical approach in Faith Studies	27
2.1.1	<connectedness and difference of God...being human...natural cosmos>	27
2.1.2	<theoretical reflexive patterning of faith...non-theoretical everyday faith experience>	29
2.1.3	<kenotic regularities...identity differences> in events, movements and processes	32
2.2	Integral and differential reflexion of systems and patterns?	32
2.3	Time's arrow	35
2.3.1	Time and epistemology	35
2.3.2	Arrow of time: towards making sense of events and happenings	35
2.4	Chaos in order and order in chaos	39
2.4.1	Chaos theory	39
2.4.2	Closed systems glide toward equilibrium, stall out and stop there	40
2.5	Bohr, Heisenberg and the uncertainty principle	41
2.6	Small and smaller micro particles and big and bigger macro entities	44
2.7	A wholesome radical, integral and differential approach	46

### Chapter 3: Twosomes, threesomes or foursomes

3.1	Whence the problem?	49
3.2	Whitehead and the relationality of processes	51

3.3	Heidegger, Being and the everyday world	53
3.4	Heidegger: the-being-thereness of existence in the everyday world	57
3.5	The mystery expressed in twosomes, threesomes and foursomes?	60
3.5.1	The threesome of <i>Dasein</i> , <i>Sosein</i> and <i>Aktsein</i>	61
3.5.2	Edmund Husserl and the threesome of <i>Aktsein</i> , <i>Sosein</i> and <i>Dasein</i>	63
3.5.3	Clues from existential phenomenology	64

## Chapter 4: Reflection on threesomes and twosomes

4.1	Reflection on threesomes (and twosomes) in history	66
4.1.1	Joachim of Fiore	67
4.1.2	Modernity	70
4.2	Reflexion on twosomes (and threesomes) in history	71
4.2.1	Earlier history	72
4.2.2	The Middle Ages	74
4.2.2.1	John Duns Scotus	75
4.2.2.2	Anselm of Canterbury	76
4.2.2.3	William of Occam	80
4.2.2.4	Peter Abelard	83
4.2.2.5	Thomas Aquinas	86

## Chapter 5: A theory of faith and sense making approaches

5.1	Theology or a Theory of faith?	87
5.1.1	The modest role and place of faith	87
5.1.2	Alphabets of motion and faith	89
5.1.3	Collating skills training and knowledge with motion and reflexion of alphabets	91
5.1.4	Fiducial alphabets as dynamic faith patterns	92
5.2	Sense making views as God-human-and-world views	94
5.2.1	Sense making views (SMVs) and God-human-and-world views (G-H-W-Vs)	94
5.2.2	A sense making God-human-and-world view emerges through a long and complex history	95
5.2.2.1	God-human-and-nature views and approaches	95
5.2.2.2	Sense making views, approaches or orientations	96
5.3	Operational characteristics of sense making God, human and world views and approaches	98
5.3.1	First characteristic	98
5.3.2	Second characteristic	100
5.3.3	Third characteristic	101
5.3.4	Fourth characteristic	102

5.3.5	Fifth characteristic	104
5.3.6	Sixth characteristic	104
5.3.7	Seventh characteristic	106

## Chapter 6: A Spirit-directed approach

6.1	A Spirit-directed approach	108
6.2	Intertwined movements of Word → Spirit and Spirit → Word	109
6.3	Notions of the Holy Spirit in the past	113
6.3.1	Patristic and Medieval Theology	113
6.3.2	The Reformation	117
6.3.3	The Modern Period	122
6.4	Current notions of the Holy Spirit	123
6.4.1	Introductory comments	123
6.4.2	M Clark: the Spirit's role in creation	130
6.4.3	AA van Ruler: Christ intermezzo between Creation and the Renewal work of the Spirit	132
6.4.4	W Heisenberg: uncertainty principle and the drawing of circles	134
6.4.5	G MacDonald: daring imagination and imaginative likenesses	136

## Chapter 7: Inclusive Spirit-directedness of the First Fruit

7.1	Pneuma-directed theology of the First Fruit	141
7.2	Pentecost affirmation and vindication of Creation, Crucifixion-Resurrection and Fulfilment in the future	148
7.3	One-sided Pentecostal perspectives	153
7.3.1	One-sided emphasis: resurrected Christ or renewing Spirit?	153
7.3.2	One-sided notion of Christcentric fulfilling future	154
7.3.3	One-sided notion of purity and perfection	156
7.3.4	One-sided notion of <i>theologia crucis</i>	157
7.4	Spirit-direction of <God... human beings... physical-organic cosmic world> embedded in <i>Dasein</i> , <i>Sosein</i> and <i>Aktsein</i>	159
7.4.1	The intradivine, intrahuman and intranatural coherence	159
7.4.2	Presence of the Spirit	161
7.4.3	Christ- and Spirit-directed faith reflexive approach	163

## Chapter 8: Kenosis, Incarnation and Reflection

8.1	Pneumacentric and Christcentric sense making negotiation	168
8.2	Kenosis, incarnation and reflexion	169

8.3	A Pneuma- and Christ-directed theory of faith	173
8.4	Kenosis hymn: Situatedness	177
8.5	Reflexion and Christology	179
8.6	Christological aspects of kenosis and incarnation	184
8.7	Aspects of the economy of kenosis	187
8.8	Continuous awareness of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment	189
8.9	<God... humanity... natural cosmic world>	191
8.10	Time and context	193
8.11	Provisional approximation of kenosis and incarnation	196

## Chapter 9: Triads and threesomes in humans

9.1	A faith theoretical approach and the <i>Dasein</i> , <i>Sosein</i> and <i>Aktsein</i> of humanity	201
9.2	Anthropological schematization	205
9.3	<i>Dasein</i> , <i>Sosein</i> , <i>Aktsein</i> and Creational, Christ-, Spirit- and Fulfilling-directed experience	209
9.4	Christian being as radical human being	212
9.5	Realisation of being human: a wholesome approach	213
9.6	Anthropological trajectories of modernity	217
9.7	A Theory of Faith: Body talk	219
9.8	Embodiment as the end of all God's work	221
9.9	Gestalt (eventshape) and multiplexity of mind	225
9.10	Spirit, eventshape (Gestalt) and circles	230

## Chapter10: Dynamism of identity and non-identity

10.1	Dynamics of technologies and interaction of identity and non-identity	237
10.2	Societal dynamism: transformation and sociocultural epochs	237
10.2.1	Pre-modern Traditional societies	238
10.2.2	Early modernity	239
10.2.3	High Modernity	240
10.3	Trajectories and dynamics of the social world	241
10.4	Dynamic character of modern social life	243
10.5	Processes of reflexion	245
10.6	Society, culture and identity	248
10.7	Collective identity and sense making	250

## Chapter 11: Approaches to texts, theories, processes and human doings



11.1	Introduction	254
11.1.1	Variety of approaches	254
11.1.2	Gadamer	256
11.1.3	Derrida	257
11.2	Constructivism and realism	258
11.3	Mirroring, interpretation and negotiation of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings	259
11.3.1	The mirroring approach as mirroring→ remirroring→ appropriation of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings	260
11.3.2	The interpretation approach as understanding → explanation → application of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings	261
11.3.3	The sensible negotiation approach as sensible co-positing→ sensible percolating filtering → sensible fusing into a co-promise design between texts, theories, natural processes and human doings	263

## Chapter 12: Spirit, Person and Community

12.1	Identity, identities and identifying	266
12.2	Dynamic roots and relations	269
12.3	God as Spirit in the human and natural cosmic world	270
12.4	The dance of to-gether-ness and at-other-ness of God, human beings and the universe	273

<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>276</b>
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# Chapter 1

## Perhaps it is true!

### 1.1 Dilemma: Problem or mystery?

Modern human beings withdrawing God from the surrounding natural environment portray unwittingly a dilemma of immense proportions. In the ancient and modern history of the dilemma emerged mainly around how the threesome of God, humanity and the natural cosmic world are relating to each other. In antiquity but especially since the beginning of the modern era one of the partners of the threesome of God, humanity and the natural cosmic world was either been omitted or was been assigned the role of all-powerful initiating agent in people's life-worlds. The procedure of withdrawing one of the threesome from the others or inducting one as the overpowering all-initiating agent of the others caused the perennial problem of how the divides between the threesome are been overcome and bridged. For many centuries the bridging of these divides were regarded as a philosophical and theological problem that only could be solved through notions of theoretical rationality in philosophy and divine revelation in theology. Students of philosophy and theology are familiar with the attempts of older philosophical and theological schools of closing the divides between God and humanity by means of analogies sprouting from a divinely positioned rational soul (*anima rationalis*) in a human being. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the bridging of the divides between God, humanity and the natural world because of the 'lingual turn' in science has taken the route of metaphors, diaphors and anaphors based on one's capacity for speaking, symbolising and language (Green 2000:167; Küng 1977:601-602; Smith 2005:8; Van Niekerk 2006:369).

Ancient and modern philosophical-theological procedures of bridging the presumed divides between the primordial partners God, humanity and the natural world operated mainly in terms of clusters of rational analogies, rhetorical metaphors or relational processes. In the views of modern theologians and philosophers (1600 - 2000CE) God, humanity or the natural cosmic world has taken turns to play the role of all-initiating agent of all meaningful processes and events. Moreover, in some instances philosophers or theologians went out of their way of constructing the other partner or partners determined by the all-initiating agent they preferred. In addition, philosophers and theologians took it upon themselves to explain the possible bridging of the divides between God, humanity and the natural cosmic world. The majority of classic and modern theological approaches designated God as the all-initiating agent crossing the divide between Godself, human beings and the natural world mainly through notions such as creation, revelation, rational or lingual mediums constructed by God in the human and natural cosmic world. In many radical humanist and atheistic approaches while throwing God at the wayside, the only task left, were bridge building processes between human beings and the natural cosmic world. An atheistic cosmisation

approach such as that of Richard Dawkins roll human beings and God out - a delusionary hiccup in the minds of human beings - as evolutionary constructs of the natural cosmisation processes (Dawkins 2006:113-119; 125-134; especially 118).

One of the main assumptions of this study, been taken from the work of Erasmus van Niekerk, the South African theorist of faith is that the majority of the bridge-building processes established between God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are symptomatic of the primordial problem of modern reductionisms. Once something existentially difficult in life is been elevated to the level of a theoretical problem, the only way left, is to find the solution in terms of theoretical means (2006:368-371). Approaching the divides as an intrinsic problem of the existential and conjunctive thereness of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world, calls for theoretical analogical and metaphorical bridge-building processes of to solve the problem. Such a problem-solving approach bypasses the nearly obvious existential assumption of the *mystery* of the *simultaneity* of the intrinsic *connectedness* and radical *difference* of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. The mystery according to Van Niekerk is been expressed in various ways:

Firstly, the mystery can be expressed in and through a foursome awareness of being created (*being thereness*), being reconciled in the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ (*being thus and thusness*), being renewed through the Spirit (*being active and actualness*) and being involved in the processes and events of consummation and fulfilment (*being this and wheretoness*) (Van Niekerk 2006:371-373).

Secondly, the mystery finds its expression in every field, mode and dimension of experience in a corresponding quadrilateral experiential pattern. However, in Faith Studies the ambience and perspective of faith experience is embedded and embodied in a quadrilateral dynamic pattern of *I believe God* and *I believe myself* and *I believe my human neighbours* and *I believe my neighbours of the natural cosmic environment* (=animals, plants and things). In a correlative sense love as active and embodied love experience 'pushes' and 'pulls' very concretely an interactional pattern of love ranging from the pointer of love for God to that of love for one self, and from the pointer of love for other human beings to love for animals, plants and things in the surrounding natural environment. Moreover, the foursome pointer pattern of God, one self, other human beings and the natural environment evolves through the experiential fields of believing (faith), thinking, feeling, apportioning justness, loving, imagining, verbalising, etc. as series and patterns expressing the simultaneous closeness and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic environment (Van Niekerk 2006:368-371; 2008:42f).

The mystery, according to Van Niekerk, is not be upgraded to the level of a *problem* in which the divides or the gaps between God, humanity and the natural cosmic world are theoretically solved. Van Niekerk views the majority of theological bridging efforts starting exclusively with God as theologism, efforts starting exclusively with human beings as

anthropocentrism or humanism and efforts starting exclusively with the natural world as naturalism or cosmologism. He asserts:

“In our society many people do not regard the experience of the threesome, each in a separate avenue as a problem which has to be solved: either because the sense making procedure of experiencing the Godness of God in a separate divine and religious avenue, the humanness of being human in a separate human avenue and the naturalness of nature in a separate natural cosmic avenue is accepted as part of the sense making ‘logic’ of modern societies, or because the problem of three separate avenues of experience was solved long ago through a connection established by one of the partners in the threesome. In history, the initiating and connecting agency between the three partners in many approaches was either God, or human beings, or the natural cosmos. The majority of these attempts foundered because the mystery of the simultaneous connection and otherness of God, human beings and cosmic nature is been speculatively upgraded to the level of a problem that has to be solved through rationality and thinking, faith and believing or language and speaking. One cannot separate the experience of God, being human and nature into three distinct avenues with the aim of establishing the appropriate connection between the avenues in a subsequent reflection procedure of rationality, faith or language. The acceptance of the mysterious connection and otherness of God, being human and nature in experiences of human beings militates against their separation.....In a sense the struggle since the Reformation of the 16th century between ‘theologists’, ‘anthropocentrists’ and ‘cosmologists’ clouded the issue of the mystery of the at-one-ment and at-other-ment of God, human beings and the natural world” (Van Niekerk 2006:368-9).

One has to make up one’s mind whether the threesome of God, humanity and the natural world is to be approach in an exclusive or an inclusive sense:

Firstly, if a choice is been made for the exclusivist approach of a *pre-eventuated setting apart* of God, human beings and nature as centuries of theologians and philosophers actually did, the necessity is given of bringing them together through a bridging operation and process of either a theologistic neo-orthodoxy, or an anthropocentric humanising, or of natural cosmisation. In terms of the exclusivist approach, the dilemma referred to in the first sentence of this study is still forceably emphasised.

Secondly, if one makes a choice for the inclusive acceptance of the mystery in which God, human beings and nature are *simultaneously connected and radically different* in their realness in people’s experience, one has taken the route in which the threesome of God, being human and the physical-organic environment are experienced in each field, mode and dimension of experience. In this study, been undertaken within the sphere of a perspective of

faith as expression of people's aware and theoretical experience of faith, the threesome is been taken up in the faith sense of the word.

What may sound as a surprise to traditional theologians is to assert that their overvalued declaration of God as the absolute agent of every event and happening in people's daily experience is of a highly problematic nature. Through being declared to be an absolute agent God is not respected but elevated to the status of a supernatural absolute agent suffering of being hold in awe and being revered with fascination (Polkinghorne 1998:72). Furthermore, various biblical and ecclesial doctrines demarcate the space within which God operates in God's own creation thus in our everyday world. The main problem is that these biblical and ecclesial doctrines are the work of human beings (theologians and church people) composed within a certain period of history. The biblical and ecclesial doctrines function not only as designs within which God is allowed to operate but more dangerously take the place of God who should be viewed as the living God, as the live-giving and live-sustaining Spirit in the totality of the millions of universes (Küng 1991:497; Van Niekerk 1996:21).

For many people our fields, modes and dimensions of experience are no longer everyday spheres in which the concreteness of the mystery of the simultaneity of the connectedness and difference of the threesome of God, being human and the natural physical-organic environment are been played and worked. In many instances people ideological, theologistic, biblicistic and ecclesiastic schemes and frameworks operate as doctrinal filters and divine gatekeepers which allow God when and where to operate. These schemes, frameworks and doctrines are in many instances a greater and more formidable obstacle that disempowers people in the broad meandering of the Kingdom of God through history than the old populist bugbears of unbelief, agnosticism, humanism, materialism, worldliness, evolutionism and scientist naturalistic schemes and arrogant atheism. The irony of God been primordially at work since billions of epochs ago through his Spirit evades seemingly the attentive and focused awareness of many people. God is since long at work through his Spirit in our experience and is thus not dependent in experiencing him on our theological, biblical and ecclesiastic conceptual and fiducial schemes, frameworks and doctrines (Delio 2003:328).

## **1.2 All embracing commitment to God, humanity and the natural world**

Someone trying to clutch to the certainty of the traditional commitment of 'belief in God' in an exclusive sense has not received tuition in the school of life of a radical and all embracing commitment to *God, oneself, other human beings* and the *natural physical world* been consistently maintained and sustained in daily life. The quadrilateral pattern of experience is in a dynamic sense part of our everyday experience (Van Niekerk 2006/7:61). People adhering to the traditional doctrine of 'belief in God' express through such an exclusive partial

commitment paradoxically an uncertainty by disclosing just a few supernatural experiences of God in daily life. Exclusive supernatural experiences of God in daily life result therein that people are been incarcerated in the supernatural 'ism' of theologism (Van Niekerk 2006/7:44f). Similarly, people exclusively adhering to humancentredness in their daily experience or exclusively adhering to naturecentredness in naturalistic, cosmologist and scientist ways are equally handicapped in terms of a radical and all-embracing sense making approach.

A radical and all-embracing commitment has to do with the experience of the *Godness* of God, one's own and other people's *humanness* and the natural world's *naturalness* in every nook and cranny, every corner and stretch of life through the mysterious workings of the Spirit of God (Van Niekerk 2006/7:368). Taking God, humanity and nature apart is a superficial exercise in which anyone of the threesome of God, being human and nature is up for sale as the newest idol to be worshipped or degraded to the level of the oldest paralysed agent suffering of inertia in people's experience (Geering 2000:4-7).

In a person's fields, modes and dimensions of experience sensible and nonsensical experiences of loving, thinking, brokenness, hating, believing, doubting, imagining, joy, praying and sadness attract and repel, intersect and dissect each other. From and within these experiences the transcendental traces, snippets, vestiges and even experiential leaps of God, oneself, other human beings and natural surroundings are set free and let loose in our life-world of everyday. The setting free and letting loose of the transcendental Godly, human and natural traces, snippets and vestiges make one more of a querist in various experiential fields of life. The stretched out field of trust and doubt, faith and disbelieve is one field of many in the quest for truth and seeking for meaning in everyday life. Ratzinger relays a Jewish story told by the philosopher Martin Buber illuminating the above:

"An adherent of the Enlightenment, a very learned man, who heard of the Rabbi of Berdivitch, paid a visit to him in order to argue, as was his custom, with him too and to shatter his old-fashioned proofs of the truth of his faith. When he entered the Rabbi's room he found him walking up and down with a book in his hand, wrapped in thought. The Rabbi paid no attention to the new arrival. Suddenly he stopped, looked at him fleetingly and said, "But perhaps it is true after all". The scholar tried in vain to collect himself – his knees trembled, so terrible was the Rabbi to behold and so terrible his simple utterance to hear. However, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak now turned to face him and spoke quite calmly: "My son, the great scholars of the Torah with whom you argued wasted their words on you; as you departed you laughed at them. They were not able to lay God and his Kingdom on the table before you, nor can I. But, I think my son, perhaps it is true". The exponent of the Enlightenment opposed him with all of his strength; but this terrible "perhaps" which echoed back at time after time broke his resistance" (quoted by Ratzinger 1969:21).

This tale imposes on us daily life as the playingfield where the central players of God's Kingdom (Commonwealth), that is Godself, human beings and the natural cosmic world demonstrates the truth of God's Kingdom before anyone and anything in the most ordinary of ordinary situations. How strong people may feel rejecting the mystery of the dynamic connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural world, the eerie feeling of the words "Yet perhaps it is true" may ring true.

Perhaps it is true in many instances that doubt as part of the faith realm saves both faith and doubt from shutting up in their own worlds. Perhaps it is true that both faith and doubt open up avenues, disclose phrases creatively and constitute limiting stages of communication. The transcendental traces, snippets and pointers of God, human beings and the natural world disclose themselves in the becoming and emergence of sense and meaning through experiential patterns of faith, thinking, feelings and speaking. In all the realms of experience God, human beings and the natural cosmic world play themselves as interactive actors in the truthful script of what the biblical texts construe as the Kingdom of God where the truthful earthly is the embodiment of the truthful heavenly. Just as God and human beings are not appendices of the truthful script, the natural cosmic world is not operating and idling along as an automatic mechanistic mega complexity.

Perhaps it is also true, that we are entering into dialogue, negotiation, and rephrasing, reorienting and an episodic and demarcating packaging of an awareness of trust, honesty, thinking, feeling and believing of the smallest of the smallest experiences. More than leading us into a world consisting of absolutes, it leads us into a world in which the subtotal of the relative smallest experiences implies the wellbeing and wellness of everyday life. Rather, these small traces, snippets and vestiges of experience indicate to us that no one can escape the experiential continuums of faith and doubt, thinking and stupidity. To some people, faith, belief or trust is in opposition to doubt, for others faith experience comprises the continuum of <faith...doubt> as an intrinsic expression of the whole sphere of faith. In terms of the integral and differential thrust of this study one has to be aware that these transcendental traces, snippets and vestiges are not only found in the field and continuum of 'faith...doubt' but are also experienced in fields and continuums of 'thinking...stupidity', 'emotional sensitivity...crude emotions' and 'right...wrong proportions of justness (Van Niekerk 2006/7:67,73,101-103).

According to Van Niekerk the experience of the togetherness and difference of God, human beings and the natural physical environment eventuates in a myriad of happenings of holiness in daily life through the mysterious operations of the Spirit of Holiness. He writes:

"The Holy Spirit embodies and participates, contributes and guides new pockets and packages, new contexts and localisations of at-one-ment and at-other-ment of God, being human and the physical-organic environment in the world. In this sense the Holy Spirit incorporates and embeds every atom and molecule in the physical-

chemical world, every cell and organism in the biotic world, every emotion and feeling, every thought and belief, every love action, and every bit of justice in human experience. We do not know how and in what sense the Spirit of God incorporates and embeds thing after thing and being after being in the many universes...The closest and the furthest one can get to the Godness of God, the humanness of being human and the naturalness of nature is to experience and encounter God, oneself and nature through living one's life with the awareness of being in creaturely, reconciling, renewing and consummating mode" (Van Niekerk 2006:374-5)

All-embracing sense making commitments to life and afterlife come to the fore as the connectedness (at-one-ment) and difference (at-other-ment) of God, being human and nature in the sense making experiences of people's everyday life-worlds. We have to be consistently aware that two broad choices amounting to integration and differentiation, or disintegration and separation of God, our humanity and the natural environment experience confront us permanently and any attempt to escape these choices seems nearly impossible (Kaufman 2004:1).

### **1.3 A perspective of faith as one amongst many**

In terms of an all-embracing sense making God-human-and-world commitment we have to be aware that we are constantly confronted by the modern reductionist commitment attitude of postulating a single truth for the broadness and the whole duration of our lives. The mentality of acquiring the whole truth through reductionist operations are poignantly demonstrated in the constancy with which one employs such a meta-truth as the undercarriage of the totality of ones life-experience. In a similar sense been confronted with sets of choices of integration and differentiation versus disintegration and separation of God, our humanness and nature in our daily experience, are we confronted with processes of the interchange, exchange and fusing of experiences (Van Niekerk 2005:411):

"Amongst the numerous factors which play a role in the very complex history and unending process of accumulating human knowledge is the ongoing process of interchange, exchange and appropriation or rejection or compromise or fusing (mixing) of "skills and tools" between people and their societies and between the many sciences and philosophies. No person, culture, language, religion, society, community, science and/or philosophy changes, develops, grows and increases or decreases its openness towards others without conscious interchange, exchange and appropriation or rejection or compromise or mixing of their "skills and tools" with those of others... ...The shape and the size of a person's cultural and scientific universe and accumulation of skills and tools, codes and modes, and science and knowledge from other persons, depend on the levels of interchange, exchange and appropriation



(or rejection, compromise, mixing or fusing) of the processes they partake in." (2005:411).

One of the aims in been engaged in processes like these are the constituting and establishing of episodic and demarcated meta-positions, perspectives and domains of experience in which we complete our everyday tasks, projects and patterns of experiences. A particular mode of a demarcated episodic meta-position, perspective and domain while setting us in relationship with someone takes us actually away for the duration of the episode from the whole network of people's experiential relationships. This is because the episodic relationship with someone creates levels of experiential contact and fracture, in and through which transcendental experiences of God, one-self, other human beings and our natural surroundings emerge (Van Niekerk 1996:22). Van Niekerk expresses this succinctly as follows:

"(I)n the dynamics of a sense making God-life-and-world approach of multiversity, none of the various fields, capacities, modes or dimensions of human experience has priority over another in a life-long and constant limitless and infinite way. Thus, in terms of the mystery of the simultaneity of interconnectedness and otherness of God's Godness, human beings' humanness and the natural physical-organic environment's naturalness, none of the fields, modes, aspects, dimensions and spheres of Reality (=the composite reality of God, human beings and the natural world) is the sole authoritative source and meaning-giver of the other. In terms of the elusive idea of experience, every field, capacity, mode or dimension of experience may have the leading emphasis over other fields of experience for an episode or period and a demarcated set of borders until it is spontaneously or deliberately been brought to a close. The reductionist approach in modern sciences and philosophies in which a field, mode and dimension of experience is infinitely, constantly, limitlessly and without borders presented as the sole meaning-giver and authoritative source of all other fields, modes and dimensions of experience is demoralised and relativised within the ambience of our radical, differential and integral philosophical approach" (2006/7:61).

Within the sphere and perspective of faith operational in this study the transcendental experiences are firstly not comprising as exclusive experience of God but also of transcendental experiences of oneself, other human beings and the physical natural world in which we live as humans like fish in the water. Secondly, these transcendental experiences are to be understood in a more specific sense as transcendental traces, snippets, clues and even experiential leaps of God, oneself, other human beings and natural surroundings let free and let loose in our daily experience (Van Niekerk 2006:376-379). Thus, from within an experiential sphere of faith we can state that our everyday life-world is scattered with words like trust, faith, love, compassion, adherence, thoughtfulness, engagement and involvement

which are all designations and denotations of the portrayal of someone's embracing or partial commitment to the connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. Episodic particularity and demarcating bordering enable us to discover the fraud of the modern superimposed gospel of reductionism, or at least to discern in a reductionist enterprise the truth moment of the little "psst!" of the universe as but one of the myriad voices in the world (Van Niekerk 1996:22).

#### **1.4 Telling of stories...and dancing**

We are constantly telling our own stories of everyday experience to each other. Story telling is the normal way in which we convey our academic and social experiences in narration and is not a special form of art or communication. Even a personal story told in the most fleeting of encounters belongs to this type experiential story telling. We learn in childhood and adulthood through the training of various alphabets and through conversing in various languages that our narrative and imagining capacities gradually develop and become educated in the use and meaning of the complexity of thousands of interconnected words and symbols. All these emerge in the communities, the families in which we are born and the social networks in which we partake. Accompanying the words that we learn are their entire complex grammatical, syntactical and semantic interconnections (Kaufman 2004:8-9; Ellwood 1983:185-186).

A continual interplay as a dynamic relationship exists between words, thoughts and beliefs as perceptual experience (Cumpsty 1991:49). Perception in the sense of what I see, hear, smell, taste and touch produces in reductionist approaches not necessarily a corresponding truth with my experience of words, thoughts and beliefs. Underlying and permeating a human being's total experience and expelling moments and fragments of sense and nonsense is one's overall embracing commitment expressed in one's ongoing sense making approach or what is quite similar God-human-and-world view (Van Niekerk 2005:407-410). In the literature, the designations life-and-world view, or life view or worldview are been widely used (Ratzinger 1971:21; Oosthuizen 1974:9). Van Niekerk insists that the three notions together make out a composite God-human-and-world view, approach or orientation (2005:410). A sense making approach to a large degree informs and directs our daily behaviour, attitudes, opinions and views of ourselves, of our fellow human beings, the physical-organic cosmos and God. This happens mostly on a non-conscious level and emerges through conscious reflection, through permeation of conscious beliefs, thoughts and emotions and through conscious focussing on circumstances, people and happenings in the bodily actions and activities of people.

People convey stories of everyday experience to other human beings and themselves, to God and sometimes even to animals, plants and things as one of the main ways they communicate, negotiate and deal with each other. In people's stories of faith and belief, we

encounter small traces, snippets and vestiges of the experience of faith the players in the story that is God, ourselves, other human beings and the natural cosmic world. Narration of these stories of faith hints and points to the small traces, snippets and vestiges of God, being human and the physical natural world disclosed and enacted, eventuated and narrated in the being there-ness (*Dasein*), the being thus and thusness (*Sosein*) and the actuality-ness (*Aktsein*) of created reality embraced and permeated by the Spirit of God (Allison 2003: 25).

The disclosure and letting loose of small traces, snippets, words and spirit-given vestiges of God, being human and nature in our stories happen as dances and leaps of interjecting and intersecting leaps and jumps of sense and meaning. These dances and leaps, hops and skips and jumps comprise of small and micro words and spirits and big and gigantic Word acoustics and Spirit echoes of God. The complementary contrariness of word and spirit in their smallness and Word and Spirit in their greatness given in classic biblical trajectories that link us to the grand acts of God in creation, reconciliation in Christ as the *Word*, renewal in and through the *Spirit* and consummating fulfilment directed to the future of all and everything. In the sense of multiple and manifold experiences in various fields of experience, we experience the Word and the words as addressing us in our dances while the Spirit and our spirits seem to drift away. At other times, we experience the Spirit and our spirits close to the surface of our skins and the layers of air around us while the Word appears to be cast in static constructs of our ecclesial conventions and our societal doctrines. In our experiences, the Word directs us towards the root function of the renewing Spirit and the Spirit directs us to the reconciling and atoning Word (Bloesch 1994:57-58,179, Abelard (1922), 1972:20).

Another way of expressing the interjecting and intersecting leaps and jumps of sense and meaning is through computational reflection in many directions and trajectories. Sometimes the leaps and jumps are the embodiment of heartbreaking and suffering experiences and at other times they are joyous, glorious and wonderful experiences expressed as a myriad of rhythmic and episodic fragments and moments as the dance of life within the realms of time and space in our society geared towards greater postmodernity (Buitendag 2002:940). Therefore, our experiences of sense and meaning dances to tunes even they are tone-deaf, until the vibrations of the music are vibrating throughout our beings, sometime making it up, either by a new step, or by following the cues and clues, steps and mannerisms of fellow dancers. What ties their creative piracy together is a radical commitment that includes all the players of the mystery of the connectedness and difference of God, being human and the natural cosmic world that are willing to dance to a new rhythm (Kanter 1989).

The dance of multidisciplinary studies and holistic methodologies requires some of the trickiest steps going. It was one thing for Jonathan Edwards for example, to draw on eighteenth-century physics to illustrate the infinitude of sin in his sermon *The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners* (Edwards 1968: 361-398; White 1981:257). It is another to

survey the vast range of contemporary scientific research, from quantum physics to chaos and set theory, from astronomy to agronomy and to be dumbstruck by the complexity and fluidity of interjections and intersections in the open-ended scientific edifice. Creative thinkers with the likes of Bernard Lonergan's pioneering models of multidisciplinary reflection, science's 'over-lapping neighbourhoods' (Polanyi), 'discourse communities' (Geertz), and 'disciplinary matrices' (Kuhn) have demonstrated just how difficult it is to put into practice the simplest of rules: There is no hearing without listening, there is no seeing without looking. A comment by Robert S Woodworth (1931:22, 27) over sixty years ago on the methods of sound and vision engineers underscores the complexity of the argument of the simultaneity of many dimensions within a particular sphere. They had to depend on the method of impression, because they are not concerned simply with the physics of light or sound, but with the effects produced upon the human being seeing or hearing.

The leading emphasis of reflecting on faith and belief in this study is been continuously undergirded by people's individual and communal experiential patterns of faith from the past, the present and future directed contexts and settings. The whole field and sphere of people's experience of faith continuously permeated and embraced by the dimensions of temporalisation and contextualisation of people's reflection, contemplation and deliberation on their experience of faith is what this study is about (Hesselgrave & Rommen 1990:1-5). Such a twofold circularity within a perspective and sphere of faith reflection proceeds from faith reflection on the dimensions of temporalising and contextualising of one's own experience of faith, to faith reflection on the temporalising and contextualising of other people's patterns of faith experience.

Broadly speaking, we are dealing with a hermeneutical reciprocal circularity of movements of present, past and future time trajectories and the experiential contexts of faith, thinking, feeling, verbalising, apportioning justness, loving, imagining and socialising in which the disclosing and becoming of transcendental traces, snippets and pointers of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world continuously emerge.

It is a *sine qua non* of such a hermeneutical enterprise that we should stay away from infinite meta-historical expressions of faith as well as from endless doctrinal speculative constructions not touching base in people's daily experience of faith (Carroll 1997:30-32; Smith 1991:2-11). Following from this, all experiences from the perspective of the agent of faith have to be rethought, redefined and reiterated in contemporary circumstances, for we embody our experiences and interpretations thereof in current expressions, experiences and societal orienting.

On the one hand, the flight of the arrow of time follows the route of past, present and future in the interpretation of the present context. Not all our experiences are *de novo* as if they are totally been created out of nothing. On the other, the sheathing of the contextual arrow serves as the sensor for the patterns of our memories, reflection and deliberation of past,

present and future contexts. This applies to our suppositions of faith too. A world consisting of 'now' and 'here' absolutes results in total and absolute assurances of what makes absolutely sense based on these absolutes. However, time-directed momentary and contextualised fragmentary experiences emphasise and indicate the need for a fusion of static infinite and endless absolutes or dynamic relative orientations towards time and space (Gadamer 1991:314; Ratzinger 1968:22-38). The term 'faith' denotes the perspective and sphere of one of the fields of experience in which transcendental traces, snippets and pointers of God, human beings and the natural world are disclosed in the becoming and emerging of sense and meaning amidst people's experience of faith. It is worth repeating that similar processes of the disclosing of transcendental traces, snippets and pointers of God, being human and the natural world takes place in experiential fields of thinking, feeling, loving, socialising, etc.

## 1.5 Faith and Experience

William James, in *The Varieties Religious Experience*, identified the quality of faith with the quality of experiencing. The real depth or cash value of the religious life, said James, is its particular experience (1919:508). Tied in the question of truth James reasons the final test of faith is not its origin, but the way it works overall (1919:443). Apart from defending the rights of religious faith, James maintained the world is richer than traditional science is prepared to admit. At the beginning of his book, he insisted incidentally that the 'available criteria' by which genuine religion could be judged were '*immediate luminousness, philosophical reasonableness and moral helpfulness*' (1919:18). What does this 'philosophical reasonableness' mean in this context? The pragmatic principle is scarcely adequate here. What does it mean to say that something 'works'? In short, how does one determine whether the effects of believers in a fiducially constructed network are overall good or bad? Here one has to bring into the discussion the notions of the origin or the effects of faith and religious experience as well as the distinction between a theoretical perspective of faith and experiential daily faith practice.

Küng's makes a meaningful point on the distinction of theory and practice:

"That believe in God must certainly be proved in practice, but that the criterion of the truth in God is not simply practice. That truth cannot be equated with practical utility or sacrificed if necessary to tactics that even a theory that is not followed up can be true, that even a message that commands little or no belief can still be right" (1991:611).

Agreeing with James and others a decision of faith is built into the following options: thus, whether we regard the mystic's experience of identity of striving to be absorbed in the mystical All-in-One (understood as 'Nothing' or 'All') as decisive *or* the prophet's experience of confrontation with God not as absorption in God but as obedient response to his call as determinative, a decision of faith is at stake. Moreover, whether we understand God as

passive in regard, to whom human beings are active, by absorption, immersion, ascent, union, or whether we understand God as the active partner who acts on human beings and thus brings the latter into activity, is also a decision of faith. Any of the options above is a decision of faith to be justified at the bar of reason. Somehow, the faith of the religious person turns out to be ambiguous and inconsistent. It calls for clarification. Believe in an Absolute, in an ultimate reality is a fully experiential insight. Nevertheless, this insight – as James also admits – can be a conceptual expression in extremely diverse ways. Such explanation tends at times to be superficial, even wrong; it requires in thoughtful reflection amplification, clarification and assurance of such a truly full and vital but often inadequate religious experience.

In maintaining that faith experience and faith reflection go together in that reflection lives by experience while experience needs the critical illumination and assurance of reflection, a sequence of questions arises. Is faith a solely emerging from human actions and responses; or is faith a solely a divine action whereby in the act of bestowing faith upon human beings a response is been elicited from them, or is faith solely a natural worldly action drawing out sayings such as “nature seems thankful for rain”?

The classic position on faith is that faith is to know God from the inside out or, with what Wesley termed ‘the right heart’ (Metuchen 1989:154-56,171-73). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, ‘heart’ has the widest possible meaning, including the functions of will as well as intellect and emotion. When Jonathan Edwards called faith a ‘heart religion,’ he did not mean that faith is dependent on experience but that faith is explored and energised through our experience which is than deeper than our reason. In Edwards’ classic position of faith and belief, faith is viewed as playing its role in the midst of human experience though not really been made of experiential ‘material’.

Faith is not simply intellectual understanding, or an act of human intention, or following some salvation ‘how-to’ manual, or assent to creedal formulations. Faith is not a matter of doing, or even being, but rather an experience of being and becoming. Experiencing is faith’s most fundamental activity. Alternatively, faith is the creative movement of self-organising processes that better understood as verbs than as nouns. Faith is the state of excitation of a set of metanoia-inducing, space-pervading fields or more ably expressed – a consuming-fire transformation of consciousness that reorients one’s ambitions, motives, presumptions, and energies. Jonathan Edwards has indicated that religion consists in an intercourse between human beings and their Maker, hinting that relations are fundamental to faith. *Metanoia* is the most transformative, explosive encounter one can have. In a metanoised self, a pilot light becomes a consuming flame. Moreover, as before Edwards positions faith in line with the classic view as more basic than any other field, mode or dimension of experience. Sharon Welch describes this position as an ‘epistemic shift’ of consciousness (1985:9-14). *Metanoia* totally transforms one’s life and the course of history.

Various fields of human experience or experiential capacities such as thinking, feeling, speaking, loving, imagining, doing and believing are been embodied as 'being' in a time-spatial continuum. Hence the question: "How is being – which can neither be an individual existent nor the totality of what is (= reality) – to be discovered, rediscovered, negotiated and renegotiated and really conceived?"

## 1.6 The field and statement of the thesis

Our investigation has its emphasis on how the pointers of the triadic continuum of 'God...being human...physical-organic cosmos' are interconnected, coincide and overlap as a mystery that can not be explained and solved like a theoretical problem. In being committed to daily experience of the mysterious simultaneity of the radical connection and difference of God, being human and the physical-organic cosmos the furthest we can venture is to confess of only having an idea as to how the three pointers of the triadic continuum fit together. We do not experience the mysterious simultaneity of the threesome as a real problem which can be problematised in a problem-setting and which with increasing insight and knowledge can be solved to people's rational, fiducially or even emotional satisfaction.

The study sets of with the stating of the dilemma of dividing God, human beings and the natural cosmic world into three avenues which have to be bridged in a theoretical sense or as a mystery of the simultaneity of the interconnection and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world that cannot be solved and proved. At the heart of the issue is whether belief in God (and human beings and nature) can be proved with the danger that faith loses its basic characteristic of trust and acceptance, *or*, belief in God (and human beings and nature) can be disproved with God (and human beings and nature) been discarded from various fields and modes of experience. The latter either-or positioning, expresses the perennial dilemma between reason and faith within the realm of the question of the interconnectedness and difference of "God...human beings...physical-organic natural world". Some solved the dilemma in favour of faith, others in favour of reason, and others do not solve it at all. The dilemma is also been found at the core of the centuries old debate between science and theology in which we are been faced with hermeneutical issues and epistemological challenges (Fee 1991:70-75).

The thrust of this study revolves firstly around *the mystery of the connectedness and the difference of God, human beings and the natural world expressed in a multi-some Reality*. Secondly, the multi-some Reality operates as the constitutive and regulative principle throughout the study as *the kenotic permeation and touching by the Spirit of God of created reality comprising of human beings and the natural comic world*. This kenotic thrust is followed throughout this study as an attempt to answer the question as to where, when, what

and how God as Spirit touches and permeates humanity and the physical-organic environment (= the world or the cosmos).

Many mysteries of the borderline type such as the one of the what, where, when and how of the interconnectedness and difference of God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmic world, have been upgraded in Modernity to problems in the theological world that can be solved through the use of various reductionist approaches. The modern notion of divine revelation, for example, played an important role since the 17<sup>th</sup> century as the source presented theologians with the divine insight and knowledge of the *precise margins* and *qualitative quality* of the interconnectedness and difference of the Godliness of God, the humanness of human beings and the naturalness of the physical-organic natural cosmos (Van Niekerk 2006:377). Many of modern theological schemes are been directed by assumed divine revelatory acts of which the underlying assumption is the solving of the mystery of the interconnectedness and difference of the partners of the triad. Another example is the 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian Karl Barth (1886-1968) who inferred and actualised his whole theology from God's assumed full and final divine revelation in Jesus Christ. In the last instance only Barth has knowledge of the solution of how the problem-setting of the interconnection and difference of God as subject-driven agent and human beings as newly established human subject and the physical-organic cosmos has been theologically constituted and established in Christ (Van Niekerk 1984:189-242).

Some proponents of a strict theological tradition assert that one can only know God if he discloses himself within a newly set realm of faith been given by God through revelation within a human being. One can conclude that this procedure amounts to a *proof of faith* for the existence of God.

A slightly different variation of a proof of faith revolves around the use of the Judaeo-Christian bible. God has the initiative and encounters one solely in the world of the *biblical tradition of texts* (Möller 1998) as been expressed by the majority of theologies since the 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformation. The proverbial biblical theologian operating within the scheme of the biblical tradition of texts has unaware accepted the construction of the procedure delivered by his/her ecclesial ancestors.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, another proof of faith revolves around the notion of God's Self-revelation. Sinful people have no knowledge of God without God's gracious self-revelation: there is no human proof of God, but only God's proof of Godself (1998:8f). What is been expected from a human being is the mode of trusting faith by virtue of the message: *credo ut intelligam*, "I believe in order to know". A dialectical position with the latter message as the underlying assumption featured centrally in the 20<sup>th</sup> century theologies of Karl Barth, the Swiss Systematic Theologian and Rudolf Bultmann, the German New Testament scholar and many of their neo-orthodox following in evangelical theology. The dialectic theology wanted to secure God's divinity and revelation against all "natural theology" of Roman Catholicism and



anthropocentric Neo-Protestantism as been propagated by Friedrich Schleiermacher in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An infinite distance exists between man and God – the *Ganz andere* – only to been bridged by God himself, “dialectically” through his revelation. For Barth and Bultmann a theology been formulated from human’s requirements (*Bedürfnistheologie*) is thus not an option. However, a number of questions been asked by opponents of the ‘dialectical theology’ were:

- Is “revelation” an unsubstantiated illusionary assumption or an ideological superstructure?
- Am I simply to dispense and to sacrifice my rational faculties?
- Is it not possible to enter into dialogue with fellow human beings on the strength of multifarious fields and modes of experience?
- Should it not be possible in principle to carry on the discussion about God with anyone?

An older theological tradition before the dialectical theology operated with the assumption that one can believe in God only if God is been firstly known by reason. The ‘supernatural’ revelation in the world of the biblical proclamation presupposes the ‘natural’ revelation of God in creation. Such a *rational proof* of God is been drawn from the reality of the world. This is possible by a reflection on the world in viewing God as the cause and goal of all things. This position acquired the name of ‘*natural theology*’ mainly propagated by Catholic Neo-Scholasticism and the First Vatican Council of 1870. Aquinas of the 13<sup>th</sup> century defended in principle the demonstrability of God, while Vaticanum I maintains in principle only the ability of the knowing of God (a *potentia* of the knowledge of God).

Natural theology through the ages has been looking for a middle path between rationalism, which reduces faith to reason (rejecting everything ‘supernatural’), and fideism, which reduces all reason to faith (rejecting all ‘natural’ knowledge of God). According to this point of view, despite the dissimilarities between God and human beings through the similarity of analogy a bridge building process is rationally set in motion. Thus, a rational analogical argument is been undergirding the correspondence between God and human beings. A dual order of knowledge comes to the fore: ‘above’ the ‘natural’ sphere, known by reason, there is a ‘supernatural’ sphere, which is been known by faith. The two-pronged approach of Religious Studies at universities in the modern era carried by a neutral and objective methodology with regard to the phenomenon of philosophy (particularly philosophy of religion) and the phenomenon of religion (particularly world religions) approximates the contradictions the ‘natural’ and ‘supernatural’ planes of reason and faith in theology. A sequence of questions arises:

- Is it possible to prove in particular the existence of God by a process of logical coercive understanding of the existence of God? Is such a proof not an ingenious thought

operation of philosophical and theological specialists that remains abstract, impenetrable and aloof for people in their everyday experience?

- Can God be God in such a proof? Does such reasoning not reduce God as being a mere thing when inferred, discovered, objectified and merely set up against the human subject?
- Since Kant's threesome critiques of pure, practical and aesthetic reason, it is been largely accepted that human knowledge is restricted and provisional. Has Kant's methodological criticism of the ontological, cosmological and teleological (physic-theological) proofs of God not been wiping the whole system of proofs of God's existence from the discussion table? Are reasonable arguments possible in the realm of faith? Here in fact lies the true problematic of the proofs of God as set in formulation by Plato and Aristotle and been taken up by Augustine and Aquinas. In history of philosophy the proofs of God were been freshly rethought by Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz. Wolff in the 17<sup>th</sup> century took up the so-called new "ontological" approach of Anselm of Canterbury. The proofs of God were finally been subjected to a radical critique by Kant and speculatively reinterpreted by Fichte and Hegel (Klapwijk 1995:184, 136, 203).

This thesis argues, in line with the approach of Van Niekerk that consensual negotiation between the sense-making patterns, portrayed in a text, theory, natural process and human doing and the sense making pattern of the negotiator takes place. The consensual negotiated result is a 'design of compromise' and 'co-promise' from which cues, clues and notions are been extracted and imparted in endeavours by people attempting to make sense of a similar issue in subsequent experiences (Van Niekerk 2006:386-88). Van Niekerk who has devised and developed the consensual negotiation approach describes the outlines of the approach as follows:

The main notions of sensible negotiation belong to the family of how *sense, sense making, meaning and significance* are to been negotiated with reference to texts, theories, natural processes and human doings. The sensible negotiation process fulfils itself as *consensible co-positing* → *consensible percolating and filtering* → *consensible fusing into a co-promise design* from where clues, cues and hues can be drawn and folded into the mix of people's life worlds (2006:387-388).

In the chapters that follow the outlines of a heuristic framework built on a consensual negotiation approach function rather as provocation and stimulation for further reflexion than an offering of detailed and elaborated prototypes of the argument.

The assumption which carries the study is implicit in the breadth and the depth of what is termed traditionally as the Christian faith proceeding as it does on the premise that God's activities through his Spirit are been directed to the natural world and us as human beings. In this sense the *carmen Christi, the coming of Christ in the flesh* of Philippians 2:5-11, the

*locus classicus* for Christian teaching on kenosis provides us with the necessary sense-making cues in the circumscription and formulation of the basic thesis.

A circular two-way movement is operational as undercarriage in the study of kenotic incarnation of the Word becoming flesh through the Spirit while the Spirit establishes coterminously pointers of the Word in the natural world and in human beings as expressive of the mystery of the simultaneity of the interconnectedness and difference of God, human beings and the natural world. The kenotic two-way movement of the incarnation of Word and Spirit allows us to trace the association between kenosis and change as the coterminous event of God standing with his hand in the soil, while touching heaven. Therefore, divine activity and earthly reality are complementary notions becoming visible in a radical, integrating and differential way in relation to each other. Kenotic incarnation and embodiment is been understood here as the affirmation of creatureliness. The continuum 'kenosis...identity' will serve as one of the problem-settings expressive of the mystery of the simultaneity of the connection and difference between God, being human and the physical-organic natural world.

## **1.7. Intersecting continuums**

Various intersecting continuums in the thesis are been offered. As has been hinted above, Van Niekerk asserts the basic struggle in scientific, philosophical and theological circles, revolves around a choice for either the theanthropocosmic, anthropic-cosmological, exclusively anthropic or cosmological principles as the determinative functional and operational factor playing a determinative role in every field, capacity, mode and dimension of human experience (Van Niekerk 2006/7:41-44). In every science as well as religious studies the methodological approach is that of the anthropic-cosmological principle, the ultimate unifying principle of the overwhelming majority of scientists and philosophers, though the anthropic principle as a single item drives mainly the 'human sciences' and the cosmological (or natural cosmisation) principle the 'natural sciences'. Theologising still takes place through the theos-principle within the traditional avenue, which mainly makes provision for reflection about God.

In line with the general assumption above of people's sense making experiences in daily life one has to add that sense making approaches play a role in all fields of experience as well as in theological and scientific theories. This is the case whether God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are included as the threesome of a theanthropocosmic principle or whether God is been excluded from the twosome of human beings and the natural cosmic world as expressive of the anthropic-cosmological principle (Smith 1992:1-5). The anthropic principle in conjunction with cosmological principle have been used by philosophers such as John Leslie, *Cosmic beginnings and human ends: where science and religion meet* (1995), William Lane Craig, *Mere creation: science, faith & intelligent design* (1998) and Richard

Swinburn, *The coherence of theism* (1993) to support the thesis that God exists. The 'anthropic coincidences' and the remarkable uniformity of the cosmic universe form a rich source of material for new forms of the design argument for the existence of God. Several of these arguments of design appear in recent theological (and scientific) literature. Anthropic design arguments use aspects of cosmic fine-tuning as evidence that the universe was designed to permit (or, in stronger forms, to necessitate) the evolution of rational carbon-based life forms. There can be little doubt that, from the perspective of the accepted mystery of the simultaneity of the connection and difference of God, being human and the physical organic natural world such features are suggestive of design. So John Polkinghorne writes:

"There are ... certain givens about our universe ..., which play an important part in determining its history... quite small variations in any of these fundamental specifications of our world would have rendered it anthropically sterile. They would have condemned it to a boringly unproductive history... If we accept this view, then a meta-question arises of why things are this way..." (1998: 71-83)

He proposes therefore:

"...the 'Moderate Anthropic Principle' (i.e. a theistic approach - JN), which notes the contingent fruitfulness of the universe as a fact of interest calling for an explanation... There seems to be the chance of a revised and revived argument from design... appealing to a Cosmic Planner who has endowed his world with a potentiality implanted within the delicate balance of the laws of nature themselves... In short, the claim would be that the universe is indeed not 'any old world' but the carefully calculated construct of its Creator" (1998: 71-79).

The intention of the study is not to enter into the domain of apologetics, instead, contra-Polkinghorne, by opting for the theanthropocosmic principle, a workable principle is provided through which ones sense-making exercises are been expressed in a more meaningful manner.

"The dynamics of a theoretical discipline termed 'faith studies' or 'theories of faith' - not theology or religious studies - is carried throughout by the theanthropocosmic principle. In theories of faith, we are engaged in aware theoretical reflexion, patterning and perspectivising within the ambience of people's experience of faith and belief. The ambience of people's experience of faith may be the experience of a person, a group or a church, as well as the contextual experiences embodied and solidified in doctrines, dogmas and books of founders of churches and movements long ago. The view of many theologians that God (or a doctrine about God) is the 'object' of theology underscores the highly problematic nature of the view of theologians as being the only real God-talkers in society since the oracle of Delphi in Greek society before the common era (BCE). Secondly, the view that a church is

sacred/holy while other societal relationships and structures are secular/profane, continues the power interests of churches and church bureaucrats such as priests, pastors and ministers, and does not serve the myriad of everyday experiences of God's people in the world. Thirdly, the common view that faith as a half-divine/half-human field of experience which embraces all other ordinary and exclusively human fields, capacities, modes and dimensions of experience has driven more people into the secular wilderness than any other atheistic, humanistic or aggressive anti-Christian or anti-religious view" (Van Niekerk 2006/7:62).

The theanthropocosmic principle functions thus as a formal epistemological principle in all the considerations and deliberations of this thesis. Challenges of contextualisation of faith, identity and reciprocal relations between God, human beings and nature percolate and oscillate between as to how, when and where the fusion of the connection and difference of God, human beings and nature take continuously and consistently place in the theanthropocosmic state of affairs been expressed in the theanthropocosmic principle (Van Niekerk 2006/7:41-44).

## **1.8 Pentecostalism and ecumenical experience**

On the one hand, Pentecostalism, in various forms as the basic experiential investigative sphere of the study in spite of strong overlapping connections with fundamentalist conservative evangelicalism is transcending the paradigm of evangelicalism. On the other hand Pentecostalism emerged through the 20<sup>th</sup> century with overlapping connections with what is been termed more liberal and neo-orthodox ecumenical-mainline thought of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially the theologies of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Jürgen Moltmann. Attempts to forge strongly links between Pentecostalism and Latin American and African liberation theology are abound (La Poorta 1998:87-91; House 2006). Others argue that Pentecostalism as a historical movement is a theological tradition in its own right deserving consideration along with the other two major streams of Protestantism, conservative evangelicalism and more liberal ecumenical-mainline thought (Martin 2002 :167-168).

Firstly, Pentecostalism's early approach to the Spirit as the embracing and life-giving partaker in our human experiences, has been gradually replaced by a gradual but definite shift away from the Spirit's material involvement in everyday experience to elevated spiritual 'experiences' with all the trademarks of Christ-directed piousness of mystical experience. The work and person of the Spirit is been evaluated in light of what God has been doing in the continuous irruption of God's revelation in and through Jesus Christ in the midst of history.

Secondly, philosophers of religion argue that as soon as a new movement is been persecuted or starts out as an alternative movement in the broadening of its societal base and by acquiring greater acceptance by upper echelons of social strata, psychological inversion starts to occur (Ellwood 1983:130-132; Martin 2002:5-7). In terms of a metaphor of

speed such a movement is going from naught to hundred within a generation or two. Usually the dominant (in this instance religious force) entangles, influence and slowly alters the rivalling tradition's ethos and sense making tools by which they fit God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmos into a meaningful system. In reaction to such phenomena experienced as a "threat" the 'opponents' vocabulary is been imparted and taken over in order to communicate more effectively. Various metaphors are usually been deployed, such as 'light and darkness', 'those of the world and us as from the Kingdom of God' (Lochhead 1988).

Thirdly, the processes of a new movement do not revolve around a two-way movement but is expressive of multi-directional traffic trajectories intersecting each other. The route of traffic prevailing is usually tied up with the stronger or more comprehensive tradition(s). Would the rivalling tradition be out searching for explanation and meaningful tools of discourse, at times it may find itself at a loss for words, and other times reiterating and copying the well known vocabulary of the dominant tradition. The challenge therefore lies in finding its own voice in the multi-directional exchange of factors in the societal setting. In such a multi-directional exchange calls for more in depth hermeneutical endeavours as theories of interpretation replacing some of the original fervour and enthusiasm with a more rational interpretational approaches. The dominant traditions are been challenged too in rethinking and renewing their basic premises especially where mega increases of numbers in the new emerging rival movement confront their societal power base. Unfortunately, the catch seems to be that a compromise is been made most of the time, usually at the expense of the weaker rival tradition.

## **1.9 The grand acts of God as the widest and deepest background of the study**

The widest and deepest background of the study is been captured by Van Niekerk's description of the meandering events and processes of what he terms the Commonwealth (=Kingdom, Priesthood and Prophetdom, etc) of God:

"the mysterious meanderings of God's Commonwealth (= Kingdom, Priesthood and Prophetdom, etc.) which are intertwined with the events and processes of "the creation and creatureliness of the many universes", "the reconciliation events of the cross, the tearing of the veil of the temple and the resurrection of Jesus", "the renewal through God's life-giving Spirit of the whole of reality", and the "processes of pulling, drawing and fulfilling of everything towards the future consummation" (Van Niekerk 2006:316).

Van Niekerk asserts that few modern people have the experiential awareness of the intrinsic embeddedness of their humanness and the physical-organic environment in God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation. The grand acts of God are been

rendered unworkable and impractical as sense making power and energy pointers in people's daily life-world by either viewing them as incarcerated doctrines in churches or by only focusing on one of the grand acts of God in their daily lives (2006:371). Van Niekerk argues that the full story and full Gospel of the Commonwealth of God as expressive of the four grand acts of God is not been served through a church in which a quarter-, a half- or a three-quarter gospel is embodied and manifested. The full gospel of the Commonwealth of God is not only directed and embodied in communities of faith but is directed and embodied in other societal institutions and organisations (2006:372f).

According to Van Niekerk:

“Many churches and their theologistic spokespersons one-sidedly emphasise either a quarter, half, three-quarters or, rarely, a full gospel:

- a quarter-version of the foursome Gospel message amounts to an exclusive emphasising of either Jesus Christ (reconciliation) or the Holy Spirit (renewal) or God the creator (creation) or God the fulfiller of everything (consummation), or
- a half-version of the foursome Gospel message amounts to an exclusive emphasising of either creation (nature) and reconciliation (grace, re-creation), or reconciliation (Word = Jesus Christ) and renewal (Spirit), or renewal (Spirit) and reconciliation (Word = Jesus Christ), or reconciliation (Jesus Christ) and consummation (Apocalyptic/prophetic future events), or renewal (Spirit) and consummation (apocalyptic/prophetic future events), or
- a three-quarters version of the foursome Gospel message amounts to an exclusive emphasising of any three of the foursome grand acts of God, or
- a full gospel message is seldom encountered in church-centred divine or semidivine churches and the deliberations of their theologistic spokespersons” (2006:373).

Historically in early and later Pentecostalism, the reconciliatory events and processes in Christ and the Spirit's renewal events and processes have been set as grand acts of God in their contrariness. While it was surely not the early Pentecostals' intention, the contrariness of reconciliatory and renewal events and processes resulted in a de-emphasising of the 'materiality of salvation', which as an intrinsic part of early Pentecostalism is, been later replaced by stronger spiritualising tendencies on salvation.

## 1.10 Contrariness of 20<sup>th</sup> century Pentecostal trajectories

The two opposing trajectories are been described as either exclusive *Christ-directed* or *Spirit- or Pneuma-directed*. The two trajectories have been extracted and drawn out from the events and processes of the Commonwealth (=Kingdom, Priesthood, Prophetdom, etc) of God. The events and the processes of the Commonwealth of God oscillating, percolating and fusing in narrowing and widening, deepening and heightening histories and dimensions are been evolving through God's grand acts of *creation* (=creation of everything), *reconciliation*

(=cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ), *renewal* (=renewal through the Spirit) and consummation (=fulfilment processes approaching us from the future) (Van Niekerk 2006:317).

In the exclusive Christ-directed approach, God's other grand acts such as creation, the Spirit's renewal work and God's fulfilling acts towards the end of times in people's experience have been strongly de-emphasised. All the events and processes of God's Commonwealth are one-sidedly brought in this sort of Pentecostalist experience under the heading of the divine actor Jesus Christ, as the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb 13:8). In this approach Jesus Christ is the sole divine actor who through his tools of the four/fivefold gospel as saviour, healer, baptizer (and sanctifier) and coming king complete the array of the events and processes of the Commonwealth of God. An example of this is the shift of FP Möller from a pneumatic-centric Spirit → Word approach in the 50's (955:6-8;142-144) of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to a nearly Christ monistic Word → Spirit view in the 70's (1975:100-101; 318-329).

The Holy Spirit is been brought under the heading of a Christ-directed approach and is thereby neglected as the full executor of all five traditional Pentecostal 'doctrinal tools'. Christ is been viewed as the main divine actor of God's Commonwealth in history in his being yesterday, today and forever the same. The main reason of Möller's shift is that he is seemingly not aware that the gradual shift demonstrates a letting loose of the dynamic intertwinement of the simultaneous movements from Spirit to Word and from Spirit to Word. One has to be aware that in the Pentecostal tradition the term 'Word' stands in one sense for the *incarnated Christ, which has ascended as the divine Son of God to the right hand side of the Father*. In that sense Jesus CHRIST is yesterday, today and forever the same as the saviour, the healer, the baptiser, the sanctifier and the coming king. In a second sense the term 'Word' also stands for the *'Word of God', the Bible as the inscripturated Word* which in the 'Gospel of Luke' and the 'Acts of Luke' is the main source for Möller's brand of Pentecostalism in which JESUS Christ's cross and the resurrection been embraced by the renewal activities of the Holy Spirit. Möller's views, though having strong experiential links to the classic period of Azusa Street (1906 -16) drifted gradually away into an exclusivist Christ-directed trajectory.

The other trajectory of many Pentecostalist approaches operated simultaneously in the classic period as the movement from Spirit → Word. The latter movement describes the proprium of the Pentecostal contribution of the classic period in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century far better than the synthesis Möller is trying to achieve with ecumenical and neo-orthodox theologians such as Karl Barth and others. Bruner in his monumental work, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, states:

"The Pentecostal is persuaded that his historical success is due to his theological distinctive, the experience of the Holy Spirit in power. It is from this spiritual centre



that Pentecostalism understands “itself”, and he continues, “There is a settled conviction that the absence in other Christian groups of the early church’s experience of the Holy Spirit is responsible for the comparative insignificance of Christianity in the world today” (1970:26-27; 32).

Although Bruner (1970:26, 32) makes a valid point in his observation of a Pentecostal mindset, I do harbour doubts whether the majority of contemporary Pentecostals will go along with his statement (Clark et al 1989). A motivation for my critical comment is the strong imbeddedness of the first trajectory of Word → Spirit in current Pentecostal experience (Möller 1975:5-9). Some of the causal factors are some of the following: firstly, increased patterns of the main Reformed trajectory of Word → Spirit are being used as heuristic principle in Pentecostal circles. Secondly, soon after the first decade of Azusa Street, Pentecostals demonstrated a longing for an ecclesial identity Pentecostals increasingly had the desire to be recognised by mainline theologians and churches in their quest for an identity as a church. This accommodation strategy of Pentecostals gave a further impetus in the drift to an exclusive emphasis of the Word → Spirit trajectory.

Neo-orthodoxy as initiated by Barth in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had a significant influence on the re-definition of the identities of many churches and the ecclesial disposition of biblical truths. Barth views divine truth as revelational truth solely in the hands of God as the all-initiating divine agent working always through Christ. Divine truth an outer-worldly divine realm is being broken exclusively in a Christcentric sense into human beings and their life-world. The mainline Barthian emphasis of God irrupting mainly and basically through his grand act of reconciliation in the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ into the human and the natural cosmic world had a strong influence on Pentecostalism of the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The sense making ‘logic’ of the Christcentric mindset of a large part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in which Barth played a determinative role has been imparted and transferred to the Pentecostal movement with great ease. For many Pentecostals of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the common symbol of faith of the classical Pentecostal movement - in all its variations – revolve around the fourfold gospel completely centred in God’s reconciliatory act in Jesus Christ: Jesus as saviour, healer, baptiser with the Holy Spirit, and coming king (Clark et al 1989:4, 26).

Various Pentecostals in the 20<sup>th</sup> century emphasised the ‘fourfold (or fivefold) gospel’ as Pentecostal symbol of faith in twofold ‘either-or’ instead of ‘both-and’ processes. On the one hand, a Christcentric process of Word → Spirit is being emphasised in which Jesus Christ as everywhere actively present (yesterday and today and forever the same -Heb 13:8), is continuously viewed as the initiating agent of the fourfold gospel through the Spirit. (Especially the ‘divine Jesus in the heart’-theology of Pentecostals strongly aligned to evangelicals and charismatics fits into this position). On the other hand, a Spirit-centric

process of Spirit → Word is been emphasised in which the Holy Spirit continuously brings the fourfold gospel into operation in people's lives through application of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the 'starting basis' of the Spirit's ongoing renewing and sanctifying work. (The 'blood of Jesus'- theology of some earlier Pentecostals fits into this position).

Lack of a large body of formal theological works has hindered the Pentecostal movement globally from adequately communicating its belief system of an equal emphasis on God's grand acts of *reconciliation in Christ* and *renewal through the Spirit* as two of God's acts of *creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation*. It seems as if a remarkable contrariness exists in the history of the Pentecostal movement in which either God's act of reconciliation in Christ or God's act of renewal through the Holy Spirit took the nod as the access point in a particular Pentecostal church or community of faith.

The contribution of Pentecostalism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century still one-sidedly experienced in many Pentecostal circles is been as an 'either-or' choice one-sidedly reflected in major Pentecostal publications. Recent Pentecostal theologians, however, have made efforts to engage other systems of thought and bring greater clarity and maturity to the movement's unique insights (Martin 2002:167-171).

## **1.11 Provisional markers *en route***

In summary, I purport that the following assumptions operate in the following chapters:

- arguing that the theanthropocosmic sense-making principle in its functioning as composite notion allows one to experience the realities of God, human beings and the natural cosmic environment as simultaneously closely connected and radically different. This imply that their relatedness is not been solved as a problem, but is accepted as a mystery playing a concrete and determinative sense-making role people's everyday living, sciences and philosophies (Van Niekerk 2005:423f; 2006/7:41-44).
- pointing at the continuous operationality in the thesis of the composite and reciprocal array of the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation intrinsically involving human beings and the natural cosmic world as energy pointers (not doctrines) of people's experience (Van Niekerk 2006:315-405). Moreover, the foursome or quadrilateral grand acts of God form the backdrop of an ongoing quadrilateral pattern of faith experience of *I believe God* and *I believe myself* and *I believe my human neighbours* and *I believe my neighbours of the natural cosmic environment* (=animals, plants and things) (Van Niekerk 2006/7:42f).

- pointing to the embracing and intranatural presence of the Spirit of God through whom links and connections are emerging with scientific approaches such as Capra's 'ecological' and 'holistic' views, Lorenz's 'chaos theory' dynamics, Eddington's 'arrow of time' views, Heisenberg's 'uncertainty principle' perspectives and Hawking's simultaneity approximate view of 'smaller than small' micro particles and 'bigger than big' macro entities. Van Niekerk's multidimensional radical, integral and differential approach of philosophies and sciences delivers sufficient clues, cues and hues for the underlying argument of the multidimensionality of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world.
- aiming at a more meaningful manner of describing the emergence in ancient and modern history of the continuums of *twosomes and dualities* of transcendence and immanence, reconciliation and renewal; *threesomes and triads* of the being thereness (Dasein), being thus and thusness (Sosein) and being actuality (Aktsein); and *foursomes and quadrilateral patterns* of the being thereness of creatureliness, being thus and thusness in being reconciled in the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, being active and actualness in being renewed through the Spirit and being whereto and thereteness of future fulfilment of processes and events (Van Niekerk 2006:371-373).
- reasoning of a kenotic incarnational theology of emphasising both dynamic trajectories of Word→ Spirit and Spirit→ Word as indicators of God's grand acts of reconciliation (= Christ's cross and resurrection) and renewal (=the Spirit of Pentecost's renewal and sanctifying work) which deliver various sense-making indicators and access pointers of opening up the complex notion of identity, identities and identification. Against the background of the two-way Word ↔ Spirit trajectories, the existential-phenomenological threesome of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* are been employed as operational indicators of how God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are embodied and embedded in kenotic incarnational events and eventshapes (Gestalt).
- suggesting a re-appraisal of the conscious mind as a multiplex mind, enabling us to have an inkling of the workings, not only of the Holy Spirit, but also how we, in reflective and reflexive experiential processes make sense of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings. The consensual negotiation approach towards texts, theories, natural processes and human doings as a Spirit-directed approach developed by Van Niekerk (2006:386-392; 2006/7:283-9, 275-282) demonstrates of transcending the modern impasse of the classic mirroring - fundamentalist and interpretation - hermeneutical approaches.

# Chapter 2

## A faith theoretical approach

### 2.1 A faith theoretical approach in Faith Studies

The evolvement, dynamics and complexity of a faith theoretical approach of the thesis is been demonstrated and correlated through three problem oriented continuums that function and operate throughout in an explicit and implicit way as problem-settings. The formatting and formulation of a problem-setting entail the problematising of something or someone by way of accessing and interrogating the space between two, three or four set pointers on a constructed continuum for the duration of the reflective process or project. The method of access is been viewed as a threefold approach:

- (1) Faith experience has to do with the embracing of our patterns of faith experiences, daily unaware reflections and our reflexive awareness within a perspective and sphere of faith,
- (2) a continuum of Word to Spirit, and Spirit to Word will provide us with an important access area in the reflection of the topic, and
- (3) an awareness of a continuous linear, diagonal and vertical movement of the grand acts of God of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment.

#### 2.1.1 <connectedness and difference of God...being human...natural cosmos>

The *first* problem setting is been expressed with three notional pointers as expressing the connectedness and difference of <God...being human...natural cosmos>. The reflexive and theoretical approach within the field and realm of faith in this thesis is a radical, integrating and differential approach towards the age-old problem of how God, human beings and nature are been closely connected while been radically different. In this thesis, pneumacentric pointers or innuendos are been detected and interrogated within the constructed format and formulation of problem-settings within the field and perspective of faith experience. Various problem-settings or continuums are been formatted and formulated throughout the thesis and they are continuously intersecting and cutting through each other in a problem-detection and interrogation sense.

In a specific faith theoretical operation negotiation and interrogation of the 'time' and 'space' between two pointers take place on each of the various demarcated and intersecting problem-settings (or continuums). According to Van Niekerk a particular and specific consensual negotiation process operational in the sphere and perspective of faith enacts the following strategic elements of assembling and constructing of the process:

- (1) a growing awareness of the *duration of the episode* of the field under construction,
- (2) an ongoing *sketching of the context* of the field under construction, and
- (3) an *emphasising and actualising of the type of field or mode* of human experience (Van Niekerk 2006/7:86-88; 276-288).

These are three indispensable elements of the negotiatory and interrogatory process leading a particular and specific negotiatory assembling and construction process. This entails two pointers in a negotiating and interrogatory sense in operation in all problem-settings (or continuums) intersecting each other.

According to Van Niekerk (2006/7:287-88) various sets of negotiatory and interrogatory pointers have been used in the modern era as access points in diversified ways of making sense of texts, theories, natural processes and human undertakings. Any problem setting, comprising of two designated pointers on a continuum in the modern era, has been expressed and made operational along the lines of a number of philosophical and sense making trajectories. These trajectories emerged as the setting of pointers in opposition to each other, complementary to each other, dialectically set towards each other, the one irrupting in the other or one effacing the other in a problem-setting with regard to their ambiances of 'time' and 'space'. The modern era is characterised by the non-overlapping and non-interlocking nature of the many sets of designated pointers on multiple continuums.

The method operational in the study is precisely that of overlapping and interlocking of two pointers on a given problem setting. The consensual negotiation taking place is not primarily abstract and speculative imaginary 'experience' but is aware reflexive experience of faith carried and driven by the theanthropocosmic principle (Van Niekerk 2006/7:41-42). This principle expresses the intrinsic overlapping and difference of God, human beings and physical-organic cosmos in a radical, integrating and differential way. The theanthropocosmic principle as the continuous leading principle plays an all-embracing role in the theoretical field and perspective of a theory of faith and in the most concrete way possible in people's daily experience of faith (Van Niekerk 2006/7:44). What one acknowledges herewith is the degrees of authenticity and legitimacy of spiritual engagements and the varying degrees of experiences of faith (Wilber 2005:40). Varying degrees of experience of existential experiences, such as believing, thinking, feelings and the awareness of being awake operate in socio-cultural settings. This we call a "centre of gravity" or an "average mode" of consciousness, around which conventional, everyday realities are been organised (Wilber 2005:25). However, there is also the *most advanced* mode of every historical epoch, pointing to increasing consciousness of belonging, structural adaptation and experience, orienting oneself in time and space (Wilber 2005:108-110; Ellwood 1983:192-203).

The point I want to make is that a radical, integrating and differential approach works with depth analysis and synthesis, which stretches as wide synchronically as possible via a network of experiential contexts of a given epoch and as temporally and historically possible

directed in the diachronic sense through various time-determined contextual periods of people's experience. In such a manner, the synchronic and diachronic aspects are been fully taken into account at the same time.

### **2.1.2 <theoretical reflexive patterning of faith...non-theoretical everyday faith experience>**

The *second* problem setting is been expressed with the notional pointers of <theoretical reflexive patterning of faith...non-theoretical everyday faith experience>. One of the interesting features of a problem or the mode of problematising in the modern era is an acknowledged problem set as a problem setting. Such a problem setting is been formulated in an environment which operate with the seemingly enable potentiality that the problem could be sufficiently and satisfactorily solved. Many problems in today's world regarded as solvable had been mysteries in the immediate past. These could not lay any claim of having the inbuilt capability to been viewed and declared a problem that can be theoretically solved. In a reflexive ambience of a wholesome philosophical approach, and especially a theory of faith (or Faith Studies), my task is to bring forward various basic and grounding sense-making pointers which undergird and determine the formation and formulation of the sense-making direction of my approach to Faith Studies.

Constant and limitless reductionism is only been corrected through an approach of episodic and demarcated reflexive reduction of experiential phenomena and events brought to closure under alternate leadership of thinking, believing, emotional or lingual emphasis (Van Niekerk 2006/7:95-97; 101-103). In a way a noetic structure of faith is been developing in structuring and patterning of beliefs in a web-like manner. The philosophising and faith theorising is been eventuating in an *ad hoc* manner without trying to establish its foundation or to determine it in full. The total faith reflexive scheme is to provide a perspective and sphere of faith in which experiential patterning and structures are been extracted and described.

The linguist Noam Chomsky (1991) suggests in his essay entitled '*Linguistics and cognitive science: Problems and mysteries*' that much of our ignorance can be divided into problems and mysteries (Quoted by Van Niekerk 2005:423). When we are been confronted by a problem, we may or may not know its solution, but we do have insight, increasing knowledge, and an inkling of what we are looking for by tackling similar situations of a problem-oriented nature. When we are been confronted by a mystery, however, we can only stare in wonder and bewilderment, not knowing what an explanation would even look like (Pinker 1999: ix quoted by Van Niekerk 2005:423). Therefore, in many instances one just accepts the mystery, just as the mystery of the simultaneous interconnection and otherness of God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmos is accepted. Van Niekerk is convinced that the radical interconnectedness and otherness of the threesome, namely God, human beings

and the physical-organic cosmos, constitute a mystery and it is doubtful that this mystery could qualify as a real problem that can be solved in the near future (Van Niekerk 2005:423f).

The question thus arises with the emphasis and focus on faith studies and a Theory of faith, and everyday experience of faith: are the pointers, margins and levels of contact and permeation between God and human beings and the physical-organic world determined and problematised in terms of a constructed problem setting? On the other hand, can we describe and report these pointers, margins and levels of contact and permeation within the realm of the experience of theoretical reflective patterning and processes of faith, or through non-theoretical everyday faith experience? In this context the notions devised by Van Niekerk of a 'sense-making approach' or 'sense-making God-life-and-world view' are being used as alternative phrases for familiar terms such as 'religious faith', 'common sense', 'ideology', 'value or belief system or world view' (Van Niekerk 2005:407-410). By employing the more embracing notional phrase it seems one captures the various ideas, pointers, phrase, phases and pre-suppositions whilst portraying the basic pattern and configuration of a person or a group of how God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmos fits together and make sense in all walks of life in the widest and deepest sense of human experience.

Traditionally some maintain that faith is the only requirement to access and configure the closely connected and differential relation between God, humans and nature. Since the Enlightenment, the avenue of access towards God, human and nature revolves around thinking and rationality. Reflectively one can argue that we have to validate the either-or scheme between faith and reason. Instead, I reckon that the either-or scheme should be viewed within a 'both-and' perspective thereby indicating that the primary modern set of 'either-or' avenues of access are valid markers from which we can access a myriad of clues. This argument seemingly maintains (for starters) that everybody is right or is been set in the sphere where right and wrong is been reflectively worked out (Wilber 2005:2-3). 'Everybody is right' implies in this regard to the quest for the Good, Truth and the Beautiful that no human mind is capable of producing one hundred percent error (Barrett 2000:160). Thus, everybody has some important sense of partial, truths to offer, and the knowledge quest is therefore not about 'who is right or who is wrong', but rather finding a way of fitting all the various truths together in a meaningful negotiatory sphere (Wilber 2005:2).

While agreeing in principle with Wilber, I propose and prefer that dialogue to take place in a consensual negotiatory way regardless of it been happening as an irruption, diagonal conversation, dialectical discussion or vertical relational settlement. Overlapping between people's sense making approaches do occur but to look for a consensual way of fitting various truth elements together comprises a major part of people's sense making experience.

Important differences emerge between pre-reflexive and post-reflexive spirituality, and aware and unaware reflection in consensual negotiation processes. The need for faith and

confidence as a specific characteristic of our everyday lives does not disappear with forms of thought and action rise beyond the everyday world into ethical, political or scientific thought (Heller 1979:7). We appreciate the tools we use in the everyday experiences of work and consumption without being fully aware of the dynamics and regularities (laws) been brought into play by our unaware manipulation of our experiences. Everyday knowledge is more than the appropriation of conditions enabling us to act and orient ourselves concretely and specifically in our specific social milieu in correlation with a given cultural level (Ellwood 1983: 78-86).

Heller (1979:8) underwrites the opinion that what is been regarded as *coax* (opinion) by the standard of science may be knowledge in everyday life. The word 'opinion' has different meanings: personal opinion (conjecture) about a given phenomenon prior to the practice (activity) related to it, or in the continuing absence of such practice one can believe that Mr X is a decent person, only until this has been 'tried out' and experienced. Knowledge acquired after such an experience is not been regarded as knowledge in the scientific sense. Everyday knowledge is not knowledge been proved; yet it must – and does – lead to decisions for actions (Heller 1979:8). In a given context of action, therefore, we necessarily accept 'knowledge of opinion' as unconditional. Opinion is always an opinion that refers to some possibility or probability (1979:8).

We engage or attach ourselves emotionally to an opinion; the type of emotional attachment to an opinion, a possibility, or a probability – emotional augmentation of the probability value of choice – is what we will term continuously faith or confidence/trust. (I will use the word 'confidence' since that is Heller's way of referring to trust. To my mind, they are interchangeable). However, anthropological, ethical and epistemological differences do exist between confidence and faith (1979:8).

Anthropologically, faith stems from particularity – the individual is both a particular and generic being. Everyone is unique with motives and aims that apply only to the person and to the satisfaction of personal needs. Confidence, by contrast, is rooted in the individual. A person is a communal being. Confidence is been directed at a person's entirety and not merely at the relation to the 'I'. As faith is an unconditional but also an untested disposition, a total surrender to an opinion or object is necessary.

Confidence on the other hand is conditional and tends to surrender to a person or opinion. New knowledge, insight and new patterns of sense making in everyday life directed at the object of confidence, enables confidence of been redefined and reoriented without been stripped of all previous experiential settings of confidence. Although both faith and confidence is dependent on authority, there are various kinds of authority. To apprentices, a skilled worker may represent unconditional authority with regard to the operation of a lathe. At the same time, he is not an authority in questions of literature or ethics (1979:11).



Faith depends on absolute authority, while confidence depends on relative authority. This type of confidence is been affiliated to scientific research since commitment forms part of confidence (1979:14-16). In the same vein, political activity is unthinkable without the working principle of confidence and trust. Employing some of the clues Heller provided, one may argue, in the episodic and demarcated sense of the word that faith is not the fundamental and basis field, mode and dimension but functions as one field of experience amongst many in people's lives.

### **2.1.3 <kenotic regularities...identity differences> in events, movements and processes**

The third problem setting is been expressed with the notional pointers of computational <kenotic regularities...identity differences> in events, movements and processes in which God, human beings and the physical-organic environment are co-actors. A new and alternate series of events, movements and processes demonstrate computational regularities. Every time something happens or a human being performs an act, it is different from any previous or other event that may seem similar or the same. The answer to the question of relationships is been looked at as, antithetic, dialectic, complementary, synchronic or diachronic types of relationships. The reality of relationships and human experiences is been taken up in their being thereness (Dasein), thus and thusness (Sosein) and dynamic actuality (Aktsein). In the contextual and situational sphere of everyday experience, a Christian who believes, thinks, imagines and economises relates to a segment of the potential totality of our experiential realities. Plainly put, in every experiential field, phase or stage, God is in, through and with human beings co-actor, co-director, co-spectator and co-wanderer with the natural surrounding environment.

## **2.2 Integral and differential reflexion of systems and patterns?**

In the time that we are living a more adequate understanding of 'being and becoming' of other people's as well as our own dynamic being is needed. The physical-organic cosmos poses similar challenges to our understanding of various realities (Smolin 1996:290; Hillis 1996:385-386). Three fundamental questions seemingly confront 21<sup>st</sup> century human beings, the one social, the other personal and the last cosmically. Each of these questions asked from within the sphere of different God-human-and-world views will have a different sense making result. Similarly, questions within the same sense making approach are been intertwined and not been answered in isolation. Systemic reflection in which the emphasis changes from thinking, believing and verbalising reflection is called for the creation of resembling systems that are not only encapsulated in systems thinking but express systems of believing, imagining and socialising.

Merchant strongly advocates the importance of systems thinking in the holistic and seemingly organic way of systems reflection:

“...all natural systems are wholes whose specific structures arise from the interactions and interdependence of their parts. Systemic properties are been destroyed when a system is dissected, either physically or theoretically, into isolated elements. Although we can discern individual parts in any system, the nature of the whole is always different from the mere sum of its parts” (quoted by Frijtjof Capra 1992:93).

This is particularly important in complex emergent systems such as life:

“...while it is true that all living systems are ultimately made of atoms and molecules, they are not “nothing but” atoms and molecules. There is something else to life, something non-material and irreducible – a pattern of organisation” (Capra 1996:81).

Capra uses two adjectives ‘*ecological*’ and ‘*holistic*’ in explaining his worldview. His approach is set against the metaphor of the *world as a machine*, brought about by the new discoveries in physics, astronomy and mathematics known as the ‘Scientific Revolution’ and associated with the names of Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, Bacon and Newton (1996:19; Gribben 2003:149). His methodological approach to understand the cosmos enables him to draw together several areas of modern science into a paradigm that encompasses quantum physics, systems theory, chaos theory, the mathematics of complexity, models of self-organisation and Gaia theory. In each case the inadequacy of the clockwork universe, Newton’s deterministic machine is emphasised. The world in which we live is not composed of ‘things’, nor of ‘objects’, but of relationships. Thus, we know an electron is ‘there’ because it relates in a particular situation as a particle or as a wave. We know a tree or mountain is ‘there’ because of the sensory and neural relationship we establish with them. The generation of these relationships is cognition.

Valuable to our discussion is the way in which Capra’s consideration of scientific paradigms opens the way towards spiritual and religious considerations. Employing the insights of the Santiago theory of cognition, some avenues open to us. The Santiago theory of cognition or *autopoiesis*, proposed by Maturana and Varela (1980), states life is cognition, in the sense that living systems operate by ‘knowing’ their environment. The relationship within the living system and its environment, written in its patterns of recognition, express a mutual informational adjustment. Thus life and cognition, preferably mutual informational adjustment, go together. The Santiago theory rejects the idea that cognition is a representation of an objective world ‘out there’. Biological cognition is an ongoing bringing-forth of a world, through the very process of living itself (Varela 1996:211).

In the Santiago theory, a *world is identical with a mind*. The mind is not bringing forth a world. Capra and Varela (Capra 1996:287) denote the modern human condition as being characterised by *Cartesian anxiety*. This is a state of frustration and anxiety caused by a hopeless grasping after an exterior world of separate objects that we see as firm and permanent, but which are really transient and ever-changing (Capra 1996:186). Likewise, an anxious grasping after an internal ego-self observed does not have any independent existence but is the result of our internal structural coupling (i.e. the mutual informational adjustment that arises from neuronal relationships). The solution therefore to the problem of the Cartesian anxiety is to see the world as it 'really' is, to see things in their 'suchness'. Hence, Capra calls for a new paradigm in which a sense of systems within systems and processes of continual mutual cognition acknowledged, instead of everything being analysed in a reductionist way, contribute to a loss of identity.

Both Capra (1986:186-187) and Varela (1996:211) emphasise a bricolage of various identities. Therefore, one has a cellular identity, an immune identity, a cognitive identity. One has various identities manifesting themselves in different modes of interaction. The concept of *autopoiesis* is an attempt to define the uniqueness of the emergence that produces life in its fundamental cellular level. There is a circular or network process that engenders a paradox: a self-organising network of biochemical reactions produces molecules, which do something specific and unique: they create a boundary which constraints the network that has produced the constituents of the membrane (Varela 1996:212). The entity produced its own boundary. It does not require an external agent to notice it, or to say, "I am here". It is, by itself, a self-distinction.

Application of the logic of emergent properties of circular structures led Varela (1996:213-215) to deconstruct among others the notion that the brain is processing information and making a representation of the world. The neuron-system has internal or operational closure, somehow making sense of seemingly non-meaningful interactions. The brain or the nervous system is not an information-processing system, because by definition information-processing systems need clear inputs. Seemingly, the operational closure is applicable to the immune system too. As soon as the militaristic notion that the immune system is about defence and looking for invaders is deconstructed, one arrives at the idea that the emergent identity of the immune system is the identity of one's body, which is not a defensive identity. The network is a mesh of virtual selves (1991:211, 214). Knowledge co-evolves with the knower and not as an outside, objective representation. The mind is an emergent property, and the consequence of this emergent property is the identity of our own self. This is possible due to an interface with the world. I am 'me' for interactions, but my, 'I' does not substantially exist, in the sense that it cannot be localised anywhere. Hence, as an emergent property, life is in the configuration and dynamic pattern – 'being here' – allowing us to interact and interface with identities or other selves.

## **2.3 Time's arrow**

### **2.3.1 Time and epistemology**

In short, the description in Psalm 139 of the embracing vastness of God's presence is applicable in describing the many dimensions and forms of time known to us. The metaphor of the arrow of time may serve here in the capacity of an epistemological pointer to reorient ourselves to the concept of time as negotiated by the Spirit in the resurrection of Jesus. A considerable amount of knowledge is been extracted of nature by treating 'time' as absolute and separate from 'space' within the Newtonian system. Einstein's relational approach of 'space-time continuum' forming a single concept, has aided us to glean and understand more about the mysteries of the universe. An awareness of the importance of 'time's arrow' brings us a step or two closer of making some sense of the deepest mysteries of the universe. In other words, time's arrow has enlarged the scope of human knowledge in multiple ways (Altekar 2006:5).

In the light of the above, let us pinpoint some important features of an epistemology of time's arrow. The presuppositions of Time's Arrow are the following (Altekar 2006:6):

- Time's arrow is depending on a duality or rather a dualism. Dualism exists between past and present, right and left, up and down, etc. Unless dualism is not been presupposed, an arrow cannot be realised. This dualism exists on the level of appearance and for any arrow to be operational there must be a beginning and end. Knowledge of arrow is possible because of change. An arrow always moves from the previous point to the subsequent point. The knowledge of any system is been extracted when it is moving. The knowledge of change depends upon the knowledge of dualism an in the absence of dualism no change is perceived.
- Change has an irreversible forklike behaviour. Arrow exists in a similar forklike or branching phase. It is from the roots to the branches and not the other way round that the information of the world is gathered.
- Irreversible change makes any system to expand and contract with time. Knowledge of any system is possible in the paradoxical expanding and contracting mode.
- Arrow always exists in an open system where small input will give high output.

### **2.3.2 Arrow of time: towards making sense of events and happenings**

A short consideration may help to elucidate clues taken from the notion of time's arrow for some of the findings of this study. Eddington, in the 1920s, points to the fact that humanity struggled to comprehend, two fundamental events since time immemorial: the birth of the universe and the emergence of life. Eddington claims that comprehensively, these events are

been better understood by means of a metaphor, the 'arrow of time' and he asserts in his *The Nature of the Physical World*, which was instrumental in popularising the phrase:

Let us draw an arrow arbitrarily. If as we follow the arrow we find more and more of the random element in the state of the world, then the arrow is pointing towards the future; if the random element decreases the arrow points towards the past. That is the only distinction known to physics. This follows at once if our fundamental contention is admitted that the introduction of randomness is the only thing, which cannot be undone. I shall use the phrase 'time's arrow' to express this one-way property of time, which has no analogue in space (1955:76).

Eddington then gives three points to note about this arrow (vide Chapter 2):

- It is vividly been recognised by consciousness.
- It is been equally insisted on by our reasoning faculty, which tells us that a reversal of the arrow would render the external world nonsensical.
- It makes no appearance in physical science except in the study of organization of a number of individuals.

Here, according to Eddington, the arrow indicates the direction of progressive increase of the random element. Following a lengthy argument into the nature of thermodynamics, Eddington concludes that as far as physics is concerned time's arrow is a property of entropy alone. He used it to use to distinguish a direction of time on a four-dimensional relativistic map of the world, which, according to Eddington, is been determined by a study of organisations of atoms, molecules, and bodies.

The events that we see in the universe are been classified into two categories: the reversible and the irreversible (Altekar 2006:1). Physical processes at the microscopic level are believed either be entirely or mostly time symmetric, meaning that the theoretical statements that describe them remain true if the direction of time is reversed. Yet when we describe things at the macroscopic level it often appears that, this is not the case: there is an obvious direction (or *flow*) of time. An arrow of time is anything that exhibits such time-asymmetry. The arrow of time is relevant to the latter than the former. It is along with the reversible-irreversible syndrome that a major light is been thrown on the notion of time's arrow.

The reversible events are those occurring regularly and repeatedly, the cycles of seasons, harvesting, pendulum swinging in a frictionless medium, the motion of earth and the moon, are some of the examples. The symmetry of time (T-symmetry) is been understood by a simple analogy: if time were perfectly symmetric then it would be possible to watch a movie taken of real events and everything that happens in the movie would seem realistic whether it was played forwards or backwards. A process is said to be reversible if and only if the system undergoing that process together with all parts of its environment are been affected,

can be restored reproducibly to their original states. In short, in the reversible process all relevant parts of the universe must be capable of been put back to how they were! Reversibility is an idealised concept. Time is not been considered to be an important ingredient in this system. The entire Newtonian Science is of this sort. Newton's laws, Maxwell's equations, Einstein's general relativity and even quantum mechanics- all remain effectively unaltered if we reverse the direction of time (Replace the 't' which represents time by '-t' ) (2006 :1). Even in life and the social sciences, time is not been considered as an important component in this system of knowledge.

Irreversibility is the negation of reversibility. It is a realistic notion. Moreover, it is the one-way time evolution of the system, giving rise to the non-repetitive, non-cyclic processes or events. The distinguishing features of time's arrow are as follows (Altekar 2006:5)

<b>Reversible Process</b>	<b>Irreversible Process</b>
1) Time is not an important element	1) Time plays a central role
2) Stability and order are vital	2) Instability and order are vital
3) System attains perfection at equilibrium	3) System collapses at equilibrium
4) Reversible system is a closed system	4) Irreversible system is an open system
5) Reversible process is static	5) Irreversible process is dynamic
6) Reversible process is cyclic and repetitive	6) Irreversible process is non-cyclic and non-repetitive
7) Small inputs would give small outputs; huge inputs would give huge outputs	7) Small inputs of change would bring about huge outputs of change.

The nature of knowledge in the context of an arrow of time illuminates that knowledge is always fallible as against infallible. Always it is subject to change and revision. Criteria or conditions of knowledge always undergo change and alteration. Therefore, such change points towards dynamic change, which is irreversible. The examples are, mixing milk in the coffee, transfer of heat from a hotter body to a cooler one, chemical changes, the state of turbulence and chaos, rhythms, non-equilibrium systems, metabolism' etc. Irreversibility is an open system in the sense that it interacts with its surrounding area and evolves simultaneously. There are two important properties of irreversibility (Altekar 2006: 2). One, when a system is far-from-equilibrium, irreversibility pushes that system onwards to evolve it as time passes by; two, the concept irreversibility has another dimension where it is been understood as a non-linear process meaning whenever a system changes into another form it never returns to its original state in the future. Hubble's law (the distance of a galaxy is proportional to its red shift) is an example of irreversible process (Gribben 2003: 592, 596). Another example, in chemistry the notion of irreversibility is very important especially when chemical changes occur, e.g., when a magnesium ribbon is burnt in the air, produces magnesium oxide along with large amount of heat and light; e.g. Magnesium + Oxygen =

Magnesium Oxide. The properties of magnesium oxide are altogether different from those of magnesium ribbon. This process is irreversible. Similarly, the phenomenon of life is the outcome of an irreversible process. Aging is irreversible in the sense that old man can never return to his own childhood days as time passes.

According to Popper (1969:15-17), knowledge always grows through falsifiability. Nevertheless, here falsifiability is of the nature of irreversibility. The arrow of time pinpoints towards the direction of increasing knowledge of events. Events for which we have information of their actual occurrence are in the past and not in the future. A world in which events occurred in the reverse order is been imagined, but a reversal to our sense of before - and- after would imply a state of mind in which we begin with maximum information of the occurrence of events and end with minimum information about the same occurrence of events. This is surely self-contradictory. Our relationship with nature and God is been understood in a completely new way with the arrow of time. Arrow of time shows how irreversible processes pose limitations on our knowledge of the world. We know reality in a multifarious way. One of the most important limits arrow of time imposes on the physical reality is that world cannot spontaneously be joined together because it has limitations to go backward in time. So synthesis of these scattered pieces are not been made merely at the physical and empirical level but which could be thought of at some higher epistemological level. Of course, this looks like a Kantian programme but the notion of irreversibility takes us beyond Kant's transcendental philosophy.

However, changes took place in scientific knowledge shifting from a rigid and irreversible arrow of time to the adjoining of processes of irreversibility and reversibility in our world. Scientific information of the universe has sufficiently made it clear that the long-term movements in the many universes are expanding and contracting while on the shorter term our universe is in an expansion phase after the Big Bang (Gribbin 2003:599-602). Similarly, human life is expanding and contracting, moving towards greater chaos and greater order simultaneously. Nothing exists outside the expansion and contraction mystery. Therefore, knowledge of discrete phenomena moving in the direction of chaos or order cannot give us a satisfactory answer to the problem of approximate knowledge of the whole of reality. The central difficulty is of how to move on the default line of expansion and contraction, chaos directed and order-directed experience. The notion of time's arrow operates in different and paradoxical ways in the both directions, for example a thermodynamic arrow functions from order to chaos, whereas, a bioorganic arrow functions from chaos to order. Moreover, different arrows of time function in a different and paradoxical way: thermodynamic arrows function from order to chaos, bioorganic arrows function from chaos to order, sociological arrows function time-asymmetric, psychological arrows function in an increasing memory direction, cosmological arrows function dynamic in expansion and electromagnetic arrows function in maintaining the principle of causality in the expanding mode.

## 2.4 Chaos in order and order in chaos

### 2.4.1 Chaos theory

The dawning realisation that much of the future is unknowable is been called the third revolutionary scientific development of the twentieth century, after relativity and quantum mechanics. The name 'chaos theory' comes from the fact that the systems described by the theory are apparently disordered while chaos theory is really about finding the underlying order in apparently random data.

In the Newtonian world, the basic processes of nature were been considered deterministic and reversible. Reversible processes do not register any specific direction of time – an arrow. Any moment in the past, present and future can be exactly like any other moment, processes thus on serve can either move backward or forward in time. This view of nature as an automatic machine or clockwork mechanism was considered as identical with order and reason and inspired confidence in the universality of the laws of nature (Gribben 2003:187). A change toward the multiple, the temporal and complex is occurring. The deterministic equations of classical are less and less adhered too. Scientists are moving away from a temporal view of classical science and increasingly realise the emergent role of randomness and irreversibility on all levels (Prigogine & Stengers 1984: xxvii).

The emphasis in everyday life on continuous chaotic changes of processes and structures contributes to feelings of uncertainty that are currently been experienced by human beings (Altner 1993:1). Incessant talk of the collapse of the certainties of modernity coupled with the realisation that reality is more chaotic and indefinite than the mechanistic and rigid law adhering theories of the past had described, exacerbate the experience of doubt and distrust of many 21<sup>st</sup> century people. An early pioneer of the chaos theory was Edward Lorenz whose interest in chaos came about accidentally through his work on weather prediction in 1961. Lorenz in been using a basic computer, a Royal McBee LGP-30 to run his weather simulation he wanted to see a sequence of data again and to save time he started the simulation in the middle of its course. By entering, a printout of the data enabled him to correspond in the middle of his simulation to conditions that are been calculated the previous time. The weather, to his surprise, predicted by the machine was completely different from the weather calculated before. Lorenz tracked this down to the computer printout. The printout rounded variables off to a 3-digit number, but the computer worked with 6-digit numbers. This difference is tiny and the consensus at the time would have been that it should have had practically no effect. However, Lorenz had discovered that small changes in initial conditions produced large changes in the long-term outcome. For a dynamical system to been classified as chaotic, most scientists will agree that it must have the following properties:

- it must be *sensitive to initial conditions*,
- it must be *topologically mixing*, and



- its *periodic orbits* must be *dense*.

'Sensitivity to initial conditions' means each point in such a system is been arbitrarily closely approximated by other points with significantly different future trajectories. Thus, an arbitrary small perturbation of the current trajectory may lead to significantly different future behaviour (Sneyers 1997:517ff) and chance has being qualified as sensitivity to initial conditions:

"...small errors or uncertainties in the initial conditions give rise to time-evolutions which are completely different (Jensen 1987:177).

Sensitivity to initial conditions is popularly known as the "butterfly effect", a notion named after the title of a paper given by Edward Lorenz in 1972 to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C. entitled *Predictability: Does the Flap of a Butterfly's Wings in Brazil set off a Tornado in Texas?* The flapping wing represents a small change in the initial condition of the system, which causes a chain of events leading to large-scale phenomena. Had the butterfly not flapped its wings, the trajectory of the system might have been vastly different.

*Topologically mixing* indicates the evolving of the system over time so that any given region or open set of its phase space will eventually overlap with any other given region. Here, 'mixing' literally means to correspond with everyday intuitive experience in which the mixing of coloured dyes or fluids is an example of a chaotic system (Li & Yorke 1975:985-992).

Furthermore, there is the uncertainty that the human brain's faculty of perception is been limited by its physiological constitution, which in turn has consequences for the brain's cognitive capabilities. Thus, the human cognitive apparatus proves to be a further obstacle in the attempt of understanding nature as a whole. The views above according to Altner (1993:1-2) amount to a crisis. Thus, the notions of reason and knowledge have become relative. Nature is indeed been proven to be history after all which in turn means that nature is an open process in time. The classical utopias have become uncertain and the mirage and the illusion that a final purpose in history can be realised have met their end. Thus, the metaphysical uncertainty, beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, has grown deeper and the mutually exclusive reductionist attempts of providing final justifications for the meaning of humankind and the natural cosmic world increased by the dozens.

#### **2.4.2 Closed systems glide toward equilibrium, stall out and stop there**

A closed system moves toward perfect organisation, control, equilibrium, sustainability and predictability, all of which are euphemisms for death and stagnation - or in systems language, the state of perfect maintainability and structure with no destabilising features. One of modernism's most balmy notions was that health and preservation were been found in predictability and sustainability and that order and chaos were mutually exclusive correlates. Even the most elementary use of systems observation (not to mention sexual reproduction) reveals just the opposite.

Dynamic reality is a bubbling cauldron of disorder, irreversible changes, disequilibrium, and instability. Open systems resist thermodynamic equilibrium. They demonstrate a dynamic openness to risk-taking exchange with their environments. It is only when organisms risk entropy, when systems risk the possibility of running down, falling apart, and crashing, that they become dynamic vehicles of God, human beings and natural worldly processes for world transformation. Energy connectors and life forces bring chaos before harmony. Every age must fix its rear-view mirror to fit its frame and angle of vision. A rule of thumb teaches postmodern people never to move without first looking over their shoulder at the past and of been located within a living tradition. Traditional theological concepts, symbols, and conceits far from obstructing a postmodern vision, provide the very models, myths, and metaphors in which such can be articulated (Lee 1987:24).

Tradition is not the inert burden modernism made it out to be. Backward looking and forward thinking can be 'mutualities' of motion. The rule of locomotion in systems theory is that the whole space-time processual structure needs to be in a vertical as well as horizontal relationship with its parts. Dynamic exchange with the environment is a constant in open systems been defined vertically as well as horizontally simultaneously. The interactive relationship of the whole with the environment (called by many the "S/E field" or systems/environment field) includes the system's establishment of a positive interrelationship of communication and trust between the internal parts or subsystems themselves. One of the most important of these vertical parts or subsystems is memory. Even the simplest system of chemical reaction has a form of a memory, when been bypassed, or blocked is happening at the peril of the organism.

## **2.5. Bohr, Heisenberg and the uncertainty principle**

Werner Heisenberg after meeting Niels Bohr, the founding father of quantum mechanics in the summer of 1922, went to Copenhagen in September 1924, been invited by Bohr to become his research associate, and later as his assistant (Gribben 2003:513-517). In 1925, Heisenberg laid down the basic principles of a complete quantum mechanics in a new matrix theory in which he replaced classical commuting variables with non-commuting ones.

Heisenberg approach marked a radical departure from previous attempts of solving atomic problems by making use of observable quantities only. In a letter of 1925, he wrote that his entire meagre efforts go toward killing off and suitably replacing the concept of the unobservable orbital paths. Heisenberg dealt with the mechanics of a one-dimensional vibrating system, a harmonic oscillator, rather than to struggle with the complexities of three-dimensional orbits. The result was *formulae* in which quantum numbers were been related to observable radiation frequencies and intensities. After Schrödinger showed the equivalence of the matrix and wave, versions of quantum mechanics, and Bohr presented a statistical interpretation of the wave function, Jordan in Göttingen and Paul Dirac in Cambridge,

England, created unified equations known as 'transformation theory.' (These formed the basis of what is now been regarded as *quantum mechanics* (aip.org/history/Heisenberg:4).

The task facing physicists was a search for the physical meaning of these equations in actual situations showing the nature of physical objects in terms of waves or particles, or both. As been later explained by Bohr events in tiny atoms are subject to quantum mechanics, yet people deal with larger objects in the laboratory, where the 'classical' physics of Newton prevails. What was been needed was an 'interpretation' of the Dirac-Jordan quantum equations that would allow physicists to connect observations in the everyday world of the laboratory with events and processes in the quantum world of the atom (Gribben 2003:519).

Heisenberg in studying the papers of Dirac and Jordan, while in frequent correspondence with Wolfgang Pauli, discovered a problem in the way one is been measuring basic physical variables that appear in the equations. His analysis showed that uncertainties, or imprecisions, always turned up if one tried to measure the position and the momentum of a particle at the same time. (Similar uncertainties occurred when measuring the energy and the time variables of the particle simultaneously). These uncertainties or imprecision's in the measurements were not the fault of the experimenter, said Heisenberg, they were inherent in quantum mechanics. Heisenberg presented his discovery and its consequences in a 14-page letter to Pauli in February 1927 (Heisenberg 1927:172-198). The letter evolved into a published paper in which Heisenberg presented to the world for the first time what became known as the uncertainty principle (2003:520-521). In March 1926, working in Bohr's institute, Heisenberg formulated the principle of uncertainty thereby laying the foundation of what has become known as the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics.

The term *Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics* was often been used interchangeably with and as synonymous for Heisenberg's *Uncertainty Principle* by detractors who believed in fate and determinism viewing the common features of the Bohr-Heisenberg theories as a threat. Within the widely but not universally accepted Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics (i.e., it was not accepted by Einstein or other physicists such as Alfred Lande), the uncertainty principle is taken to mean that on an elementary level, the physical universe does not exist in a deterministic form – but rather as a collection of probabilities, or potentials (2003:599). For example, the pattern (probability distribution) produced by millions of photons passing through a diffraction slit can be calculated using quantum mechanics, but the exact path of each photon cannot be predicted by *any known method* (aip.org/history/Heisenberg:4-5). The Copenhagen interpretation holds that the exact path of each photon is not been predicted by *any* method, not even with theoretical infinitely precise measurements. Einstein was questioning the latter interpretation when he said 'I cannot believe that God would choose to play dice with the universe.' Bohr, one of the authors of the Copenhagen interpretation responded, 'Einstein, don't tell God what to do.' Niels Bohr himself acknowledged that quantum mechanics and the uncertainty principle were

counter-intuitive when he stated, 'Anyone who is not shocked by quantum theory has not understood a single word.'

Heisenberg went a step further: he challenged the notion of simple causality in nature, that every determinate cause in nature is followed by the resulting effect. Translated into 'classical physics,' this had meant that the future motion of a particle could be exactly predicted, or 'determined,' from knowledge of its present position and momentum and all the forces acting upon it. The uncertainty principle denies this, Heisenberg declared, because one cannot know the precise position and momentum of a particle at a given instant, so its future cannot be determined. One cannot calculate the precise future motion of a particle, but only a range of possibilities for the future motion of the particle. (However, the probabilities of each motion, and the distribution of many particles following these motions, are calculated exactly from Schrödinger's wave equation).

The equations developed by Heisenberg, Schrödinger and their colleagues give a glimpse into the nature of reality, but that's not all. They are also essential tools of modern work in key areas of practical technology – including the electronics you are using to read this text. Thousands of physicists use the equations of quantum mechanics every day to understand and improve computer components, metals, lasers, the properties of chemicals, and on and on. Many important physical effects, from fluorescent lights to the shape of a snowflake, are not understood at all without quantum mechanics. Even the Uncertainty Principle is not 'merely' philosophy: it predicts real properties of electrons. Electrons jump at random from one energy state to another never reaching the next state except that their energy is made uncertain.

The uncertainty principle is sometimes connected to the "observer effect", wherein the observation of an event changes the event. The observer effect is an important effect in many fields, from electronics to psychology and social science. Following the optical paradigm used by Heisenberg in the 1920s, many (but not all) commentators have interpreted Heisenberg's original research to mean that every observation requires an energy exchange to create observed 'data' - an intervention that changes the energy (wave state) of the observed object. Although, in recent years, new technologies have made possible less invasive forms of observation, the uncertainty principle - as originally formulated and adapted – supports the conclusion that the act of measurement itself introduces an irreducible uncertainty in certain measurements.

Accepting Heisenberg's assumption of every concept having meaning only in terms of the experiments used of measuring it, one also agrees that things which are not been measured have no real meaning in physics. Thus, for instance, the path of a particle has no meaning beyond the precision with which it is been observed. A basic assumption of physics since Newton has been that a 'real world' exists independently of us, regardless of whether or not we observe it. The assumption is however been challenged by some philosophers.

Heisenberg assumption boils down to the argument that such concepts as orbits of electrons do not exist in nature unless and until we observe them.

I maintain that the Heisenberg uncertainty principle is applicable to the drawing of circles in space and time by the Spirit. In quantum physics, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle is a succinct statement of the 'uncertainty relation' between the position and the momentum (mass times velocity) of a subatomic particle, such as an electron (Gribben 2003:519). It has been related to the idea of wave-particle duality, which states that certain pairs of quantum properties, such as position and momentum, can never be defined at the same time since there is always a residue of uncertainty in the value of at least one of these properties. Heisenberg's realisation of the path of a particle having no meaning beyond the precision with which it is observed in the physicist's world has profound implications in other fields of experience as well for other sciences too. Many sense making approaches and God-human-nature views of our current world still not accepting 'the order in the chaos; chaos in the order' approach, though living of the technological fruits emerging from within the sphere of the application such an approach also do not make sense of the certainty within the uncertainty of circles and orbits of the 'uncertainty principle'.

## **2.6 Small and smaller micro particles and big and bigger macro entities**

In the social sciences Clifford Geertz has taught how small facts speak to large issues. Similarly, the *Annales* School of historiography has demonstrated how the history of anything can reveal everything. At the same time, in the physical sciences we have been learning from Archimedes' bathtub, Newton's apple, Watt's teapot, perhaps even Bohm's hologram and Mandelbrot's coastline that the more mundane and smaller and simpler are in inverse proportion to the bigger than the big of majestic proportions. The minute aspects of particle physics, with all its 'bifurcations,' 'time horizons,' 'strange attractions,' 'solitons' and 'vacuum bubble instantons' (perhaps the universe's most bizarre and lethal object) (Briggs and Peat 1989:31) raises the magnificence of cosmology. Even mathematician/historian/philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, who is too widely quoted for defining religion as "what one does with one's solitariness," develops and deepens this definition until it leads him to this: 'Religion is world-loyalty.'

Particle physics provides us with a few cues and phrases and serves as enhancement of the point I am making. Identity is an elementary story. There are three types of interactions affecting an elementary particle: electromagnetism, the strong force, or weak force (Moring 2002:206). The electron, the muon and the neutrino are not part of the strong interaction at all. They are involved with the weak interaction and are been put into a classification called leptons (2002:206). A lepton (the Greek word for small) is a particle that is involved with the weak interaction and at times with the electromagnetic. All charged particles are however been affected by electromagnetism.

All of the other particles discovered are involved one way or the other with strong interaction. These particles are been made up of hadrons. A hadron (in Greek indicating strong interactions) is any particle with strong interaction. Quarks are the building blocks of all hadrons (2002:209). However, they decay into a collection of stable particles – the proton, electron, photon and neutrino. Particles in which a proton appears in the end as processes of decay often appears as a cascade, similar to the ones created by cosmic rays entering our atmosphere and are called baryons. These two mentioned are universal constants (2002:207). Moreover, particles whose final collection is been made up entirely of leptons and photons (no protons) are called mesons. The point I am driving at is that such classification of particles is also applicable to our topic, underscoring my argument that the presences of God's Spirit and human beings are dealing with participatory circles of processes in the very small and the very big of the natural cosmic world. These classifications in the microcosmic puzzle of elementary particles are been identified as:

- Identification through interaction of leptons and hadrons.
- Identification by decay product: baryons and mesons.
- Identification through electrical charge of an isospin. Hereby particles are been defined by two quantities: their spin direction and their electrical charge. The combination of these two gives us a new quantity called isospin.
- Identification by internal dynamics: spin indicating the direction of rotation it has around its axis. It is been defined in terms of its angular momentum – described directionally by up, down, or sideways.
- Identification by speed of decay: strange versus non-strange; some particles takes longer than others to decay so this is another way to classify them. Strange particles decay in times on the order of  $10^{-10}$  second and non-strange particles decay in  $10^{-23}$  seconds (Moring 2002:208; Moltmann 1991:1-10).

My point is that we all, as beings, are subjected to the above. Jesus too in been kenotically incarnated in playingfield of God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. Apart from it, we are all participants in particle interaction. So we share from a physical point of view a standard model that contains: 18 quarks, 6 leptons and 12 gauge bosons (they carry or negotiate the four fundamental forces i.e. electromagnetism, gravity, the strong force and the weak force (Moring 2002:198-202)). All matter is composed of two basic groups of particles: leptons and quarks. Our consciousness of being, however, does not always realise it until our consciousness is so to speak telescopically been enlarged to the very big and microscopically enlarged in the other direction to the very small. The mystery of consciousness in which the threesome presence of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world comes together might be the medium by which God's information or presence is present in the human and natural environmental systems. This would be consonant with the notion that it is to human minds with the greatest noetical sphere of

consciousness that God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are able to make their most sensitive and articulate communication.

The twentieth-century successor to Isaac Newton in the Lucasian chair of mathematics at Cambridge, Stephen Hawking is been called the greatest mind alive today. He certainly may be the strongest mind in physics since the days Albert Einstein. In his 'best selling' and 'least read book', *A Brief History of Time* (1989), Hawking recounts the story of his hunting down of the singular law or at least set of fundamental laws that will relate everything to everything else - the law that unifies gravity, electromagnetism, and other forces ruling micro-and macrocosmic events. He believes that without that missing mathematical formula of a Theory of Everything, the 'design' of the universe is not been said to be 'divine.' The unity at the heart of the universe is now such an established part of the scientific quest that GUT's (grand unification theories, or grand-unified-field theories) and TOE's (theories of everything) have become 'the Holy Grail of today's physicists' – an analogy used by of Heinz R. Pagels (1985:264).

## **2.7 Wholesome radical, integral and differential approach**

Van Niekerk portrays in an integral and strong differential way that the notion of a human being as a multiversal being embodying a multimind is a considerable improvement on the modern reductionist attempts regarding time, space and human experience. A human being with his or her multi-mind 'interacting' with the natural environment and God expresses him or herself through different fields, modes and dimensions. The mystery of the 'interactive' intertwinement and difference of a human being with the natural surrounding environment and God, is been manifested in the oscillation, percolation and fusion taking place in human experience. In a mysterious way God, human beings and the natural environment can be regarded as co-existing, co-operating and co-acting in each other's worlds.

Van Niekerk points to the notions of a human being as a bodily-doing-being in the uni-, bi- and multi-being sense as a *computational bicameral but multiplex spherical matrix* (Van Niekerk 2006/7:96):

"In differential and integral philosophies and sciences the mind covering the bodily existence is conterminously and simultaneously viewed, as (i) a unitary uni-mind, the personality or ego-centre where the I-ness of the person is constantly shifting and turning, differentiating and integrating various (ii) bi-cameral facets, dimensions and organs of a human being as a bicameral being with left and a right spheres and dimensions and (iii) operationally through continuous changing emphases in a variety of fields, modes and dimensions of experience. By these shifting emphases are meant, an episodic and demarcated leading emphasis of a field, mode, dimension, organ or facet of experience while the less emphasised fields, dimensions, organs or facets of experience are drawn along under the leadership of the emphasised field or

facet. All fields, dimensions, organs or facets of experience are encapsulated in each other in a mysterious, highly complex way” (2006/7:96).

Van Niekerk points out that each of these fields as constructed discoveries had a turn in the modern era to be the constant limitless and timeless reductionist initiating agency and meaning-giver of all the other fields of experience (2006/7:90-91). Van Niekerk proposes the following fields, modes, domains, dimensions or facets of human experience as constructed discoveries of the modern era each of which in its heyday had a reductionist phase in which every other field or mode is been reduced to the reductionist operational ambience of the contingent absolute or sole meaning-provider of all the others:

Fields, modes and dimensions of experience			
Thinking/reasoning: thoughts & reasons	Feeling: emotions & feelings	Loving: love expressions & acts	Speaking/verbalising: words, terms & symbols
Apportioning: justness, justice, laws, rules & ordinances	Economising: supply/needs+ demand/capacities	Imagining/fantatising: imaginative creations, fantasies & artful expressions	Socialising: codes, modes & styles
Producing/performance: products & performances	Bio-organic evolving: cells, organisms & growths	Moving: movements & kinetics	Physico-processing: mass & gravitational processual energies
Chemicalising: chemical processes & energies	Entitising: things & entities	Spatio-coordinating: spatial constructs & coordinates	Informing: information & data
Empowering/managing: powers & strengths	Believing/faith: beliefs & certainties	Educating/training: skills & capacities	Etcetera

(Van Niekerk 2006/7:96)

Each of these fields of experience according to Van Niekerk (2006/7:97) is been encapsulated and intersected by the ancient distinctions of ‘mind and matter’, ‘spirit and physical nature’ or ‘spirit/soul and body’. In traditional dualist and modernist dual views of human beings, half of the fields, modes, dimensions and facets of experience belong to the ‘matter and physical nature or body part’ and half to the ‘mind or spiritual and soul part’ of a human being.

In the view presented ‘mind and matter’ or ‘soul/spirit and body’ cut through every field of experience of a human being. Van Niekerk (2006/7:69) asserts of faith, belief and trust - the so-called spiritual and soul facets of traditional views - as not having a higher and more important embracing position than thinking, feelings, producing, loving, speaking, physical-chemical energy, entitising entities or coordinating spatial experience. Similarly, the complex notion of time is been rerouted from the various modern reductionist treatments it has received in the past five hundred years and is brought into an integral and differential network in which seemingly contrasting dimensions of time may rather look for its particular garb and colour as a time dimension than play the role of being the decisive and determinative card in the pack of time dimensions.



Van Niekerk strongly emphasises the fact that a human is a living being bound up with the surrounding physical-organic environment like a fish in the water, similarly to Capra and Varela's bricolage of identities. However, Van Niekerk asserts that human beings do not consist of levels of spirit and nature, mind and matter. Making the traditional operational scheme of spirit and nature, mind and matter palatable in the differential sense he asserts that the notion of time is been manifested in each of the fields, modes or dimensions of experience in terms of the particular characteristics and colourful nature of a particular field of experience. Thinking experience as thought temporality cuts by way of speaking right through a human being from the head to the fingers in the act of typing a sentence like this now. In a similar sense, feeling, believing, chemicalising, loving and bio-organic evolving which is central to Varela's approach cut right through the whole human being in his or her situatedness as being intact with the natural surrounding environment every minute and every second (2006/7:96-100).

Furthermore, Van Niekerk asserts time comes differentially to expression in each of the fields, domains and dimensions of experience in terms of the colour features, field characteristics, modal attributes and dimensional dynamics of the particular field, mode or dimension. Physical time comes to expression in chemicalising processes, bio-evolving time comes to the fore in bio-evolving processes and time of faith and belief comes to expression in the experiential pattern 'faith is faith is faith is faith process which we have seen, consists of the repetitive pattern of 'I believe God and I believe myself in self-confidence and I believe other human beings and I believe my natural environmental neighbours (=animals, plants, things).

Such an integral and differential approach makes provision for time trajectories to move in multiple directions in different dimensions. Dimensions of time come to the fore in people's experience in linear, cyclical, pendulum, zigzag, swirling and meandering ways. In the discussion above we have seen that in Altekar's reductionist physicalist approach of an irreversible process of time's arrow, time plays a central role, is open and is dynamic. In so-called reversible processes time is not central, is closed and repetitive. Nevertheless, we have seen that in the bioorganic sphere, reversible time is central, open and dynamic.

In our faith reflexion differential modes of expressing time in the multidimensional complexity of the 'praesentia presences' of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are important tools of discussion. God's Spirit as the operational agent of the meandering Commonwealth of God, through and in God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment, embraces and links the irreversible arrow of time with the reversible bioorganic wholes, the ordered regularities with chaotic randomness, the uncertainty of positions with moving circles and orbits. Finally, the Spirit mysteriously correlates the smaller than small micro particles with the bigger than big macro cosmic entities.

# Chapter 3

## Twosomes, threesomes or foursomes

### 3.1 Whence the problem?

Earlier the thrust of this study was been referred to as revolving around the mystery of the connectedness and the difference of God, human beings and the natural world expressed in a multi-some Reality in its being there-ness, its being thus and thusness and its being actualness. This multi-some Reality operates as the constitutive and regulative principle throughout the study as *the kenotic permeation and touching by the Spirit of God of created reality comprising of human beings and the natural comic world*. This kenotic thrust is followed throughout this study as an attempt to answer the question as to where, when, what and how God as Spirit touches and permeates humanity and the physical-organic environment (= the world or the cosmos).

There have been many attempts to solve the problem of many centuries as to where, when, what and how God as Spirit touches and permeates humanity and the physical-organic environment (= the world or the cosmos) as God's creation. Many approaches in history attempted to solve the problem that revolves around the mystery of the simultaneity of the connection and the difference of God, humanity and physical-organic environment:

The first approach is that of the notion of an impersonal God that was view as the embracing cosmic power or the absolute permeation of God in reality.

The second approach revolves around the notion of a personal God, which emphasised the dynamic mobility and closeness to people as a higher elevated person.

The third notion is that of pantheism and panentheism which describes the same reality in the sense of Spinozian identity of *Deus sive natura* in which the natural world is been regarded from one perspective as God while in turn God is regarded as the natural world.

The fourth group of attempts revolves around the classic theological procedure to operate with tool pairs such as transcendence and immanence of God, God 'inside' and 'outside' created reality. These traditional views needed a unity of thought, belief, ontology or process to bring God's transcendence and immanence together. Precisely at this point is the linking of traditional tool pairs through analogy, correspondence and metaphorical bridging of the connection and difference of God with humanity and the natural world at a most acute level.

The fifth attempt emerged in 20<sup>th</sup> century in many versions of process theology and philosophy (Whitehead 1960). Theology before Hegel, process theologians and philosophers

assert, tried to effect a static reconciliation between the transcendence of God 'outside' of reality and the immanence of God at the 'inside' of reality. The sense making approach of Whitehead – after Hegel and in the same trajectory as Hegel – attempted a dynamic process of reconciliation of the transcendence and the immanence problem (Küng 1991:178). In the dynamic processual approach of Whitehead God is been ingrained in the process as Godself in the relational process.

The separation of the experience of the threesome each in a separate avenue emerged as a problem as been solved and for which solutions were provided from all quarters of the philosophical and theological world. All the traditional approaches mentioned above have a similar problem in which God, human beings and the natural world were distanced from each other as a first step of the particular approach. As a second step an analogical, corresponding, metaphorical and processual bridge is established between God, human beings and the natural world which can only be understood against the background of the basic sense making pattern of a particular approach (Van Niekerk 2006: 370).

“In a sense the struggle since the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century between 'theologists', 'anthropologists' and 'cosmologists' clouded the issue of the mystery of the at-one-ment and at-other-ment of God, human beings and the natural world. The pre-eventuated setting apart of God, human beings and nature necessitates the bringing together through a bridging operation and process of either a theologistic neo-orthodoxy, or an anthropocentric humanising, or a general cosmisation. In most cases, the handiest tool for the bridging operation has been the world of analogies and metaphors (anaphors). The irony is, what God has brought together, thus God self, the humanity and nature through the inauguration of the mysterious meanderings and moving processes of the Commonwealth of God in, through and with the 'grand acts' of creations reconciliation, renewal and consummation are revoked in a superseding way by tripartite reductionist processes of setting apart and then bridging the gaps through a person's favoured reductionist stance” (Van Niekerk 2006: 369).

In line with the main trajectory followed in this study, I want to take a few clues from the traditional approaches while simultaneously turning the traditional ground scheme on its head. In the patterns and processes of human experience God, human beings and the natural world are not only simultaneously connected and radically different but is continuously in action and in motion.

The mystery of the connectedness and the difference of God, human beings and the natural world is an expression of multi-some Reality which is simultaneously an expression of the notion of *kenotic permeation and touching by the Spirit of God in created reality which comprises human beings and the natural comic world*. This kenotic thrust is followed throughout this study as an attempt to answer the question as to where, when, what and how

God as Spirit touches and permeates humanity and the physical-organic environment (= the world or the cosmos).

### 3.2 Whitehead and the relationality of processes

Whitehead attempts to solve the mystery is to position God as the grounding antecedent for the whole process in which the ideal form of all 'entities' enter into the temporal world. Therefore, 'God' who is the ground antecedent to transition, must include all possibilities of physical value conceptually. God therefore is been grasped in processual reflection as 'dipolar' in nature. Whitehead attributed God with a 'primordial nature' and a 'consequent nature', as (in part) the result of an unpredictable process of becoming (1960:542). What is the meaning of this conceptual-ideal 'primordial nature' of God?

At the 'beginning', God is the 'unlimited conceptual' realisation of the absolute wealth of 'potentiality' (1960:521). Thus, God is not 'before' but 'with' all creation; in this respect, he is 'deficiently actual' and even devoid of consciousness (1960:521). The meaning of the physical-real 'consequent nature' of God is that God at the 'end' is 'the realisation of the actual world in the unity of his nature' (1960:542). The wealth of conceptual potentialities is realised in the world, but only incompletely, and this has repercussions on God himself. By the *creative act*, the world of ideas so to speak objectifies God. God is now determined, fully realised and conscious. Whitehead made a further analysis by delineating the '*consequent nature*' in metaphors of tender care by which nothing is lost, of considerate wisdom and infinite patience. God is thus seen as the 'poet of the world': he realises 'his vision of truth, beauty and goodness', patiently leaving an all-compassing reasonableness to have its effect and thus uniting in real harmony the real processes of the temporal world with his infinite original conception of the world (1960:524-26). God is thus a *changing God* and a God characterised by love, even a fellow sufferer who understands (1960:532).

For Whitehead, the authentic Christian understanding of God does not fit into the scheme of the three notions of the creative act, consequent nature and the changing nature of God mentioned above:

"It dwells upon the tender elements in the world, which slowly and in quietness operate by love; and it finds purpose in the present immediacy of a kingdom not of this world. Love neither rules, nor is it unmoved; also it is a little oblivious as to morals" (1960: 520-521).

Whitehead does think of God wholly in Hegelian terms as dialectical unity of permanence in flux and flux in permanence. What is at stake is the reciprocity between God and the world. Actuality in permanence as it characterises God's primordial nature, needs fulfilment in flowing. Thus, the profound unity of God and the world becomes apparent: The consequent nature of God in the fluent world becomes "everlasting" by its objective immortality in God. On the other hand, the objective immortality of actual occasions requires the primordial

permanence of God, whereby the creative advance ever re-establish itself endowed with initial subjective claim derived from the relevance of God to the evolving world” (1960: 527).

In terms of the simultaneous connectedness and difference of God, humanity and the physical-organic nature, Whitehead's approach delivers a whole number of problematic aspects. Apart from using the Old and New Testament selectively and on the other disregards conclusions of classical Christian theology on God, he oversimplifies in his thought the relationship between God and the world while humanity functions as an appendix to the primary relationship. This according to Küng (1991:180) amounts to a complete reciprocity between God and the world, which is highly problematic. I said earlier that there was and will be many attempts to solve the problem of many centuries as to where, when, what and how God as Spirit touches and permeates humanity and the natural cosmic world as God's creation and our reaction to it. Is the problem of God and the world as ultimate interchangeable factors eternally related to one another, actually solved by our reflective schemes? Is it in the end *just as true* that God is before the world as the *world is before God*? (1991:180).

The problem lies precisely in the 'just as true'. Berkhof (1986:152) states that Whitehead influenced the process of theology positively by starting to speak of a changing God. The attempt of process theology to answer and solve the mystery of the simultaneity of God, human existence and physical-organic environment is as follows: Causality without involvement is incompatible with love. Is this however not a reductionist answer? Further, why is love exclusively brought into vision? What about hope, imagination, and how difficult to utter, hate? Apart from the momentum given to the process of theology, it seems that the mystery of the simultaneous connection and difference of God, being human and the physical-organic environment has not successfully work through in the views of Whitehead.

Parallel with the philosophical and theological views of Whitehead, Teilhard de Chardin, groping to find his way, spoke about God being incomplete in the evolutionary process. For Teilhard, all physical and spiritual matter existed from the beginning in an embryonic state. There is only one creative act of God, which is still happening and will always continue to happen. There is no particular intervention by God because 'A creation, which is unthinkable without the hand of God in even the minutest phase of its course, needs no intervention' (Kopp 1964:42-43). Such a view reflects the concept of God exercising an all-pervading control of the world, in effect a constant state of intervention. Teilhard's position is a matter of faith rather than of science. Whilst he is a critic of the static worldview, and an advocate of a more dynamic view of the world, he contradicts this attitude by the adoption of a faith position essentially based on a static worldview. Teilhard resists any disjunction between the inorganic and the organic. For him, matter and spirit are but different aspects of the same cosmic stuff, and evolution is simply the progressive spiritualization of matter (Allison 1995:790). When the first Christians adopted a static worldview, they simply reflected a view

which was universal and which remained essentially unchallenged until the scientific revolution. There is an inherent contradiction in Teilhard maintaining a faith position based on such a static worldview whilst advocating cosmogenesis. As he (1974:18) himself says, the very concept of cosmogenesis is opposed to the ancient and medieval concept of a static cosmos. This faith position arose when Christianity adopted the Hebrew view of God's creative role, which the Hebrews had derived from Ancient Mesopotamia. This view, not only held that God created everything it also held that God governs the whole universe exercising an all-pervading control over everything (Kelly 1960:83). This all-pervading control over God made responsible for the Holocaust and the Gulags. It also initiates the problem of Evil. Chardin raised many questions among Roman Catholic theologians about the changeableness of God, especially in connection with the incarnation: "...he who is unchangeable in himself can himself become subject to change in something else" (Berkhof 1986:152).

### 3.3 Heidegger, Being and the everyday world

In attempting to answer the question, how God, human beings and the natural world are been connected and are different, we need to pause and reflect on the ontology of everyday existence. Reflexion on kenosis and identity invites one to work out the question of the sense of *being* and *identity* and to do so concretely. Heidegger (1889-1976) proposed a phenomenology of the everyday. The everyday is that which is closest to us, our natural, common, uncomplicated stance or comportment within the environment we find ourselves. Traditionally the everyday world is been degraded as vague or even illusory; at best, the raw material in need of been ordered into real knowledge, at worst an obstacle in the way of truth. In contrast, theory holds the key to the secrets of reality, through reason we can know that which is most essential, that which truly is.

Heidegger seems to start from the more moderate position, making the everyday the starting point for his investigation into the meaning of *Being*. We must start with the everyday because this is where we are. It is only possible in light of human beings who somehow understand in their own existence what 'being' means. The distinctive feature of human being's peculiar mode of being is the fact that we are not merely 'there', 'available', like a stone or a tree or a work of art: *Human beings exist*. That is to say, we project ourselves in freedom in virtue of our possibilities and thus realise our existence in the midst of the world and among other human beings (Heidegger 1968:353-392; Küng 1991:493). As Heidegger develops his phenomenology of the "where we are" called *Da-sein* (Being-there), it becomes apparent that our being-there-in-the-world has a complex structure. In order to avoid confusing Dasein with one aspect of this complexity Heidegger focused on *Dasein* in its most undifferentiated state, that is its everyday state. This helps clarify that which precedes, and makes possible, more definite modes of being such as theoretical thought (Heidegger 1977: 6). The rethinking of the troubled relation between everyday experience and theoretical

thought becomes then possible. How is 'being' understood by Heidegger? In German, Heidegger is distinguishing *Sein* (the verb-derived abstract noun corresponding to 'being' in English) from *Seiend*, the German gerund of the verb *sein* ('to be'). In English, however, the gerund of 'to be' is also 'being'. To preserve Heidegger's distinction, translators usually render '*Seiend*' as 'a being' or 'beings,' and occasionally as 'entity'. I reckon that *Seiend* can be read as 'to become'. Heidegger (1977:6) claims that *Being* determines existential beings in the process of understanding of the becoming of being. Heidegger is seeking to identify the criteria or conditions by which any specific entity can become at all in the process of the close linkage of the understanding of the becoming in being.

The argument runs therefore that should we grasp some definitions of 'being', we will somehow be able to clarify the 'meaning' or 'sense of being': by 'sense' Heidegger means that 'in terms of which something becomes intelligible as something' (1977:151). According to Heidegger, as this sense of being precedes any notions of which beings exist, it is pre-conceptual, non-propositional, and hence pre-scientific or pre-theoretical (1977:8-9 ; 1962:59; Hayward 2002: 4-5). Thus, in Heidegger's view, *fundamental* ontology would be an explanation of the understanding preceding any logic, theory, or specific ontology (1977:12).

At the same time, there is no access to being other than via beings themselves—the formulation of the question of being means asking about a being with regard to its being (1962:16). It can only be that being for whom the question of being is important, the being for whom being matters. As this answer already indicates, the being for whom being is a question is not a *what*, but a *who*. Because this type of explanation precedes logic, and because the way toward an understanding of being can only proceed by referring to particular beings, the method of pursuing being must inevitably, according to Heidegger, involve a kind of hermeneutic circle, that is, it involves interpretation (1977: 37).

Heidegger had initially distinguished between two kinds of being: being-in-itself of objects, and being-for-itself of the self-conscious subject (Heidegger 1967:149-168). A few more were later added by him, including being-in-the-world, being with others, and being-toward-death as encapsulated in language as the 'house of being' (Löwith 1995:39; Scruton 1997:232; Sheehan 1998:311-312). These are not mere features or properties of the things that possess them, but fundamental forms of reality. To pass from one mode of being to the next is as a vast and cataclysmic a change as the dialectical *Aufhebung* of the Hegelians, or the revolutionary epoch of Marx. Herewith he aimed to understand the ontological structure of being based on the hermeneutics of human existence through language.

The later Heidegger tried to understand the existence of human beings in terms of an understanding of the world through language as the 'house of being' (Löwith 1995:39). He has been concluding that daily conversation or speech generally serves as a transcendental prerequisite to the ontic-existential language, either as the spoken word, or even as a silence. Language has the function to articulate the *Dasein* in all of its interconnectedness

(Bakker 1964:181-183). Heidegger was not aiming at a psychological description of human life but existential phenomenological interpretation (Bakker 1964:141-153; Bril 1986:295) is been directed through the medium of language at the special mode of human existence: temporality of existence (Löwith 1995:38; Küng 1991:493).

Macquarrie (1990:62ff.) has summarized Heidegger's approach in a convenient three-fold manner:

(1) *Facticity* stresses my stark individualism. I was not just "thrown" into the world; I am and have to go. I am already a fact and never get to start from the beginning. Being-in-the-world is an individual existence among the things of the world – it is one's own Being as *Dasein*. 'World' indicates for Heidegger a dynamic set of relations (Heidegger 1996:114), ultimately ordered to human possibilities, which leads to meaning or significance to the things one deal with – as in the phrase of 'the world of the artist' or 'the world of the builder' (Bakker 1964:167 – 173; Sheehan 1998:311).

(2) *Depersonalization* is the form of a threat issuing from being-in the world with-others. Simultaneously I am also a being-in-the-world with others and must not regard them as mere objects. (By this reasoning, he aims to penetrate the subject-object scheme). As soon as I see others as objects, things, the crowd, the 'they' or the 'public', I succumb to the threat of depersonalization. Heidegger's radical individualism is been seen against the background of a world depersonalised by industrialization and totalitarian states (Ashcraft 1972: 27). The cue to answer the 'Who' question Heidegger finds in the fundamental involvement of the *Dasein* with the 'other' (Heidegger 1996:129). *Dasein* is to experience *Mitsein* together with the world's *Mitwelt* (Bakker 1964:176-178).

(3) *Fallenness* is the kind of inauthentic existence in which man/woman has lost him/herself in the world or even the other (Heidegger 1996:21). Human beings are repeatedly tempted to 'fall' into the world, are tranquillised so no sensitivity exists to the demands of existential living, and in becoming so alienated from themselves, entangling with the self occurs.

Death is an important concept in both Heidegger and Bultmann's (1972:28) reflections. The concern is not with the general concern of death, but rather the existential understanding of one's own death. Death is not simply the end: death is that being-in-the-world-no-more. If I confront the possibility of death, I sense the meaning of isolation resulting from been cut off from the world and others. Yet, despite a human being's dread, transistorizes, guilt, finitude, the nothingness of the world, and the reality of death, the individual must resolutely push onward to authentic existence. In other words, the individual's life is oriented from the standpoint of his/her consciousness of death, which is an indication of temporality and finitude. Death indicates in my understanding thereof the closeness of systems or the absolution of the finite by denying interdependence and interaction of the threesome of God...human beings...and the cosmic world. At every moment of my present existence, I am been determined by the past and the probable future. This is the basic structure of human



existence. As hinted above, resoluteness, time, historicity, temporality and finitude play roles in the consciousness of human beings (Küng 1991:494; Sahakian 1968:352; Scruton 1997:232-234). This is experienced in one's present immediate presence and being.

One of the important results of Heidegger's discussion of being-towards-death is that only I as a person can face my own death. That is why Heidegger emphasised from early on the 'mineness' character of the *Dasein*. Ultimately authenticity is about becoming-a-self, it is about facing ones own most possibilities, it is about tearing oneself away from the 'they' in order to find oneself. He points out that *Dasein* is alongside other entities in a way different from, say, a chair. While a chair may be propped up against a wall, the chair strictly speaking, does not touch the wall. The chair does not encounter the wall (1962:55). This is because the chair lacks a knowing or understanding relation to the wall. *Dasein* in contrast always encounters its world, *Dasein* cannot escape the world, it is being-in-the-world and as such, it is world-hooded. *Dasein* is essentially 'there' in the world. It is only a *Da-sein*, a being that *is* in its 'there', for which the world can become disclosed and so encounterable. Being-towards-death thus individualizes *Dasein*, and so makes *Dasein* ready for authenticity. Authentic being-a-self must be achieved out of ones own resources; anything else would be to concede one's responsibility to others and so be lost once more in the 'they'.

Another way to put it is to say the *Dasein* is the origin of all time experiences and is as such the qualitative axis around which our past, present and future revolves. The fundamental forms of reality are in such a way informed, directed and negotiated within an experiential framework of time. In Heidegger's words:

"The existential and ontological constitution of the totality of *Dasein* is grounded in temporality. Accordingly, a primordial mode of temporalising of ecstatic temporality itself must make the ecstatic project of being in general possible. How is this mode of temporalising of temporality to be interpreted? Is there a way leading from primordial *time* to the meaning of *being*? Does *time* itself reveal itself as the horizon of *being*?" (1977:437).

However, time in a primordial, that is time in a practical sense, is always the time of something or time for something. We are involved in the world, in projects, and these swallow up time; for example, we open doors without explicitly giving time to it. The present emerges not out of itself but as time we must act or not act and as a finite being, we are always being-towards-death. Being itself is an issue for us. Similarly, the past through tradition is been transmitted to us, or rejected by us. In the Heideggerian sense of the word, we are thrown into a given time period determining our choices. One cannot choose to be a genuine Samurai warrior in the twenty first century. In various ways, time is usually been referred to as temporality whether it is Aristotle's view of a simplistic past, present and future scheme or other ways in which time appears as a thought out complexity.

### **3.4 Heidegger: the-being-thereness of existence in the everyday world**

Underlying the Heideggerian enterprise is the posed question what can be called the question of 'being' which has 'ontological priority' over all other questions. One's existence is at stake in the question. The answer is only been found by existing in another way. The question confronting us revolves around the following comment. People of our age after Darwin, Marx and Heidegger, knowing the evils of discrimination in various forms and witnessing the opening of the space age and the cloning of animals are in the broadest sense of the word widely open for a new understanding of being and becoming without the personal and societal 'sins' of subterfuge, hypocrisy or anachronism. This new understanding of being and becoming enable people of our age to respond with integrity and diversification to a transcendent and concerned reality (God), themselves as human beings and their everyday orienting of in their physical-organic life-worlds.

A rich diversity of meanings confronts us in our everyday experiences. Hayward relates the example of the Dutch philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd buying cigars:

"I walk into a store to buy a box of cigars. If a jurist were watching, as a jurist, he would notice the rights and duties of buyer and seller. An aesthician will pay attention rather to the style of the activity, the gestures of the figures, perhaps the cut of their clothes and the interior design of the store. An economist will be interested primarily in the price and value of the cigars. A sociologist is concerned especially with the mores of those in the shop, the customs of greetings and politesse, the neighbourhood. A linguist might focus on the talk, its slang, correct speech forms, or inflections of dialect. An off-duty psychologist happening in would detect the emotions involved, the buyer's desire for a good smoke and the wish of the seller to please his customer. Although a physicist and mathematician do not usually examine the sale of cigars in their laboratory, such professionals could study the quantitative side of this business transaction, matters of inertia, velocity, size and number; after all, Dooyeweerd's buying cigars also falls into the realm of statistics" (2002:22).

Dooyeweerd operating from a different sense making approach than Heidegger understood reality to be a complexity of meaning. Dooyeweerd however has deliberately emphasised a variety of special scientific viewpoints people could adopt in the interpretation of any phenomenon. Not only do entities exist within a referential framework, as with Heidegger, but basic modes of meaning depend and relate to each other in a coherence of references (1984:55). Dooyeweerd writes that

"Every aspect of experience expresses within its modal structure the entire temporal order and connection of all the aspects", and so all of the modes of experience, in

spite of their mutual irreducibility - are interrelated in an unbreakable coherence of meaning" (1984:3-60)

Implication hereof is modes of meaning do not exist in themselves, instead they are only to be thought of in connection with actual beings, in this way Dooyeweerd rejected all ideas of substances or things in themselves that somehow stand behind everyday experience (Friessen 2006:2).

Heidegger came to a somewhat similar conclusion, yet by an independent train of thought that an analysis of the everyday also shows us that reality confronts us as something holding together in a complexity of inter-relations. Although he never claims to offer a complete or systematic analysis of the everyday, he speaks loosely of 'modes of being' as 'all the structures of being of *Dasein*' (1977: 114); however, he never asks what these modes are or how they might relate to each other. Despite his explicit attention to the problem of the multiplicity and unity of being, and his sensitivity to the complexity of our everyday experience, in the end Heidegger's search for the Being of beings leads him beyond to an essential world stripped of significance and meaning. Being is ultimately an inhospitable place for *Dasein* and its projects. Pure being is been known through the mood of anxiety, shaking us out of our everyday involvement in the world. This being is actually not that different from the being of rational metaphysics. It is a world with no care for our projects, an essential world behind our more familiar one revealing our concerns as arbitrary and contingent. This is the ambivalence of the everyday, which at one point gives us our critical advantage over rational metaphysics while ending up in a traditional role of superficially, vaguely covering and obscuring the deeper truth of being. While Heidegger's project concerning the question of being certainly helped him break with the dominance of an epistemological stance while reaching a more subtle understanding of the richness and complexity of our world, its emphasis on a hidden unity behind the everyday ultimately destroys both the coherence and the diversity of the different modes of reality.

What is behind Heidegger's endeavours? In reflecting on being itself, Heidegger has planned to overcome traditional metaphysics as represented throughout the centuries from Plato onward which had maintained the separation between the physical-sensible and the metaphysical/supra-sensible worlds (Küng 1991:495; Hayward 2002:6). Considering only the being of the individual been existing in relation to being, the resulting into being itself as been forgotten. In such a way, the history of being is been regarded as a history of the forgetting of being. However, to think of being itself demands a new mode of thinking, contemplative instead of calculating thinking. Moreover, to think 'objectively' of being itself means to think of it in its difference from the existent and to think of the existent in its difference from being (Heidegger 1957:59).

In conclusion, Heidegger's philosophical reflection continually revolves around language as an expression of the richness of human experience (Jens 1977:149-153). For Heidegger the

whole area of language comprises of more than the informative statements of interest to philosophers (modern subjectivity metaphysics), but also of language that has reference to commands, wishes and intercession (1962:162). He invites us to notice the social character of language writing that 'Being-with' is explicitly shared in discourse' (1977:162). Heidegger is aware of the way non-linguistic elements are bound up with, and shape language in the intonation, modulation and the tempo of talk which makes up the 'way of speaking' (1962:162). His discussion of hearing opens up the phenomenon beyond the physical, biological, and sensitive modes which makes hearing possible, to its rich functioning as part of *Dasein* – to be understood as being-in-the-world. Against empiricist reduction to sense impression, Heidegger argues that 'initially' we never hear noises and complexes of sound, but the creaking wagon, the motorcycle; we hear the column on the march, the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, the crackling fire (1977:163). We do not hear pure noise except with deliberate effort, because *Dasein* is always being-in-the-world together with inner worldly things.

Heidegger viewed God as the supreme Existent, upholding reality. In light of our discussion thus far, it must be assumed that human beings accept in principle their own existence and reality as a whole. Therefore uncertain reality and particular ones own uncertain existence is not regarded *a-priori* as meaningless, on the contrary, this reality despite its uncertainty, is in principle meaningful, valuable, and actual. Thus, fundamental trust is been brought to reality. Even for someone who accepts through basic trust the reality of the world and human beings, the complete uncertainty of reality persists in its ontic, noetical and ethical aspects (Küng 1977:71). Trust in uncertain reality does not eliminate its radical uncertainty. Moreover, this is here that the question of God arises: reality, which can justify a basic trust, seems itself to be mysteriously unsubstantiated, sustaining through itself is not been sustained but evolving without aim. Reality is there as a fact, yet remains enigmatic, without any manifest ground, support or purpose. Uncertain reality is itself not God because the self, society and the world cannot be identified with 'being' itself. Negotiated, in view of the uncertainty of human beings it indicates a hypothetical answer serving in principle as a probable solution. Today less than ever one has to assume that people know what they mean by God (Kaufman 2004:6, 8-11). First, of all, we have no alternative but to start out from a preliminary notion of God. The preliminary notion of God is what people commonly understand by God but express in different ways: the mysterious and unshakeable ground of what is a meaningful life; the centre and depth of human beings, of human fellowship, of reality as a whole, the final, supreme authority on which everything depends; the opposite, beyond our control, source of our responsibility. However, in viewing God we simply cannot avoid a decision for or against reality. Küng (1977:74-75) argues that such decision is tied up with basic trust. In and through trust one remains completely open to reality as it is experienced and while one ventures to apply oneself and give oneself up, meaningfulness is unlocked. At the same time, despite all uncertainty, an ultimate rationality of one's own

reason is experienced in which light, confidence in reason, appears not as irrational but rationally substantiated.

### **3.5 The mystery expressed in twosomes, threesomes and foursomes?**

The all-embracing commitment to the mystery of the simultaneous connectedness and difference of God, being human and the natural cosmic world is been expressed in various ways. Earlier was seen that Van Niekerk expresses this mystery fore mostly in a foursome way. On the one hand he describes the mystery as been expressed in terms of a foursome awareness of being created (*being thereness*), being reconciled in the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ (*being thus and thusness*), being renewed through the Spirit (*being active and actualness*) and being involved in the processes and events of consummation and fulfilment (*being wheretoness*) (Van Niekerk 2006:371-373). On the other hand, Van Niekerk's description of the mystery finds its expression in every field, mode and dimension of experience. Love as active and embodied love experience leads an interactional pattern of love ranging from the pointer of love for God to that of love for one self, and from the pointer of love for the other human being to love for the physical-organic environment leads in an episode in time and context in space. Similarly, the foursome pointer pattern of God, one self, other human beings and the physical-natural environment takes turns to roll and evolve through believing (faith), thinking, feeling, apportioning justness, loving, imagining, verbalising, etc. as interactional series and patterns expressive of the mystery (Van Niekerk 2006:368-371; 2006/7:42f).

The views of the 20<sup>th</sup> Neo-orthodox Swiss theologian Karl Barth contain a partial element of truth. Barth has approached the mystery of the simultaneity of connectedness and difference of God, human beings and the natural world as a problem which is been solved through the establishment of a bridging initiative from God's side to human beings through analogies of reality, possibility and act (Van Niekerk 1984:208). The partial element of truth of his basic assumption is that two movements are to be detected, the one initiated by God, and the other from human beings back to God. Barth mainly emphasises the relationship between God and human beings while de-emphasising the natural cosmic world as not as important as the partners God and human beings of the main relationship. Both (God and human beings) are as present and as each other's counterpart (Moltmann 1992:289).

Barth's analogical relationship between God and human beings is a theological construction as an archetypical and prototypical, that is a constitutive and regulative revelation in the midst of history in Jesus Christ as the revelation of God compounded in a threesome analogical way of an analogy of faith, analogy of reason and an analogy of actuality (activity) (Van Niekerk 1984:208-211). Van Niekerk demonstrates that these threesome analogies of reality, possibility and act function operationally as the regulative and constitutive, the archetypical and prototypical criteria that Barth uses throughout his theological treatises. He

asserts that the various aspects of Barth's overall idea of analogy must be borne in mind throughout the many volumes of his Church Dogmatics:

"Factuality is followed by rationality, which must have factuality as its presupposition; and both rationality and factuality can only be disclosed in combination in terms of actuality. Perception without its concomitant, conception is blind; conception without prior perception, vacuous; and perception and conception without the dynamic act to disclose them are static. And to Barth static in-actuality is more or less the archetypal sin of all unbelief and pseudotheology." (Van Niekerk 1984:226)

Barth acquires in his unwrapping of his own assumption of the centrality of God's act of revelation in the midst of history in Jesus Christ through a threesome of analogical bridges between God and human beings God's full revelation and concretisation in God's grand act of reconciliation. Barth, similarly as many others in the history of Christianity, is one-sided with his emphasis on the grand act of God's reconciliation in Jesus Christ. Van Niekerk (2006:371) asserts that the mystery of the connectedness and difference of God, being human and the physical-organic world is embedded in God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation in the meandering process of the Commonwealth (Kingdom) of God from beginning to end:

"Few modern people have the experiential awareness of the intrinsic embeddedness of their humanness and the physical-organic environment in God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation. The grand acts of God are rendered unworkable and impractical as sense making power and energy pointers in people's daily life-world by either viewing them as incarcerated doctrines in churches or by only focusing on one of the grand acts in their daily lives."

In the sense of a pneumacentric axial and spherical movement terms, are employed throughout this study in polyphonic coherences and relations consisting of triadic complexes of terms such as content, form and event, or the being-thereness (*Dasein*), being thus-and-thusness (*Sosein*) and the actuality-ness (*Aktsein*) of the union of these three attributes of reality. Alternate terms of description are perception, conception and verbalisation, or, even as the Barthian triadic operational scheme of factuality, rationality and actuality (Van Niekerk 1984:42).

### **3.5.1 The threesome of Dasein, Sosein and Aktsein**

The thrust of the thesis circles around the *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* of the touch, permeation and emptying of God Spirit in creation which consists of human beings and the physical-organic reality (= galaxies, planets, animals, things, etc.). Reflexive clues and vestiges built into the triadic scheme of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* have been reflectively gathered from my personal meandering history of experiences and from experiences of communities where the Spirit of God has been playing the role of the embracer, penetrator,

toucher, permeator and emptier of God in the most ordinary of ordinary contexts of experience. Clues and vestiges of the triadic scheme have grown out my encountering of philosophers and theologians in modern history, especially Heidegger, Jaspers, Hartmann and Barth.

The following is a table of the triadic operational thrust of the study:

<b>Dasein</b>	<b>Factuality</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Being there-ness</b>	<b>Conception</b>
<b>Sosein</b>	<b>Rationality</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Being thus and thus-ness</b>	<b>Perception</b>
<b>Aktsein</b>	<b>Actuality</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Actual-ness</b>	<b>Word</b>

In the 18-hundreds, *Dasein* is been viewed as in opposition to the realisation of reality while been caused by influences outside reality. Realisation of reality is been understood as independent of thought and as been standing on its own feet. I create reality – *Dasein* – in my mind, projecting it on the plane of reality. Reality becomes a product of my mind. No place has been entertained to the linkage of our consciousness and human beings’ final destination or meaning of life. Adding to that, the notion of *Dasein* is been further understood as just an unforeseeable, non-computational notion of a possible realised future. Rationalism developed this route further in the sense that the unpredictable could be a possibility by power of understanding and of existence. In contrast, the inclination of the philosophy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century especially that of Heidegger was rather to focus on human existence as such. Therefore, the questions and answers of the being of human beings regarding the meaning and significance of their concrete everyday dynamic and living existence are been embedded and embodied in their concrete everyday existence. The tautology of the questions and answers about everyday existence been given in the being there-ness of the everyday existence called the tune of the majority of existentialist inclined philosophies.

General and universal understanding of the humanity of human beings was not a theme anymore. Some exponents of such understanding of *Dasein* were K Jaspers and M Heidegger. K Jaspers (1958) uses *Dasein* to signify existence in the ordinary sense, and reserves *Existenz* for the authentic mode of human existence. In contrast, Heidegger (1927) uses *Dasein* as a technical term for one kind of existence: the manner in which human individuals exist. The central distinguishing characteristic of existence is that it belongs only to those entities whose being is ‘an issue’ for them. The existence of individuals is of a different kind. The existence of the many distinctive features of *Dasein* is at the core of Heidegger’s philosophy.

Nicolai Hartmann (1935) in turn made a fundamental distinction, not between existence and essence, but between *Dasein* and *Sosein*. Everything that *is* has both the character of *Dasein* and *Sosein*. Something *is* and *is in a certain way*. Ideality as well as reality have existence (*Dasein*) and have *Sosein* of this *Dasein*. In making the simple discriminations,

Hartmann opposes both those who maintained that we could only recognise the *Sosein*, and never the *Dasein* (Kant), and those who maintain that we know the *Dasein* while the *Sosein* is unapproachable. (*Sosein* in scholastic sense implied/denoted that the essence of being is in direct contrast to *Dasein*, being. It is a thus-and-thusness, perception or form). For Hartmann, *Dasein* and *Sosein* though been separated belong together and are relative to each other. He illustrated his position with the example that Socrates lived, and that he had a *Dasein* while he was a *Sosein* of the population of Athens. The *Dasein* of the population of Athens is one moment of the *Sosein* of Greece and so on. Each *Dasein* is a *Sosein* of something else. Nevertheless, this series ends with the *Dasein* of the universe. The *Dasein* of the universe is not the *Sosein* of anything else. Abandoning his early adherence to idealism, Hartmann propounded instead a philosophical realism based on the intelligibility of being. For Hartmann, ontology was the source of philosophy. He saw philosophy's mission as the statement of the problems of being and the unravelling of the irrational and the puzzling. Although a nontheist humanist, Hartmann sees spirit is the specifically human in the human being, in contrast to the individual's other material, organic and conscious or psychic aspects. The common limitation of the essence of man to the rational, in his view, overlooks the active side of spiritual life manifesting itself in man's willing, acting and reacting, loving and hating, and in knowing, thinking and reflecting (Werkmeister 1990:157).

He posited three levels of the spirit, which he considered a process rather than a substance (Kelly 2000:3). Hartmann also shows that individual humans grow into a common spiritual sphere consisting of more than the sum of the individual members of which it comprises of is a sphere of historical or objective spirit. This is the sphere of human culture. This second form of spirit, objective spirit, has a history. It is the spirit of a living group, a community or nation, which exists and vanishes with the group. This common spiritual sphere is the fundamental basis of a human culture. Spirit, in Hartmann's view, exists in its accomplishments. It is continuously seeking and finding new ways of expressing itself, and is always creative and in process. (1990:159-60). He held the world to be a unity, but said that one would not be justified in calling that unity God.

### **3.5.2 Edmund Husserl and the threesome of *Aktsein*, *Sosein* and *Dasein***

The notion of intentionality played a central role also in Husserlian phenomenology. Applying his method of the phenomenological reduction, however, Husserl addresses the problem of directedness by introducing the notion of '*noema*,' which plays a role similar to Frege's notion of 'sense.' Husserl, however, regards *Akt* as an intentional episode or experience which while flowing forth from the innermost self is also directed at the negating processes of contradiction (Husserl: 1901). In broader sense, *Akt* is been regarded as spiritual and psychological progress, expressed as improvement or re-thinking or act of will, or our emotional actions. A German philosopher, student of Brentano and teacher of Heidegger, Husserl pursued the development of phenomenology as a pure investigation into the nature and content of consciousness in *Logische Untersuchungen (Logical Investigations)* (1901-



13) vol. 1 and vol. 2. This pursuit requires that we 'bracket' our natural beliefs in order to understand their structural sources. Husserl described his methods of *Pure Phenomenology, Its Method and Its Field of Investigation* (1917), in his inaugural lecture at the University of Freiburg.

Husserl made it clear in *Meditations Cartésiennes (Cartesian Meditations)* (1931) that only the transcendental self remains both the agent and the object of phenomenological study. An emergent behaviour (*Aktsein*) or emergent property (*Dasein*) can appear (*Sosein*) when a simple number of entities or agents operate in an environment, forming behaviours that are more complex as a collective. Among human beings event shapes of *Dasein*, *Sosein*, and *Aktsein* are detectable by our senses of smelling, tasting, feeling, hearing and seeing various complexities of behaviour. If emergence, generally speaking, happens over disparate size scales, then the reason is usually a causal relation across different scales. In other words there is often a form of top-down feedback in systems with emergent properties, it could however also be down-to-top. These two trajectories are the major factors why emergent behaviours occur through intricate causal relations across different scales and their feedback into the relations. The property itself is often unpredictable and unprecedented, and may represent a new level of the system's evolution. The complex behaviour or properties are not properties of any single such entity, nor can they easily be predicted or deduced from behaviour in the lower-level entities: they are irreducible. No physical property of an individual molecule of air would lead one to think that a large collection of them will transmit sound. The shape and behaviour of a flock of birds or shoal of fish are also good examples. One reason why emergent behaviour is hard to predict is that the number of interactions between components of a system increases combinatorial with the number of components, thus potentially allowing for many new and subtle types of behaviour to emerge. For example, the possible interactions between groups of molecules grows enormously with the number of molecules such that it is impossible for a computer to even count the number of arrangements for a system as small as 20 molecules.

### **3.5.3 Clues from existential phenomenology**

My consensual negotiatory conclusion regarding Heidegger, Husserl and Jaspers produced certain clues. I understand the following from the ambit of a pneumacentric and pneumadirected approach of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein*. From the perspective of Pentecost as affirmation, vindication and validation of the Resurrection and Crucifixion and Creation and the Future of the new heaven and the new earth an awareness of creation, reconciliation, resurrection, renewal, and fulfilment is a reciprocal informative and directional process in a consensual negotiation of *Dasein*, *Sosein*, and *Aktsein*, and vice versa. Therefore, a process of emergence is inherent to my theoretical approach. Emergence is been understood as referring to the way complex systems and patterns arise out of a multiplicity of relative simple interactions, not only indicating a dynamic process but also demarcating the field in which common characteristics emerge. These are:

- radical novelty (features not previously observed in systems);
- coherence or correlation (meaning integrated wholes that maintain themselves over period of time);
- a global or macro 'level' (i.e. there is some property of 'wholeness');
- it is the product of a dynamical process (it evolves); and
- it is 'ostensive' – it can be 'perceived' (Corning 2002:18-30).

On the one hand, a pneumacentric and pneumadirected experiential pattern and encapsulation of <God...human beings...natural cosmic world> guides in a consensual negotiating way, the notions of kenosis and identity in their being there-ness, being thus and thusness and eventualising actuality (*Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein*). On the other hand a pneumacentric and pneumadirected experiential pattern is directed in inter-, intra-, trans-, meta-, and cyber-subjective interactional relationships of God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmos. Such relationships exist in time and space and have an influence on God and us, and I reason that it does not only influence the beginning but also the end, not only creation but also the fulfilling consummation (eschaton) of the future.

# CHAPTER 4

## Reflection on threesomes and twosomes

### 4.1 Reflection on threesomes (and twosomes) in history

Seemingly, the habit to divide almost everything into three lies deeply buried in the structure and sense making of the human consciousness. In ancient Indo-European societies, it was the custom to describe the whole of society by distinguishing three functions, those of warrior, orator and labourer. Even Immanuel Kant thought that all of philosophy could be summarised in three questions: What can we know? What may we hope? What must we do? (Kenny1997:181-192).

In the Christian tradition, it has become commonplace to view God as manifesting himself in three persons: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. The tri-partite division is been found in anthropology: the body, soul and spirit. It seems then a division into three offers an instrument of analysis and of synthesis at the same time. As known, Western history is generally been divided into three epochs: the Antique World, the Middle Ages and the Modern World (Raedts 2000:1).

Christophorus Cellarius (1638–1707) who lived at the end of the seventeenth century applied the viewpoint of the Leyden Church historian Georgius Horn (1627–1670) who saw the fall of the Roman Empire and the beginning of the Reformation as the two most crucial events in church history (Mertens 1992:46). Celarius distinguished three historical periods that he, for the first time, gave the now familiar names of Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Modern Age although it seems to be already present in the writings and documents of the fourteenth century scholars such as Petrarch and Boccaccio (Oosthuizen 1972:9; Schaeffer 1990).

Renaissance humanists seemingly were instrumental in the classical formulation of the periodisation of Ancient, Middle and Modern eras. They displayed great admiration for the Greek-Roman cultural achievements, but had an aversion toward the culture of the so-called “Dark Ages” in which Christendom had fallen. They saw themselves as heralds of the new era in which the glory of Western society are been restored. The humanists deeply believed that, with their zeal for the restoration of classical Latin, they had forever left behind the middle period by restoring the glory of ancient Rome.

Point in case is the crowning of Petrarch as poet-laureate in Rome on the Capitol on Easter Sunday 1341, twelve hundred years after the last coronation of a poet had taken place. With this grand gesture, classical literature was resurrected (Mertens 1992:32-33). A similar pattern is been identified in the mindset of the Reformers who divided Western society also into three epochs. Whereas the above thinkers were culturally motivated, the leading thought

of motivation with the Reformers was religious in nature. The Reformers regarded the Middle Ages as rotten due to the dark times of primitive superstition and that they stood on the threshold of a new era.

#### **4.1.1 Joachim of Fiore**

There was and will always be attempts to fuse and solidify the movement of time, and in broader sense to identify the Logos or the Spirit with specific periods in history. One such effort was been done by Joachim of Fiore's historical periodisation of salvation history, and his eschatological vision of its perfection shaped the Western interpretation of history, particularly in its modern form. Joachim of Fiore, also known as Joachim of Flora and in Italian Gioacchino da Fiore (c.1135–March 30, 1202), was the founder of the monastic order of San Giovanni in Fiore (now Jure Vetere). He was a mystic, a theologian and an esoterist. His followers are been called Joachimites.

Michael Grosso (1995:42-47) argues that Joachim of Fiore had a major impact on the philosophy of History. By converting the static theological idea of the Trinity into a developmental pattern of spiritual evolution, a dry scholastic symbol became a tool for predicting the course of history. In effect, Joachim historised the Trinity, inventing a system of thought that would grip the prophetic imagination of the West and lay the groundwork for the secular ideas of progress, evolution and revolution (1995:44). The modern faith in progress grew up from the messianic form Joachim gave to history (1995:40-59).

Born in Calabria, some time about 1135, from what we would call a middle class family today, he acted as an official in the court of the Norman kings of Sicily where he had a spiritual conversion, and went off on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, a mysterious time about which we know little. When he returned to Calabria, he lived as a hermit for a number of years before eventually joining the Cistercian Order (McGinn 2006:1).

Like many 12<sup>th</sup> century monks, Joachim was fundamentally a scriptural commentator. History has it when he was trying to understand and write a commentary on the Book of Revelation, the Apocalypse, it seem like a daunting task. Nevertheless, while studying the doctrine of the trinity he had a vision "in which the fullness of the Apocalypse and the complete agreement of the Old and New Testaments [were] perceived with a clear understanding by the mind's eye" (Eusebius in Grosso 1995:43). By means of studying the hidden harmonies of the two Testaments, Joachim thought he saw a third historical epoch still been unfolding (Gonzales 1984:306). The Trinity became an image of time, of progressive movement. Within the doctrine of the Trinity, he saw the pattern of history itself. Thus, the progress involved development from the age of the Father to the age of the Son. The first age was been based on the age of the Father, the second on the incarnate Son. There tradition stopped. A third age was yet to come: the age of the Holy Spirit. This altogether new epoch proceeded out of the first two stages, integrating yet transcending them (Reeves 1976:1-8). The first, lasting

from Adam to Jesus, lasted forty-two generations. Joachim then reasoned that since God loves order and symmetry, the era of the Son is been lasting the same number of years. At thirty years per generation, Joachim calculated the date the era of the Spirit would start in 1260. The monks who are more spiritual than other people will be the heralds of the new age. This sense-making scheme had implications since herewith Joachim launched a full-scale attack on Western patriarchy (Grosso 1995:44).

The first two stages, the Old and New Testament, had Christ as the pivot between them (Grosso 1995:43). Joachim's scheme of the Holy Trinity is been translated as follows:

<b><i>Father</i></b>	<b><i>Son</i></b>	<b><i>Holy Spirit</i></b>
Law	Grace	greater grace
Knowledge	authority of wisdom	perfect understanding
Chains of slave	service of son	Freedom
Exasperation	Action	Contemplation
Fear	Faith	Love
Bondage	Freedom	Friendship
Childhood	Youth	Maturity
Starlight	Moonlight	Daylight

As already said, it does seem that the three persons of the Trinity represent three stages in the progress of history proper, but also in the history-faith development. According to this scheme, the course of history is been directed to move from an age of fear to an age of faith. Thus, the first moment in the evolution of divine consciousness, the age of the Father, is fear; in the age of the Son it is been replaced by faith; while the third age, or Third Testament, gives rise by faith to a higher stage of history and is characterized by love.

Joachim was been brought into disrepute by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) under Innocent III. The Fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215 condemned some of his ideas about the nature of the Trinity, but without taking any action. Finally, Pope Alexander IV condemned his writings and those of his follower, Gerardo of Borgo San Donnino. In 1263, a commission was set up which eventually declared his theories heretical. His theories inspired also subsequent heresies like Dulcinians and Brethren of the Free Spirit and had an influence on Lessing. Ever since G Lessing, 'modern times' have been viewed as the fulfilment of the 'third kingdom of the Spirit' which history had prepared and heralded. A new sense of life and nature, of the world and God was been promulgated. This was the emotional thrust behind the Enlightenment (Küng 1991:132). It knew itself to be the goal of history and the revelation and solution of history's riddle. In this sense, Lessing wrote in *The Education of the Human Race*:

“Perhaps their ‘Three Ages of the World’ were not so empty a speculation after all, and assuredly they had no contemptible views when they taught that the New Covenant must become as much antiquated as the Old has been. There remained among them too the same economy of the same God. Ever, to let them speak my words, ever the self-same plan of the education of the race. Only they were premature. Only they believed that they could make their contemporaries who had scarcely outgrown their childhood, without enlightenment, without preparation, all at once men worthy of their Third Age. Moreover, it was just this, which made them enthusiasts. The enthusiast often casts true glances into the future, but for this future, he cannot wait. He wishes that this future be accelerated, and accelerated through him” (Lessing in Moltmann 1992:296).

What Lessing does here is to connect creation (the coming of the Third Age) to redemption (education of the race) which brings about renewal (of the status quo) and hence fulfilment of time. From a philosophical point of view this indicates a total different understanding of our scheme and Moltmann suggests that (1992:296) Lessing misunderstood Joachim. The argument, contra Lessing, runs along the lines of temporal concepts of anticipation and abrogation regarding the Trinitarian concept of appropriation to which Joachim adhered. In short, his reasoning was that history was a process with a goal, a self-transcending process. There was a developmental pattern, destined by divine decree to evolve. The three ages or divisions are aspects or stages of one process - the unfolding of the spirit, and they exhibit Joachim’s law of spiritual development.

Another way to view time or (cultural) history from a Western perspective is to differentiate between Greek Roman, Judeo-Christian and the Humanist-technological beliefs. Van der Walt (2000:9) even describes the worldviews in Africa as pre-colonial (until ca. 1800); the colonial period (until ca. 1960); and the postcolonial era (from more or less 1960) – and that is according to him solely applicable to the past century (sic).

Toffler (1981:338-358) in turn suggests an agricultural, industrialised and techno-civilisation as keys of entry in history. Our key to various historical epochs is the God-world-life view of various people about periods such as antiquity and modern times. Therefore, when someone emphasises the idea of a worldview as the sole access avenue of making sense of reality the omission of the input of human beings and the age-old question about the involvement of God in people’s lives and their worlds forces such an approach in the direction of reductionism. The point in case is that almost throughout all of history a triad seems to surface. Whatever names one chooses to describe realities as handy markers; it remains difficult at times to make sense of the specific characteristics of each era. Suffice to these identifications or naming is a way describing the form of awareness and of identity (Küng 1977:77; Vollenhoven 1961:1-34). Diversity is been encountered with a seemingly unified idea ruling the dogma of the day.

Tripartite segmentation as been unavoidable highlights my argument. Religious views are been set in threes. The number three comprises the deity. It takes three heavens to comprise heaven – Paul talks about someone (presumably himself) being “caught up to the third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:1-4). It seems that it takes three to get to heaven – two or more people, plus God (“where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst,” Matt.18:20). In addition, it takes three to get married – a man and a woman, plus God.

According to the theology of Augustine of Hippo, it takes three to complete the ‘incarnations’ of God – in the words of Scripture, in the humanity of Jesus, in the action of the sacrament. Bonaventure, a thirteenth-century Franciscan, has been expounding in his rules for the acquisition of knowledge, a need for ‘three eyes’ of seeing God: the eye of flesh (by which we perceive the external world), the eye of reason (by which we attain the knowledge of the internal world of philosophy and mind), and the eye of contemplation (by which we attain knowledge of the transcendent world) (Wilber 1980: 216-220).

Three historical ages complete the process of history, according to Joachim of Fiore (Age of the Father, Age of the Son, Age of the Spirit) and Giambattista Vico (the divine, the heroic, and the human). Three scales of time are needed to encompass history in the historiography of French economist/historian Ferdinand Braudel – ‘geographical time’ (in which events occur over the course of aeons), ‘social time’ (shorter spans of time for measuring economies, states, and civilizations), and ‘individual time’ (the shortest span of all, the history of human events). Ernest Gellner (1988) in *Plough, Sword and Book: The Structure of Human History* argues three discontinuous stages of human history (hunting/gathering or agriculture/scientific industrial) are discernable for the historian/anthropologist/philosopher to explore as three basic types of human activity – production, coercion, and cognition.

#### **4.1.2 Modernity**

Modern philosophers are not been excluded from the tri-partite club. It takes three to define time – past, present, future – and if J.B. Priestley is correct, it takes three differentiations to conceptualise Time: Time 1 (chronological time), Time 2 (intermediate or pliant time), Time 3 (our true time – overlapping with the future) (Priestley 1964: 292-308). It takes three ‘sub universes’ to form the universe in the thought of philosopher/lecturer Karl Popper and Penrose’s – World 1 (the physical world), World 2 (the mental world), World 3 (the cultural world).(Penrose 1999: 93-100; Popper 1972).

A tripartite tendency is been found among modern scientists too. Three levels of consciousness, according to Freeman J. Dyson, accommodate the increasing diversity and knowledge of the world – the first level of consciousness present in each particle as it makes ‘quantum choices,’ the second level of consciousness present in human creation, the third level of consciousness present in God (1988). Three distinct ‘arrows of time’ to conceive of

time, one based on Big Bang expansion, the second based on entropy, and the last arrow based on biological and historical evolution. It looks like it may even take triplets of subprotonic particles (quarks) to constitute the fundamental matter of the universe. Just because Jesus is according to the book of Hebrews (13:8), the same yesterday, today, and forever does not mean he does the same thing in the same way yesterday, today, and forever. Each of us is comprised of sixty trillion cells. Physiologically speaking there is constant movement and re-formation, with 98 percent of the 10<sup>~</sup> atoms of the human body replaced annually. Each part of the body – bone, blood, brain – has a different rate of re-formation. However, every five years there is an entirely new body, all our atoms are been replaced. In a theological sense, our present body is the same as it was five years ago. Nevertheless, in a physiological sense, our present body did not exist at all five years ago. Energy matter is been dispersed through space-time in ways we have yet to comprehend (Murchie 1978:32; Dossey 1982: 78-81). Although one can form the opinion that a tripartite division of reality is an almost cosmological given, it is far from it; instead it operates as markers in our sense making strategies. Overlapping, mixing and irruption of one epoch into the other occurs on regular and irregular basis. Bril writes:

“Binne een tijdstroming vind men een verscheidenheid van typen of denktradities; bijvoorbeeld materialisme, vitalisme, en spinozisme. Zo stond bijvoorbeeld Einstein in een spinozistische traditie. Deze typen ondergaan in een volgend tijdstroming een transformasie. Dijkwels weet men, in een nieuwe ‘tijdgeest’ toch in een oude traditie te staan” (1986:1).

## **4.2 Reflexion on twosomes (and threesomes) in history**

The God-human life-natural-worldviews of modern people are more intricate and complex than the traditional threesomes that have been developing in history. The propagation of different realities into threesomes seemingly presents us with a myriad of fissures in God-humanlife-naturalworld views which are been expressed as twosomes or binaries. On the one hand the implication is that the what is been regarded as reality goes beyond our everyday and philosophical reflexive schemes. On the other hand, the reality of ordinary life is been viewed differently from that of religious experience (Eliade 1959:50-59; Berger 1973:34). Hence, picking one facet from within the complexity of fissures as an absolutised and reductionist perspective necessitates a revolt from other facets and fissures:

“What is real can be encountered in wholly different ways and consequently can also bear a wholly different character...Obviously there is not simply ‘reality’ but very different planes of reality. But this means we cannot and may not absolutes one particular aspect of reality for then the other aspects will revolt” (Weischedel 1973:343-344).



In all phrases, phases, stages, planes, aspects and differentiations of premodern history the notion of reality been divided into a threesome played a role. We have seen that strong divisional schemes of a triadic nature is been concluded at the expense of a human being's understanding and sense making of God's mysterious involvement and the dynamics thereof within one's life (Strauss 1978:100-107). Out of necessity dual notions such as mind and matter, faith and reason, and unity and truth of reality are of importance in the modern discussion:

“The obsolescence of the theological unity of reality expressed in Aristotelian terms certainly does not settle the question of unity and truth, the salvation and the meaning of the whole. Only does it cease to be a traditional postulate and become an open question that keeps time and the progress of human history in suspense, continually provokes new answers and makes all answers obsolete and temporary. Truth and the salvation of the whole are understood in the form of an open question. As long the question is open and still is recognised everywhere as a question, science remain science. Kant justifiably declared that ‘a religion which, without hesitation, declares war on reason will not, in the long run, be able to hold out against it’. Yet it became evident that even reason, in its enlightening victory over what it called faith, could not hold out alone, but developed highly unreasonable forms of naïve credibility” (Moltmann 1968: 207).

The statement by Moltmann forces us to ponder how the question of unity and truth is been answered. In correspondence to the latter question, despite the multiple dimensionality of reality, the unity of the various dimensions is not to be overlooked (Smolin 1995:295). How is a solution for problems and the meaning and value of life, cosmology, society and of the world been found and understood? These questions are obviously been connected to the rolling triad of God...human beings...and the physical-organic cosmos. Perhaps, it is more than ever true in our time and age that one becomes a part-time philosopher/theologian or scientist or rather by preference a full time philosopher/theologian and scientist. Between these stances, a critic-dialogic collaboration will be in need of the one world and humanity as a dual problem complex. As the theologian lives by the ‘functioning’ of mathematics and of natural sciences, so the mathematician or natural scientist live in practice by the reality that makes possible and sustains the world in its phenomena.

#### **4.2.1 Earlier history**

A short survey of the emergence of dualities and twosomes will contribute to thrust of the thesis. Reason connected to science and faith to theology was one of the most interesting yet complex dual relationships in the early Christian world and the middle Ages.

Jewish thinkers such Maimonides and Muslim scholars such Averroës while introducing and defending Aristotle wanted to separate pure philosophy and reason from theological

arguments and belief as delivered by Farabi, Avicenna and Ghazali, amongst others (Hoekstra 1934:118).

Van Niekerk asserts that the turn around to Aristotle came about by Muslim-Arabic scholars:

“After a millennium in which neo-Platonic schemes determined the majority of sense making ambiances in Western and Eastern societies and Aristotle’s views had a lesser influence on the broad Christian movements after Christ, a neo-Aristotelian trend emerged in the 900s (AD/CE) which comprised mainly out of Muslim philosophers and theologians brought Aristotle’s works onto the scene.

- Farabi of Bagdad, who was primarily a Muslim Neoplatonist made Aristotle’s logic known to Muslims of his day.
- Avicenna, a Persian-Muslim philosopher-physician, emphasised Aristotle’s views but he mixed Neoplatonism into his cosmology and epistemology. His works played an immense role in Christian scholasticism of the 1100s and 1200s, especially the influence of his Aristotelian views on Thomas Aquinas.
- However, the Muslim-Persian Ghazali was a vintage theologian with Neoplatonic influences who opposed philosophers in general, especially Aristotle. He was the father of Muslim mysticism and has influenced orthodox Islam for centuries.
- Averroës, who was a brilliant Aristotelian commentator, excellently rebutted Ghazali’s collection of 20 false philosophical problems. Averroës’ Aristotelian commentaries attempted, first, to recover ‘pure’ Aristotelian philosophy; second, to cleanse Islamic philosophy of Neoplatonic views (although he actually demonstrates some Neoplatonic elements in his philosophy); and third, to separate pure philosophy from the theological arguments delivered by Farabi, Avicenna and Ghazali, amongst others.” (Van Niekerk 2006/7:223).

Thomas Aquinas in the 13<sup>th</sup> century attempted to reconcile Catholic theology with Aristotle’s philosophy. He was concerned with illumination the relationship of between faith and reason (Castagnetto 1993:87). The twosome scheme of reason and faith seems to be a ground motive in the development of human cultural history (Dooyeweerd 1979:50; Van der Walt 1986:156-164; 2000:128). Against the divisions of earlier history in which reality been structured in threesomes, modern twosomes and dualities emerged in the work of thinkers such as Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza. Admittedly, the twosomes of thinking and being, mind and matter, soul and body, faith and reason, practical and theoretical, and philosophy and theology were throughout history part of the discussion and debates of various societies. What follows is a summary of some constructions and sense making patterns of twosomes in early Christian reflection.

Early Christian thought and reflexion are been assigned to more or less the period 200-500 A.D. or Common Era. Three thinkers from North Africa are scrutinised. Clement of Alexandria

(d.212 CE) answered in the affirmative to the question of whether truth is been arrived at separately from faith – through knowledge ‘deeper’ faith. An antithesis is been noted in his reasoning. According to him both Greek philosophical thought and the Old Testament are vestibules of the New Testament. Here the idea of *praeparatio evangelica* is detected (Van der Walt 1986:160). The gospel only brings to fruition or actualises what is already present in a person. Therefore, a Christian does need to hesitate to make use of that what is true and genuine in heathenish systems. The task of pagan science is to guide the believer to a deeper understanding of Scripture. Reasonable knowledge of the Christian faith is necessary for the following reasons: to explain Christian teachings, to battle heresies within the church, to refute attacks from the outside and to convert the unbelievers with reasonable arguments. Therefore, the ‘normal’ believer believes in an almost childlike sense; the perfected believer developed with aid of Greek philosophical categories from *pistis* to deeper Gnostic knowledge.

Tertullian (150-223 CE.), one of the first ‘Pentecostal’ thinkers especially in his Montanist years, was almost the total opposite of Clement. The expression “What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem?” is well known. Reason stands next to faith – there is no common ground between them. Taljaard (in Van der Walt 1986:145) mentions that nowhere in the writings of Tertullian the words ‘*Credo quia absurdum est*’ is found, and yet they are ascribed to him in history. Apparently, the statement has its origin in the statement: ‘*Credibile est, quia ineptum est*’, the more original statement. Thus, philosophy and heresy is almost synonymous to him. He was not interested in building a bridge between the two so-called approaches.

Augustine had another solution to the problem. In his younger years not strongly aware of the dichotomy, in his later years became more aware of the antitheses between worldly wisdom and divine revelation. Great emphasis is been placed on faith in the sense that wisdom (knowledge of God) is obtained through faith. Both philosophy and religion have the same quests, namely truth, but the former is inferior to the latter in this pursuit. With reference to Isaiah 7:9b (Latin: ‘*Nisi credideritis, non intellegitis*’), he taught that no one can come to true knowledge without faith. Apart from the words uttered: ‘*Credo ut intelligas*’ he phrases dialectically the opposite: ‘*Intelligo ut credas*’. If I understand Augustine correctly, he places faith above reason, or nature under grace.

#### **4.2.2 The Middle Ages**

A short excursion of the Middle Ages (500-1400 CE.) is our next aim. One can broadly say the Patristic era emphasised belief as a primary, while the Middle Ages is characterised by the growing awareness of the importance and function of reason. Two fundamental problems predominated in this period, persisting both in the Platonic period (CE. 529-1200), and in the Aristotelian period (CE. 1200-1453) (Sahakian 1968:93-94). These two problems were: (1) the problem of universals as objective realities, (2) the problem of logical proofs for the

existence of God. Van der Walt (1986:163) summarised the Middle Ages with three key phrases: coherence, coherence and difference, and difference between belief and reason.

Scotus, Anselm and Abelard are been considered as proponents of the coherence theme. The main question they explored was whether the same person can simultaneously believe the same issue and know it. The question was whether reason could a meaningful role in issues of faith and belief. Each of them confirmed the problematic of the duality of faith and reason in their own way.

#### 4.2.2.1 John Duns Scotus

John Duns Scotus was born in Scotland, probably in the village of Maxton (now Littledean), in 1265 or 1266. In 1308, Scotus was in Cologne as lector in the Franciscan Scholasticate, and there on November 8 of the same year he died (Stokes 2005:53). Although Duns Scotus was a scholastic realist (as opposed to a nominalist) in that he treated universals as real, he did not accept the Thomist distinction between existence and essence (Walter 1968: 85). Duns Scotus followed Aristotle in asserting that the subject matter of metaphysics is 'being *qua* being' (*ens inquantum ens*). Consequently, according to Scotus, prime matter can exist as been separate from the form. Furthermore, there is no real distinction between essence and existence. Matter, then, is a constitutive element of every being, even of the separate forms, such as angels, in whom spiritual matter is present.

Three modes of knowing are been maintained by Scotus. First, there are principles known in themselves of which we would say that they are *a-priori*. Second, there is knowledge of our own actions and third, there are things known immediately of our own actions (Stokes 2005: 55). More profound is the difference between Thomas Aquinas and Scotus regarding the principle of individuation. Thomas had affirmed that the reason for the contraction of the form to the individual depends upon "materia quantitate signata". Scotus does not accept this solution, but observes that quantity is an accident, that therefore in Thomas' system individuality is been reduced to the level of an accident (*Lectura* I 39, d. 12, q. un., n. 55, translated by Spade 1994). Thus, according to the 'Subtle Doctor', individuality is been derived from the form, which is the basis of being. Scotus calls this new imitative perfection, which comes to the species (forma) and which indicates the passage from specific difference to individual determination, "there are things known by our own actions" or "thisness" (*Ordinatio* 2, d. 3, pars 1, q. 1-6, especially pars 1, q.2G. translated by King 1987). The ultimate reality of the form (and hence of the entire composite) is towards real existence. For the apprehension of individuals, an intuitive cognition is required, which gives us the present existence or the non-existence of an individual, as opposed to abstract cognition. Thus the human soul, in its separated state from the body, will be capable of knowing the spiritual intuitively (Walter 1968:125). Scotus does not accept the Augustinian notion of illumination. Instead, he holds that intellectual cognition takes its origin from sensation through the

process of abstraction (Scotus 2006:1). He distinguishes, however, between the *proper* object of the intellect and its *de facto* object. The proper object of this faculty is 'being' – the entire field of being without restriction (*'ens in quantum ens'*) – through which the intellect can know immaterial essences, even without the aid of sensations. In the field of fact (Scotus' *'obiectum de facto'*) or in actual conditions and as a consequence of original sin, what move the intellect are only those things that are presented to sensation (*'quidditas rei sensibilis'*). The passage between sensation and intellectual cognition (ideas, concepts) is abstraction as speculation.

Thomas Aquinas reasoned that abstraction consists in an act on the part of the active intellect, which illuminates the phantasm (sense image). However, for Scotus the universal concept is the result of causality by which the phantasm itself supplies the physical universal. The intellect, determined in a certain causal way by the physical universal, gives it intentional being – or in other words, makes it a real concept predicable of many (Spade 1997: 98). From this mutual causality comes the logical universal which exists in the intellect; the objectivity of this logical universal is founded upon the physical universal that exists in individuals outside the mind. Scotus, led by his doctrine that prime matter has a complete essence, separate and distinct from that of form, admits that in every individual there is a multiplicity of forms. In man, there would be the form of the body and that of the soul, and the unity of the person would result from this: that the form of the body is coordinated with that of the soul. The soul is complete in itself and hence can exist even without the body; and granted, as we have said, that the proportionate object of the intellect is *'ens in quantum ens,'* the human soul can know the essences of things even when the soul is separated from the body.

Thus, in Scotus we find a resurgence of the Augustinian doctrine that there is no clear distinction between reason and faith, and that reason needs the assistance of faith in many of the conclusions that for Thomas Aquinas are simply rational truths. Let us note that the voluntarism of Scotus does not destroy the principle of contradiction but holds that God is free to choose any alternative only in the field of the contingent and provided the opposite is not contradictory; the will of God is therefore not bound to one side more securely than to the other. (Thus, for example, it would not be contradictory for fire to have a different action, so that it would not burn.) The absolute truths, which are over and above the field of contingency, and whose opposite would be contradictory, do not depend upon the will of God but upon His essence; such truths are always valid, and their opposite is certainly false – for example, the statement 'Being is.'

#### **4.2.2.2 Anselm of Canterbury**

Anselm of Canterbury (CE. 1033-1109) was born at Aosta (1033), entered the monastery of Bec in Normandy (1060), succeeded Lanfranc as Abbot (1078), and as Archbishop of Canterbury (1093). He died in 1109. He left a great number of writings, the most important of

which are: the *Dialogus de grammatico*, the *Monologium de divinitatis essentia sive Exemplum de ratione fidei*, the *Proslogium sive Fides quaerens intellectum*, the *De veritate*, the *De fide trinitatis*, and the *Cur Deus Homo?* (Spade 1997:77).

Anselm holds that faith precedes all reflection and all discussion concerning religious things, epitomised by the credo *Credo ut intelligam* and *fides quaerens intellectum*). For a Christian faith is not merely the starting point. A Christian is also not aiming to *depart* from faith but to remain in it as the fixed rule and goal of thought. Thus, faith is the beginning, the middle, and the end of all philosophy. Anselm accepted herewith Augustine's proposed view that faith is the only basis for belief, epitomised by the credo '*Credo ut intelligam*' (*Proslogion I*) and '*fides quaerens intellectum*' in *Monologium* (Hopkins 1972:38). The implication hereof is that faith is been accepted as the absolute standard for rational thought. The church herewith procures its position as the so-called custodian of the truth, a position strengthened by its acceptance of the assertion that truth is been revealed directly by God. Reason is been inverted; it became religious reason. The point he made was one must have a conception of God before he or she can believe that God exists. The statement 'Faith comes from hearing' means that faith comes from what the mind apprehends or conceives through hearing, not in the sense that the mind's conception alone produces faith in man, but in the sense that there can be no faith without some conception (Hopkins 1972:39). Although Anselm was been criticised for his novel and extreme appeal to reason in religious matters, his was the way of the future. Later Scholastic scholars came more and more to view theology not simply as 'matter of wisdom' but as a scientific discipline.

The unbelievers, he says, strive to understand because they do not believe; we, on the contrary, strive to understand because we believe. They and we have the same object in view; but inasmuch as they do not believe, they cannot arrive at their goal, which is to understand the dogma. The unbeliever will never understand. In religion faith acts the part been played by experience in the understanding of the things of this world. Hence, we do not reflect in order that we may believe, on the contrary, we believe in order that we may arrive at knowledge. A Christian ought never to doubt the beliefs and teachings of the Holy Catholic Church. All he can do is to strive, as humbly as possible, to understand her teachings by believing them, to love them, and resolutely to observe them in his daily life. Should he succeed in understanding the Christian doctrine, let him render thanks to God, the source of all intelligence! In case he fails, that is no reason why he should obstinately attack the dogma, but a reason why he should bow his head in worship.

He is a typical scholastic doctor and a fine exponent of the alliance between reason and faith, which forms the characteristic trait of mediaeval philosophy. He assumes, *a priori*, that revelation and reason are in perfect accord. These two manifestations of the same Supreme Intelligence cannot possibly contradict each other. Hence, his point of view is diametrically opposed to the *credo quia absurdum*. Moreover, he too is been besieged by doubt. Indeed, the extreme ardour which impels him to search everywhere for arguments favourable to the

dogma, is a confession on his part that the dogma needs support, that it is debatable, that it lacks self-evidence, the criterion of truth. His chief concern, even as a monk, was to find a simple and conclusive argument in support of the existence of God and of all the doctrines of the Church concerning the Supreme Being. Mere affirmation did not satisfy him; he demanded proofs or necessary reasons for the truths of faith (Spade 1997:76-76).

Everything that exists, he says, has its cause, and this cause may be one or many. If it is one, then we have what we are looking for: God, the unitary being to whom all other beings owe their origin. If it is manifold, there are three possibilities:

- (1) The manifold may depend on unity as its cause; or
- (2) Each thing composing the manifold may be self-caused; or
- (3) Each thing may owe its existence to all the other things.

The first case is identical with the hypothesis that everything proceeds from a single cause; for to depend on several causes, all of which depend on a single cause, means to depend on this single cause.

In the second case, we must assume that there is a power, force, or faculty of self-existence, common to all the particular causes assumed by the hypothesis, a power in which all participate and are been comprised. Nevertheless, that would give us what we had in the first case, an absolute unitary cause.

The third supposition, which makes each of the 'first causes' depend on all the rest, is absurd; for we cannot hold that a thing has for its cause and condition of existence a thing of which it is itself the cause and condition. Hence we are compelled to believe in a being which is the cause of every existing thing, without being caused by anything itself, and which for that very reason is infinitely more perfect than anything else: it is the most real (*ens realissimum*), most powerful, and best being. Since it does not depend on any being or on any condition of existence other than itself it is *a se* and *per se*; it exists, not because something else exists, but it exists because it exists; that is, it exists necessarily, it is necessary being.

It would be an easy matter to deduce pantheism from the arguments of the *Monologium*. Anselm, it is true, protests against such an interpretation of his theology. With Augustine, he assumes that the world is been created *ex nihilo*. Though accepting this teaching, he modifies it. Before the creation, he says, things did not exist by themselves, independently of God; hence, we say they were been derived from non-being. They existed eternally for God and in God, as ideas and have existed before their creation in the sense that the Creator been foreseeing them and predestining them for existence. The existence of God, the unitary and absolute cause of the world, been proved, the question is to determine his nature and attributes. God's perfections are like human perfections, with this difference, however, that they are essential to him, which is not the case with us. Man has received a share of certain

perfections, but there is no necessary correlation between him and these perfections; it would have been possible for him not to receive them; he could have existed without them. God, on the contrary, does not get his perfections from outside. Thus, God has not received them, and we cannot say that he *has* them; he *is* and must be everything that these perfections imply; his attributes are identical with his essence. Justice, an attribute of God, and God are not two separate things. We cannot say of God that he has justice or goodness; we cannot even say that he is just, for to be just is to participate in justice after the manner of creatures. God is justice as such, goodness as such, wisdom as such, happiness as such, truth as such, being as such. Moreover, all of God's attributes constitute but a single attribute, by virtue of the unity of his essence (*unum est quidquid essentialiter de summa substantia dicitur*).

All this has been traced back to Platonism. However, not satisfied with a spiritualising theism, Anselm enumerated the difficulties which he finds in the conception are enumerated. God is a simple being and at the same time eternal, that is, diffused over infinite points of time; he is omnipresent, that is, redistributed over all points of space. Shall we say that God is omnipresent and eternal? This proposition contradicts the notion of the simplicity of the divine essence. Shall we say that he is nowhere in space and nowhere in time? Nevertheless, that would be equivalent to denying his existence. Let us therefore reconcile these two extremes and say that God is omnipresent and eternal, without been limited by space or time. The following is an equally serious difficulty: In God there is no change and consequently nothing accidental. Now, there is no substance without accidents. Hence, God is not a substance; he transcends all substance. Anselm is alarmed at these dangerous consequences of his logic, and he therefore prudently adds that, though the term 'substance' may be incorrect, it is, nevertheless, the best we can apply to God – *si quid digne dici potest* – and that to avoid or condemn it might perhaps jeopardise our faith in the reality of the Divine Being.

The most formidable theological antinomy is the doctrine of the trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence. The Word is the object of eternal thought; it is God in being so far as he is thought, conceived, or comprehended by himself(sic!). The Holy Spirit is the love of God for the Word and of the Word for God, the love God bears himself. Is this explanation satisfactory? On the other hand, the dogma is not been sacrificed by professing to explain the conception of unity? Anselm sees in the Trinity and the notion of God, insurmountable difficulties and contradictions, which the human mind cannot reconcile. Regarding the latter, he confessed with Scotus Eriugena, Augustine, and the Neo-Platonists, that no human word can adequately express the essence of the All-High. Even the words 'wisdom' (*sapientia*) and 'being' (*essentia*) are but imperfect expressions of what he imagines to be the essence of God. All theological phrases are analogies, figures of speech, and mere approximations.



### 4.2.2.3 William of Occam

William of Occam – spelled also Ockham - (CE. 1280-1347) stood for the difference between belief and reason. He reasoned that only particulars exist. The individual, not the universal, is real. All universals are merely terms of description – nomina – and therefore not real entities existing in particular objects. A botanist cannot study plant species as a whole, but only the characteristics of this or that individual plant (Spade 1997:100). Generalisation is not an option. He reasoned that God is been accepted by way of faith since theological truths are not subject to proofs. God is an omnipotent being, whose will is superior to intellect, with boundless freedom, decrees what is been coming into existence as a fact of nature or as a principle. We cannot through logical necessity anticipate God's creative activity; the reality of the world is not been discerned through sheer logic without the evidence of empirical data.

Agreeing with Duns Scotus, Occam maintained that the realness of individual things been known to us intuitively, are presented in their basic forms (nomina) to the mind of human beings by sense experiences, rather than through the instrument of intelligibles (ideas) (Sahakian 1968:116-117; Stokes 2002:54). A particular object been related to us in our experience produces an idea which represents itself in our minds. Thus, a specific bird sitting in front of me produces in my mind an idea of it when I close my eyes. This we may call a relation of the first intention. I may however have a general idea about the nature of a tree without necessarily thinking of any specific tree and such abstract ideas, not referring to a specific tree have a relation we call the second intention. Thus, ideas of the second intention are merely arbitrary and relate to individual ideas, but the individual ideas relate to real individual objects. Thus, things do not need to be 'individualised'; they are individual from the outset - they simply come that way (Stokes 2005:55).

What needs explanation is: given that there is absolute nothing common between one individual and another, how the mind can nevertheless form universal or general concepts that somehow correctly apply to several individuals at once (Spade 1997:101). In short, one does not need a metaphysical 'principle of individuation'; one needs an epistemological 'principle of universalisation'. Regarding the latter problem Occam is honest enough to admit he does not have the answer (1997:101). In forming universal concepts, he says, 'nature works in a hidden way'.

Nevertheless, a shift from the metaphysical to an epistemological one occurred in the thinking of Occam. The principle Occam applied to this end came known as 'Occam's Razor'. The principle stating that the explanation of any phenomenon should be underplayed with as few assumptions as possible by eliminating, or 'shaving off' as many as possible of those assumptions which make no difference in the observable predictions of the hypothesis or theory. The principle is often been expressed in Latin as the *lex parsimoniae* (law of parsimony or law of succinctness): *entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*, which may be translated, as 'entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity'.

The term *razor* refers to the act of shaving away unnecessary assumptions to get to the simplest explanation. The latter represents correctly the general tendency of his philosophy though it could not be found in any of his writings. His nearest pronouncement seems to be *Numquam ponenda est pluralitas sine necessitate*, which occurs in his theological work on the *Sentences of Peter Lombard (Quaestiones et decisiones in quattuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi)* (ed. Lugd., 1495), i, dist. 27, qu. 2, K). In his *Summa Totius Logicae*, i. 12, Occam cites the principle of economy, *Frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora* (Kneale & Kneale 1962:243; Thorburn 1918: 352-353). This is often paraphrased as "All things being equal, the simplest solution tends to be the best one." In other words, when multiple competing theories are equal in other respects, the principle recommends selecting the theory that introduces the fewest assumptions and postulates the fewest hypothetical entities. The origins of what has come to be known as Occam's razor are traceable to the works of earlier philosophers such as John Duns Scotus (CE.1265–1308), Thomas Aquinas (CE.1225–1274), and even Aristotle (384–322 BC) (Thorburn 1918:348; Charlesworth 1956). The term 'Occam's razor' first appeared in 1852 in the works of Sir William Rowan Hamilton (1805–1865), long after Occam's death circa 1349 (Thorburn 1918: 349-350). Occam did not invent this "razor," so its association with him may be due to the frequency and effectiveness with which he used it (Ariew 1976). Though the principle is been stated by Occam in various ways the most popular version was written not by himself but by John Ponce of Cork in 1639 (1918:350).

Originally a tenet of the philosophy of nominalism, it is more often taken today as a heuristic maxim that advises economy, parsimony, or simplicity in scientific theories. In the 20th century Philosophy of Mind, Occam's razor found a champion in JJC Smart, who in his article *Sensations and Brain Processes* (1959:142) claimed Occam's razor as the basis for his preference of the mind-brain identity theory over mind body dualism. Dualists claim that there are two kinds of substances in the universe: physical (including the body) and mental, which is non-physical. By contrary, identity theorists claim that everything is physical, including consciousness with nothing non-physical. The basis for the materialist claim is that of the two competing theories, dualism and mind-brain identity, the identity theory is the simpler since it commits to fewer entities. Smart was criticised for his use of the razor and ultimately retracted his advocacy of it in this context.

Occam was probably the first person to make use of the principle" (Stokes 2005:54). He writes in *Summula Philosophiae Naturalis III*, chap.7:

"The source of many errors in philosophy is the claim that a distinct signified thing always corresponds to a distinct word in such a way that there are as many distinct entities being signified as there are distinct names or words doing the signifying."

And, more to the point

“We are apt to suppose that a word like ‘paternity’ signifies some “distinct entity”, because we suppose that each distinct word signifies a distinct entity. This leads to all sorts of absurdities, such as ‘a column is to the right by to-the-rightness’, ‘God is creating by creation, is good by goodness, is just by justice, is powerful by power’, ‘an accident inheres by inherence’, ‘a subject is subjected by subjection’, ‘a suitable thing is suitable by suitability’, ‘a chimera is nothing by nothingness’, ‘a blind thing is blind by blindness’, ‘a body is mobile by mobility’. We should say instead that a man is a father because he has a son” (*Summa Totus Logicae*, Book I, Chapter 51).

On this basis, Occam distinguished between a real and a rational science. Real science pertains directly to individual real things which are known through immediate intuition, while a rational science deals with abstract concepts, organising and describing the immanent relations which prevail among the various abstract ideas without any direct sense experience (Stokes 2002:54). Whereas Scotus saw a relation between faith and reason, Occam maintained the difference between them. In short, his argument came down that a person can only react to revelation in faith. Revelation flows forth by a decision of God. This decision seems to human beings as non-rational – creation and revelation could have differed, had God willed it. Therefore, it is difficult to agree with revelation in a rational manner. He considered, however, some Christian sources to be valid sources of factual data, equal to both logic and sense perception. In line with his epistemology, he maintained no plurality is been assumed unless it can be proved (a) by reason, or (b) by experience, or (c) by some infallible authority; referring in the last clause to the Bible, the Saints and certain pronouncements of the Church (Hoffmann et al 1997: 3-28; De Jong 1987:134). Hence, a disposition that faith is a personal acceptance and obedience to the authority of the message of God. For mystical and constructed truths, there is no place. Reality is been understood in a rational manner. How does it relate to the existence of God? After all, even acceptance of the Biblical message is a construct of one’s mind.

Some thinkers apply Occam's razor in the philosophy of religion to the existence of God; if the concept of God does not help to explain the universe, it is argued, God is irrelevant and should be cut away (Schmitt 2005:5). While Occam's razor cannot prove God's non-existence, it does imply that, in the absence of compelling reasons to believe in God, disbelief should be preferred. There is much controversy over whether such compelling reasons exist or not. The history of theistic thought is rife with attempts at formulating them: the cosmological argument, for example, states that the universe must be the result of a ‘first cause’ and that that first cause must be God. Similarly, the teleological argument credits the appearance of design and order in the universe to supernatural intelligence. Many people believe in miracles or have what they call religious experiences, and some theists consider creationism as been more believable than naturalistic explanations for the diversity and history of life on earth.

The majority of the modern scientific community maintains that these arguments fail to necessitate the inclusion of the God hypothesis in the world model. They instead prefer explanations that deal with the same phenomena within the confines of existing scientific models. The necessity of a God in the teleological argument is challenged by the effects of emergence, leading to the creation-evolution controversy; likewise, religious experiences have naturalistic explanations in the psychology of religion. Other theistic arguments, such as the argument based on miracles, are sometimes pejoratively been said to argue for a mere God of the gaps. Whether or not God actually works miracles, any explanation that 'God did it' must fit the facts and make accurate predictions better than more parsimonious guesses like 'something did it', or else Occam's razor still cuts God out. Rather than argue for the necessity of God, some theists consider their belief to be based on grounds independent of, or prior to, reason, making Occam's razor irrelevant. This was the stance of Søren Kierkegaard, who viewed belief in God as a leap of faith sometimes directly opposing reason (McDonald 2005:7; De Jong 1987:309-312). Considering that the razor is often been wielded as an argument against theism, it is somewhat ironic that Occam himself was a theist. In Occam's view, an explanation not harmonising with reasoned, experience or the aforementioned sources is not been considered as valid.

#### **4.2.2.4 Peter Abelard**

Peter Abelard (1079-1142) – also spelled: Abaelardus, Abelard, Abailard, Abelard - was born in 1079 in Le Pallet, twelve kilometres eastward from the city of Nantes, Brittany. Abelard was the son of a knight who gave him military training and schooling. Abelard's philosophy is the first example in the Western tradition of the philosophy of mind which later was been called 'nominalism' (King 2004:65). Abelard's nominalism – or, better, his unrealist realism – is in fact the hallmark of his metaphysics in which universals are been viewed as mere words (*nomina*). He is a realist not only about universals, but also about propositions, events, and times other than the present, natural kinds, relations, wholes, absolute space, hylomorphic composites, and the like. Abelard holds that the concrete individual, in all its richness and variety, is more than enough to populate the world. He preferred reductive, atomist, and material explanations if they were available. He also devoted a great deal of effort in pouring cold water on the metaphysical excesses of his predecessors and contemporaries. Yet unlike modern philosophers, Abelard did not conceive of metaphysics as a distinct branch of philosophy.

Following Boethius, Abelard distinguishes philosophy into three branches: logic, concerned with devising and assessing argumentation, an activity also known as dialectic; physics, concerned with speculation on the natures of things and their causes; and ethics, concerned with the upright way of life (Spade 1997:82; Boethius, *In Sag. Mayor* 1.3 140. 18-141.19). Metaphysics falls under Abelard's account of 'physics' as the second branch of philosophy, which is sufficiently broad to allow for traditional metaphysical concerns as well as issues

proper to natural philosophy. Determining his metaphysical commitments is a matter of teasing them out of his discussions of philosophy of language and natural philosophy (King 2004:65).

Abelard had a liberal attitude toward religion. It was his idea that Christianity had not presented new ideas but rather represented the consummation of a long process in the history of religions; Christianity is a democratised form of Hellenic philosophy. His rationalism impelled him to reverse the Augustinian-Anselmian dictum: *Credo ut intelligam*, formulating his own opinion: *Nisi credendum nisi prius intellectum* (De Jong 1987:130). Although for both Abelard and Anselm there could be no real distinction between revealed truth and philosophical truth, for both truths are identical. Anselm however gave faith precedence above reason, whereas Abelard accorded superior status to reason. A doctrine is believed, not because God declared it so, or the church, but only because of the dictates of reason.

Gleaning from Boethius who produced translations of Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione*, and of the *Isagoge*, an introduction to Aristotle's *Categories* by Porphyry, Abelard discusses and argues several theories before setting his own (Spade 1994:70, 82). The first was an 'essence realism of materiality', a sophisticated version of the realism prevalent among philosophers at the beginning of the twelfth. Abelard's teacher William of Champeaux held this summarised as follows in three theses (Abelard, *Hist. Calam* 65: 85-89; Spade 1994: 82f):

First, it holds that the material essence (the genus with regard to its subordinate species, or the species with regard to its subordinate individuals) is a Boethian universal, since it is simultaneously present as a whole in distinct items making them what they are as the 'materiality' of their essential being. The material essence 'animal' is present in the species man and the material essence man is present in Socrates and Plato. William held in effect that Socrates, for example, is a kind of metaphysical 'layer cake' – built up successfully of multiple ingredients: substantiality, bodiliness, life, animality, humanity, Greekness, and so on – each subsequent ingredient narrowing or specifying its predecessors (Spade 1994:82-83).

Second, it holds that the material essence is 'contracted' (made metaphysically less general) by the addition of forms accidental to it; since it is essentially the same in distinct items, whatever differentiates those items cannot be essential to it, and hence must be accidental. For individuals, this reduces to the claim that accidents individuate substances (Boethius, *De Trin.* §1,168. 56-63 and §2 169. 83-89). Implication hereof is one mentally removes all the ingredients after 'humanity', one ends up with one humanity common to Socrates and Plato. This was widely accepted in the early Middle Ages. Abelard claims in his *Historia Calamitatum* (Chptr II (1922) 1972:2-3; Spade1997:84; King 2004:70) that because of his (Abelard) ingenious arguments, William was been forced to abandon his theory and adapted another theory whereby Socrates and Plato are exactly alike, but numerical two.

Third, it holds that individuals are metaphysically composed of the material essence in combination with the forms that serve to individuate them. Hence, Socrates is composed of the material essence man plus his particular height, weight, and so on; likewise for Plato.

Porphyry distinguishes between genus, difference, species, definition, property, accident; and recall that there are also individuals, of which genera and species are been predicated. To predicate means 'to affirm as a predicate of' – 'Socrates is a man' predicates 'man' of Socrates. A categorical or predicative proposition is one that affirms or denies some predicate of some subject, 'S is [or 'is not'] P'. A *universal* is something that is been predicated of many different individuals. 'Socrates is a man', 'Plato is a man', 'Aristotle is a man' – 'man' is predicable of these three individuals, and of others; i.e. man is a universal. In the *Categories* Aristotle lists ten highest genera - substance, quality, quantity, relation, time, place, action, passion, position, and condition (King 2004:80f). Abelard takes Aristotle's categories to be a guide to the fine-grained metaphysical structure of substances and accidents, although each category is been investigated in its own terms; the concrete world is spatiotemporal, though what exactly this amounts to has to be worked out. He carefully follows it as a guide to the categorical structure of the world in all his writings. A brief excursion of Abelard's understanding of these categories will suffice.

Abelard accepts the traditional identification of concrete individuals with primary substances, although strictly speaking the distinction between primary and secondary substances is really a linguistic distinction between proper and common noun (LI 2. 05 140. 19–24). Abelard explains in (157. 23–28) that primary and secondary substances, as words, differ 'in their manner of reference' since the former refer to individuals 'as personally distinct and different from all others' whereas the latter 'appellate them as agreeing.' The distinction between primary substances - individuals, like Socrates, Plato, etc., and secondary substances - universals, genera or species, like man or animal.

They are causes, but strictly speaking they are neither events nor propositions or 'the things that are said by sentences,' namely dicta. One has to recall that Aristotle also distinguishes between univocal, equivocal and analogical words: a univocal word (if there is any such thing) has just one meaning; an equivocal word is simply ambiguous; an analogical word has several senses that are been different but is not been unrelated. Finally, remember what the essence of a thing is, the answer to the question: 'What is this?' or 'What sort of a thing is it?' Humanity is the essence of Socrates, because if you ask 'What sort of a thing is this?' pointing at Socrates, the answer is 'A man.' ("Humanity" is the abstract noun for being a man).

#### 4.2.2.5 Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas is representative of the coherence-difference theme. On the question of whether the same person can have both belief and knowledge, he answered neither yes nor no. His point of view, being a Scholastic scholar, owed much to Aristotle (Van der Walt 1986:211-216; Sahakian 1968:104). Thomas made no sharp distinction between the natural and supernatural or divine worlds. He maintained all creation, be it supernatural or natural, and all truth, revealed or rational, stems from God's personality. Nevertheless, he did adhere to the superiority of the supernatural above the natural world; the world of grace is superior to the world of rational conclusions. Truth is the identification of an object with its object (Stokes 2002:48). God's ideas are the ultimate, real ideas in it self, not merely precise reproductions; therefore, God is truth *per se*. Reality is a hierarchal structure. God is the highest absolute being, being the first cause of the spiritual and material world, but also the final cause. The world was created by God in order to reveal him self in as many ways possible. All kinds of life, ranging from the lowest to the highest forms, from vegetation to moral beings, assist in revealing God's attributes in our universe (Van der Walt 1986: 218). The essence of created things is the divine law which Thomas called *exemplar, similitude, ratio, verbum* or *imago*, created within the creation by God (1986:218). It is in this manner that God imprints his image on creation. Thomas calls God the "*causa efficiens et exemplaris*". The relation between God and his creation is one of cause and effect. As all truth comes from God while the channel for its transmission is of no consequence i.e. it does not matter whether God conveys his truth through revelation or reason. Thus, the existence of God is not merely a revealed truth, for human reason can also inform us of the existence of God. In this way, Thomas synthesised the antitheses of Abelard (who insisted on initial understanding before believing) and Anselm (who insisted a person must first believe before being able to understand).

# Chapter 5

## A theory of faith and sense making approaches

### 5.1 Theology or a Theory of faith?

#### 5.1.1 The modest role and place of faith

One has to ask the question at this point: how are we to negotiate, substantiate and, interpret these cues, clues, phrases, phases, stages and deal with these sense-making approaches of early history, the Middle Ages and Modernity?

The first assumption of a theology been viewed as a theory of faith is that the mystery of the simultaneity of the connectedness and the difference of God, being human and the natural world has to play a role in each scientific discipline through the operability of the composite theanthropocosmic principle. Van Niekerk in wrestling to move away from the age-old problem of three separate avenues of reflection for God, human beings and the natural world asserts:

“In moving away from the three traditional separated avenues of three experiential realms (i.e. the avenues of God, religion and God-talk; human beings and human doings; and nature and natural processes) the threesome made up of God, being human and the physical-organic environment should be encapsulated in a dynamic pattern of ongoing at-one-ment and at-other-ment in each field, mode or dimension of experience and in each scientific discipline. This includes theology which when hauled up from its knees may be resurrected as a more modest theory of faith. Thus, I suggest that the realities of God, humanity and the physical-organic natural environment in their radical interconnectedness and otherness be compositionally lumped together in a *theanthropocosmic* sense making principle playing a concrete and determining role in everyday life, as well as in scientific disciplines and philosophies. In introducing a much more modest way of talking about God, human beings and the physical-organic universes in each science, I am fully aware that the traditional approach of three separate avenues of experience is still broadly been embodied in three types of scientific complexes of knowledge at modern universities, namely the religious-theological disciplines, the humanities and the sciences. Many theologians and religious scientists still try to access their experience of God as separate from their human experience and their experience of the physical-organic environment. Similarly, many subject specialists in the human sciences or humanities at universities still try to access the experience of human beings separate from God and the natural physical-organic environment. In addition, sciences or natural sciences within the science faculties of universities still try to access the experience



of the physical-organic environment as separate from their experience of God and themselves as human beings.

On the one hand, from a diasporic but wholesome, negotiatory and Spirit-directed stance, theology's reflexive pattern of faith is been extended to include God, the human self, other human beings and nature in the broadest differential and integral sense possible. On the other hand, theology is allotted a more modest role as faith studies, or a theory of faith because the basic experiential pattern of God, the human self, other human beings and surrounding physical-organic nature are viewed as part of every other field, mode and dimension of experience, albeit with alternating emphases or perspectival headings such as thinking, feeling, loving, proportioning of justness and verbalising." (2006:376-377)

Van Niekerk argues in favour of a theanthropocosmic principle by which the radical interconnectedness and otherness of the realities of God, humanity and the natural cosmic world are more satisfactorily been drawn together. Such a principle plays an important and concrete role in everyday life, as well as in scientific disciplines and philosophies. In agreement with Van Niekerk, one has to concur that the theanthropocosmic principle is a more modest way of speaking about God, human beings and nature in each science. In terms of the thrust of the study space is been created for the dynamics of a philosophy of emergence. Many theologians and religious scientists still try to access their experience of God as separate from their day-to-day sense making and dealings with and within the natural cosmos.

The argument is put forward that from a perspective faith a Theory of faith in Faith Studies sense making patterns of faith experience and experiential patterns of our daily involvement and engagement of faith are been drawn on the micro and the macro level. Van Niekerk offers the following advice to a theologian considering of positioning him or herself on the stance of a theory of faith:

"The best advice to a theology which has to relinquish the avenue in which all religious and divine operations are encapsulated is to re-establish the meaningful human and worldly parts of faith enterprises into aware patterns of *faith, belief, trust and confidence experiences*:

as whenever faith, belief, trust and confidence towards and of oneself ⇒ faith, believing, trust and confidence towards and of God ⇒ faith, believing, trust and confidence towards and of the neighbours (⇒human, animals, plants and things in the micro- and macro-universes).

The basic pattern of experiential indicators can be alternately expressed with loving, justice, thinking, and feeling emphases." (2006:378)

The main clue extracted from the quotation that the direction of faith, belief, trust, reflexion and confidence within the context and duration of a particular faith experience, leads, directs and informs one as a Christian coterminously believing, thinking, apportioning justness, speaking or verbalising, socialising or imagining for the duration of the particular period of faith experience (Van Niekerk 2006/7:93-98). The leading, directing and informing of oneself as being a Christian in a relationship with God in Jesus Christ through the immediacy of Holy Spirit embracing ones total personal existence, in enveloping all experiences of being human.

However, the following premises are been noted:

Firstly, it does not carry the implication that similar experiences do not occur in other faith traditions (Smith 1991:11; Lochhead 1988). The moment one enters the arena of interfaith contacts with other faith traditions no monologue is adequate. When one deciphers ones own thoughts, opinions, and sense-making patterns and ideologies it is of utmost importance to enter into multilogue. Indeed, on a personal note I deem it obligatory in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in been engaged in a multilogue, not only in studies and theories of faith, but in all other fields, modes and dimensions of human experience.

Secondly, as indicated above, faith, belief, trust, reflexion and confidence toward God, toward oneself, toward other human beings and the physical-organic cosmos is part of all religious traditions, orientations and is to a degree a game of faith language. Perhaps, the insights of Edmund Parker underwrite the point made here. In the context of scientific self-defence, namely Kenpo Karate, he writes:

“BASICS are all physical moves or gestures executed with specific intent or purpose...each basic move literally constitutes an alphabet of motion and when combined to form words, sentences, and paragraphs of motion...” (Parker 1983:31).

### **5.1.2 Alphabets of motion and faith**

Parker’s approach presents us with clues which are been enfolded in the motion of aware patterns of *faith, belief, trust and confidence experiences* towards and of oneself ↔ towards and of God ↔ towards human neighbours ↔ towards animals, plants and things in the micro- and macro-universes. Similar to physical Kenpo Karate moves - which everyone is able to muster as an enhancement of (daily) bodily movements, albeit enhanced (Parker 1985: Vol.3) - a person is been doing ‘moves’ in daily experiences of believing, thinking, apportioning of justness, speaking (verbalising), socialising or imagining. All of these fields of experience having been imbued with an ‘alphabet’ of sense-making tools drawn from intuition, education, physical abilities like breathing, naming, co-ordinating, calculating, analysing, imagining, informing, activating, smelling, feeling, reading, moving, locating and identifying, talking, hearing, governing accessible to all regardless of faith tradition. Similar to

the notion of a system of alphabetic rearrangement of physical moves the same format has been used in the formation of systems of concepts, words and beliefs (Parker 1983: 38). Letters selected from our alphabetic system (Roman-Latin) when properly arranged, can create words, sentences and paragraphs that make sense to us. Even limited knowledge of the alphabetic system is meaningful if the rearrangement process is thoroughly understood. For example, even if a linguistically wise person has only discovered in learning the alphabet from A to G, he/she can still benefit, negotiate and manoeuvre, provided words that can be created from these seven letters can be created such as AD, BAD, DAB, ACE, CASE, FACE, FED, FAD, DEAF, etc. (1985: 38-42). Thus, when each of the letters is used more than once in rearranged fashion, meaningful words and thus meaningful sentences are produced. Since every physical basic move is discovered in learning of an alphabet of motion, people can surprisingly create a number of words of motion even though their knowledge of the alphabet of motion may be limited. This insight is applicable to belief experience too. Discovering in learning how to tailor-make one's own basic sense-making tools will enhance and aid in converting, spelling and co-ordinating embryonic movements to sophisticated sense-making experiences in different fields of experience (Van Niekerk 2006: 57-58). The point to be emphasised is that all people have first to learn 'basics skills and knowledge' of a particular field of experience, not only those of the experiential field of faith but also the 'basics' of other experiential fields of existence.

The main reason for the acquisition and development of skills and knowledge in different fields of experience is to make sense of oneself as a wholesome and diversified human being with satisfactory levels of wellbeing and wellness. A wholesome and diversified human being is able to make compounded basic moves within a certain field of experience but does not stay too long in that field before being drawn to the task of compounding basic moves in another field of experience. The process of compounding basic moves is a complex process of piling one move upon the other and piling the previous piling separately and as a complexity of two onto the following move. In the individual application thereof within specific contexts lies the interconnectedness and overlapping of the micro parts of our daily existence. Translated to terms of faith and belief the assertion seems valid that people learn a fiducially or faith alphabet, just as they learn a political, aesthetic, mathematic and scientific alphabet.

The alphabetical rearrangement process implies the simultaneity of content and structure, and intention and direction. Ellwood (1983:166) distinguishes content as the message, which is what has been said, and the structural message is what is said by the way it is said. Skills and knowledge in many alphabets in different fields of experience undergird the idea of Ellwood of 'message as content' and 'manner in which it is said as structural form': various letters, words and sentences function as message while the manner and the way in which these are used function as the regulative structural form. In the evaluation of the late modern movie scene the assertion is often heard that a film does not have or carry a message

because the film is the message itself. In a similar sense, the rearrangement of alphabets in the experience of different life-worlds in the same person's life demonstrates that someone's overall sense making approach to life is a compounded number of diverse sense making patterns of experience. Growing sense making awareness is part of the skills training and knowledge acquisition of 'alphabets' in different fields of experience in the most ordinary of ordinary everyday life-words.

### **5.1.3 Collating skills training and knowledge with motion and reflexion of alphabets**

The processes of motions and reflections of discovering in learning of a diverse number of 'alphabets' collate with our skills training and acquiring of knowledge in daily life. A fiducial and faith alphabet as the alphabet on which our faith perspective is been focused plays a constructive pushing, pulling and guiding role in the training and educating of people to become more aware of the motion and reflexion of the regularities in the irregular alphabetical motions in their ongoing experience of faith, belief and trust. Patterns of regularity emerging through the motions of irregularity become the trained motions of regularity. These trained motions of regularity find expression in alphabets as in phrases, phases, meditations and mixtures of code and modes in societal realms. While one participates in an action or conversation, one imaginatively oversees and reflects on the action (Van Niekerk 1996:3).

Experience of imagination and even imaginative fantasies is real in and amongst many experiences. Imagination and fantasy are not been described with the notion of nothingness. Imaginative reflexion *has* a place in the partaker's situation as part of the partaking in the experience of other people's alphabetical constructs and prescribed ways of doing. These cannot and are not been solidified into constant, abstract and eternal black boxes from which all other actions, events, etc. had to be structured or had to take their cues. This observation applies to both everyday and scientific situations (Scheid 1993:124). Factors been contributing to such a disposition is been likened to a pedestrian who wakes up one morning in an unfamiliar pedestrian zone: waking up the person would immediately find his or her way without knowing where he or she is. At times one almost gets the impression that we are in the present societal world in a similar situation – we know our way around, but do not know where we are going. A contribution of finding a direction might be consistent training in our sense making patterns and alphabets of skills and knowledge in various fields of experience, helping and carrying our experiences of wellness and wellbeing from the past through the present to the future.

Alvin Toffler calls the time in which we are living that of a "Third Wave" civilization. He differentiates between the collapsing "Second Wave" as industrial society or Machine Age with the emerging "Third Wave" society in the second volume of his trilogy beginning with *Future Shock* (1970), continued with *The Third Wave* (1981), and is now complete in

Powershift (1990). Third-wavers claim the time in which they live for God, themselves, other human beings and the natural world – asserting that the foursome emphasis is the full gospel. They learn to ride the revolutionary waves inundating us this moment, seizing the global initiative in ministries using audio (radio and cassettes), video (television, movies), print (books, magazines), and software. All living systems have the capacity for creating new self-organizations. This capacity is been activated when a single fluctuation, adding its strength to the constantly fluctuating sub-systems, destabilizes the pre-existing organization. The mysterious moment at which this revolution happens, is been called a singular moment or a bifurcation point. From this moment on, it is inherently impossible to predict whether the whole system is en route of collapsing into chaos or will recreate itself into the higher order and level of coherence.

Ilya Prigogine (1984:xiv-xvi) calls these irregular regular collapsing of a structure a 'dissipative structure'. Prigogine's 'laws of dissipative structures' demand, in being laws of biological and social transformation, of things to fall apart in disequilibrium, instability, and turbulence before they can come together in systems down new paths of development. What is predictable is that without instabilities and transitions, and without movement away from equilibrium structures, no possibility for the formation of new dynamic communities and states of matter as dissipative structures arises amidst the events and happenings of daily life and in the natural world.

Everyday boundaries are blurred and rules broken in pursuit of regularities within irregular complex motions in people's experience. The main obstacle, however, is that people are not aware of their own sense making alphabets as dissipative structures which simultaneously move away and together in the strangest curls and swirls. The everyday world is a comprehensive creative environment of new versions and additions to the current versions of ones ongoing processes of sense making alphabets in ongoing processes played out in minutest nook and cranny of ones experience.

#### **5.1.4 Fiducial alphabets as dynamic faith patterns**

How does it apply to faith? Moreover, what is a fiducial and faith alphabet? My approach is that the basic 'letters' of a faith alphabet are various experiential fiducial and faith episodes in ones life, e.g. conversion, baptism, work of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, forgiveness, prayer, communion/the faith meal, the faith meeting and congregational gathering, offices and the diaconate (Berkhof 1990:351-397). These are ecclesial aspects and linguistic phrases of a fiducial alphabet. We have to add naming, co-ordinating, calculating, analysing, imagining, informing, activating, smelling, feeling, reading, moving, locating and identifying, talking, hearing and governing since they are part of the experiential vertical depth and horizontal width of a fiducial alphabet. Without these sense making tools, wherein faith, belief, trust and confidence are percolating through all experiences, ecclesial fiducial 'words and sentences' will not be possible (Van Niekerk 2006:377f).

Construction of a fiducial alphabet within a particular contextual setting rests essentially on the premises of openness and imagination in their radical connectedness to the time dimensions of past, present and future. In the phrase 'God was in Christ' a content message, a structural message and Spatio-temporal message are been detected. Such a statement is been affirmed by many Christians in the same words but with different meanings because of differences in structural contexts of traditional church doctrines formulated by fundamentalist, conservative or liberal theologians (Hesselgrave & Rommen 1989:169). The adjectives fundamentalist, conservative and liberal suggest in fact three different structural styles of speaking religious truth messages, or three different sense making patterns, systems and views embraced in their complexity (Van Niekerk 2006/7:50-59). Having said this, I maintain that the basic pattern or pointer structure of faith and belief experience (including all other differentiated fields of experiential existence) is part of God's creation. Surmises to state faith, belief, trust, reflexion and confidence is not later added through God's salvific acts and grace as asserted by the majority view in Christianity but are a given within every person. In the words of Van Niekerk:

"Faith is not a supernatural or a meditative nothingness, which has no structure as a human act of experience. No person is without the faculty of faith or belief, not even an atheist or an agnostic in whose faith experience at least the pointers of being human, other human beings and the natural physical-organic environment are functioning. The idea of 'believers/unbelievers' is foreign to our approach supported by the theanthropocosmic principle, just as the substantive pairs 'thinkers/un-thinkers' and 'feelers/un-feelers' strike us as absurd. Even in the sense making procedures of the anthropic-cosmological view, where God is left out of the equation, such an ontologist chasm in the human race of 'believers and non/unbelievers' would seem very strange indeed" (2006/7:73).

The main difference between people however is the direction of their patterns of experience of faith, as well as the direction of their thinking, feelings, language and loving patterns of existence. Van Niekerk continues with his argument that the notion of God's Commonwealth embraces all experiences of human beings:

"Some Evangelicals would understand if I explained the difference in the direction and aim of different patterns of experience with the terms 'converted faith' and 'unconverted faith'. What they would find strange, however, is that I assert that one should also then speak of 'converted thinking, feeling, etc.' and 'unconverted thinking, feeling, etc.'. I assume that the idea of a human being involved and engaged in every field and pattern of experience in processes of continuous conversion, liberation and renewal within the realm of the Commonwealth of God, which ranges and covers the billions of universes as well as the billions of years of their age, is too foreign an idea

to make sense to the traditional Evangelical mindset, which mainly opts for conversion of religious faith and of the spiritual kind.”(2006/7:77).

Therefore, I agree with Kim (1978: 67-68) when he states:

“The sphere of divine experience is neither limited to any one religious tradition nor to particular sacred texts; it encompasses the wider context of human experience which is not confined merely to sense experience”.

The continuous processes of conversion, liberation and renewal in every field of human experience within the realm of the Kingdom of God which is as wide as creation, seems a bit radical, too foreign an idea to make sense to the traditional Evangelical and Pentecostal who mainly opts for conversion of religious faith and of the soft spiritual kind. Criticism such as been delivered in this chapter is located in the midst of phenomena, factual objectivities and changes of a rapid changing modern to a late modern world.

## **5.2 Sense making views as God-human-and-world views**

### **5.2.1 Sense making views (SMVs) and God-human-and-world views (G-H-W-Vs)**

Human beings live in this world as emergent selves experiencing various forms of being, becoming and relational orienting while making sense of their immediate existential surroundings. Our world is no longer restricted to limitations of time and space, or the limited, immediate, visible Mediterranean world, as it was for writers and people of Biblical times, but has become a large, ever expanding physical-organic cosmos (Barrett 2000:129; Peacocke 1993:343). Although our knowledge has grown proportionally, it seems we know less and less of our worlds and ourselves, let alone about God. This places us right in the middle of reflexion on the God-life-world views we live, enact and deduce our value systems from while relating to the nature and relations of being.

A God-humanlife-naturalworld view functions in a computational way in various areas of life: Firstly, human beings order their lives around daily practices and beliefs that makes sense to them. Secondly, these sense making experiences play a role in the way people construe their theories and the ways they read complex texts. A G-H-W (God-Human-World) view is regulative in the sense that it articulates not only something of the existence, but also something about value and meaning thereof to the subject. This means that not only various notions of realities are been made sense of, but also the whereto and why of these realities. It is computational in the adding of experience, compiling thus, deducting, multiplying and even dividing of experiences (Pinker 1999:91; Penrose 1999:98). The determining question arises: what is a God-human-and-world view and what is a sense making view? Are they the same or similar? What is the significance of their usage in our life-worlds?

## 5.2.2 A sense making God-human-and-world view emerges through a long and complex history

### 5.2.2.1 God-human-and-nature views and approaches

Van Niekerk captures in the phrases God-life-and-world view or God-human-and-nature view, approaches and orientations the notion of people's composite views or approaches to the totality of reality after several years of been involved in philosophical and scientific reflection and investigation on belief systems, value systems, ideologies and religions (2008:50f). In many spheres of society, people still speak, either of a 'life and world view' (human and nature view) or plainly of a 'worldview' or an approach to 'nature' as is still been seen in natural scientific circles. Most of the time a view of God (theology), a view of human beings (anthropology) and a view of being in general (ontology) operating on the subconscious level are not been articulated in a composite and computational way. Only when people are deliberately tackling and reflecting from their God-human-and-nature views a problem, phenomenon or given fact is there the possibility to arrive at a reflected and articulated view in which God, being human and the natural world operate as built-in operational 'pushing' and 'pulling' components of their composited and complex sense making approaches (Van Niekerk 2006/7:116f).

Van Niekerk (2006/7:48) summarised the long and complex history of how the notions of God, being human and the natural world built into the composite phrase God-life-and-world view (= God-human-and-nature view) were been brought together:

"A God-life-and-world (GLW) view, approach or orientation is the bundling together of isolated avenues of Antiquity 1200-0 BCE, the early ages (0-400) of the Common Era, the Middle Ages (400-1800) including the Renaissance (1400-1600) and Modernity (1600-2000) which spoke either of:

- human life view (German: *Lebensanschauung*), which concentrates on the anthropological question of human beings, or
- world view (German: *Weltanschauung*), which concentrates on the cosmos (world) as a created or scientifically viewed world, or
- view of God, which concentrates solely on God such as in theology (Greek: knowledge about God) and religion(s). (Originally from Latin verb *religare*: to tie, to fasten; very early in history the term 'religion' was seen as been reserved for being tied and fastened to a divinity or God.)" (2006/7:48)

Van Niekerk adds to the exposition above the following concluding statement:

"A composite and interlocking GLW view, pattern or orientation is more inclusive than one that concentrates solely on God (which is the case with the majority of theologians) or mainly on human beings (which is the case with proponents of the so-



called humanities at university) or solely on the physical world, nature or the universe (as is the case with many proponents and practitioners of the so-called natural sciences)” (2006/7:5)

A God-human-and-nature approach thoroughly and aware in operation is not been suffering from the isolation of theology, anthropology and ontology as three separate avenues of reflection. For example, various definitions of ontology have been passing the revue in the modern era. Oosthuizen (1974:8) views ontology as the perception human beings have of the nature, interconnectedness, the value and meaning of all, which exists. Hartmann (1953:13-14) asserts all ontology has to do with fundamental assertions about being as such. Assertions of this sort are been called categories of being. These categories are not *a-priori* principles – only things like insights, cognitions, and judgements can be *a-priori*. Ontology, Hartmann reasons, is not concerned with knowledge, but with the object of knowledge insofar as such an object is at the same time ‘trans-objective’, that is, independent of whether or to what extent being is actually transformed into an object of knowledge (1953:14). Of importance are not the categories of time and space but those of time and individuality. Ontologically considered, time and space are not categories of equal worth: time is far more fundamental than space (1953:25). Only material things and living beings, including the processes through which their existence flows, are special. Spiritual, mental and material are temporal. For everything real is in time and only a part of it in space. Joined with temporality is individuality. The real is perishable and thereby unrepeatable. The same sort of thing recurs, never the same identical thing (1953:26). This holds true of historical events as well as of cosmic motions, of persons as well of things. Even when viewed as aloof, a God-life-world view with its accompanying aware reflection has a regulative instead of a substantive character (1974:8-10).

### **5.2.2.2 Sense making views, approaches or orientations**

Van Niekerk has been developing the notion of a sense making view, approach or orientation as an operational approach in conjunction with the notion of God-life-and-world views (2006/7:48-50). He asserts that it does not matter much which term is been used after the initial two words: sense making - as long as terms such as view, approach, orientation, pattern, network, interests, system, spectrum and set are been alternately used with equal validity in completion of the notion of sense making (2006/7:48).

Van Niekerk describes the notion of sense making approaches as follows:

“Sense making approaches operate and function in everyday unaware as well as theoretical aware ways in our lives with totalising complexity and unifying simplicity, computational fluctuation and regularising constancy. They permeate, carry and guide hardened and age-old doctrines, theories, religions, clichés, buzzwords, constructs,

banalities, stereotypes, ideologies, truisms, commandments and mottos in every nook and cranny of life. A sense making view, approach, orientation or pattern is presented here as nothing more than what is usually called one's wisdom or common sense pattern, religion or ideology, belief or value system, symbol spectrum or God-life-and-world view" (2006/7:48)

In this study Van Niekerk is strongly followed in his bringing together of both the composite notions of God-life-and-world view or God-human-and-nature view, and that of the notion of a sense making view, approach or orientation. Van Niekerk favours the phrase God-life-and-world view, pattern, system, network or orientation, etc. which is expressive of a sense making pattern, as an indication of a person's or group's all-embracing and complex pre-scientific sense making view, etc., in which many theoretical snippets of knowledge from philosophies, the sciences and technology are in operation:

"Sense making views are also influenced by scientific and theoretical patterns and theories through scattered insertions and injections from many philosophies, sciences and technologies. A pool of scientific, technological and philosophical knowledge is been accumulated over many centuries from many cultures of the past and the present. A myriad of activities and things that people encounter in modern life springs from philosophies, all sciences and the technology that follows from each science, from things like electric kettles and microwave ovens and flying aeroplanes to designer drugs and computers, and from theories and approaches such as hypnosis and therapeutic strategies to meaningful patterns of faith, thinking, loving, socialising and speaking. In passing I want to point out that, the whole idea of technology is not only to be reserved for the so-called natural sciences. The word 'technology' is made up of the Greek word *techne* meaning 'technical and/or skill' and *-logy* meaning 'word and/or knowledge'. Every science at university has its concomitant technological section; even a theory of faith has its technological side with its development and training of skills and capacities of belief and faith patterns." (2006/7:50-51)

Hilary Putnam (1983:139-154) in discussing Davidson's *Philosophy of Mind* presents us with some ideas. By taking on Davidson's (1970), proposed thesis of *anomalous monism* the notion of token-token identities between physical events and mental events (i.e., events described in the vocabulary of belief and desire) are described which is not of type-type identities. Putnam reasons that Davidson's point is that what is true of public language is almost certainly going to be true of any 'mental representations' or salient neurological states which stands casually behind *public* language.

"Just as we have to say that a person's true preferences are not exactly the same as the preferences he avows, so we will have to say that a person's 'true preferences (i.e., the ones it would be best to ascribe to him in rationally reconstructing his behaviour) are not the same as the one encoded in his brain representations.

Believe-desire explanation belongs to the level called *interpretation theory*. It is as holistic and interest relative as all interpretation...the point is that there may be sentence-analogs and predicate-analogs in the brain, but not concepts. ‘Mental representations’ require interpretation just as much as any other signs do” (1983: 139-154).

### **5.3 The operational characteristics of sense making God, human, worldviews and approaches**

Van Niekerk has been distinguishing and developing a complex list of seven characteristics of coherent and aware sense making views, approaches and orientations (2007:51-58). The nearly tautological procedure in which ones sense making approach is instrumental in discerning in what way the characteristics of a sense making view look like is expressive of the problem one is facing. The description and distinction of sense making characteristics are been determined by the input of ones sense making approach. In the instance of the description of the seven characteristics, Van Niekerk’s radical integral and differential God-human-and-nature sense making approach is operational and at work. The bringing together of a God-life-and-world view or God-human-and-nature and the characteristics of such a sense making view overlapping in many instances are discursively treated.

#### **5.3.1 The first characteristic**

*“Everyday sense making views (SMVs) and approaches are mainly unaware and non-theoretical reflective experiences of sense and/or non-sense. Scientific and philosophical sense making views and approaches are mainly aware and theoretical reflexive patterning processes of what does or does not make sense.”* (Van Niekerk 2006/7:51)

Patterns of living depend on a vast array of factors. They may appear to the individual simply as a set routine, thus, as a way things are and have always been. Everyday sense making views (SMVs) are not been expressed as views that are “made”, as they are to a great degree unaware, uncalculated and not part of a theory-praxis relationship, however, they do include aware or reflective moments. These views emerge as a pattern of everyday life and develop from first experiences, and evolve as these experiences evolve for the entire duration of one’s life. SMVs develop not only from personal experiences in isolation – a non concept, as personal experiences are never in isolation but as a result – but from everything that influences and continues to influence the individual (Van Niekerk 2006/7:51).

Science, technology and philosophy are usually fields that are been seen as separate from the *personal*. However, reasons and thought patterns emerge or develop in conjunction with, or as result of sciences, philosophies and technology and in turn, participate in their creation

– a cyclic continuous movement. A common view in the current world is to view science, technology and philosophy as enterprises practised by people who work in isolation and of whom the findings remain in many instances remote from *real life*. However, the way that ordinary SMVs are cobbled together resulting in removed from reality concepts such as philosophy, manifest in a personal philosophy and, if awareness continues to increase into investigation, this progress into scientific reflexive thought, with fewer unaware moments.

Van Niekerk distinguishes between SMVs as mainly pre-theoretical *unaware reflective experiential processes* not been always conscious reflection. Scientific and philosophical theory making and patterning are on the other hand *aware reflexive and theoretical experiential processes*. Van Niekerk asserts:

“There is no real difference in meaning between the terms ‘reflection-reflective’ and ‘reflexion-reflexive’, as there is no real difference between pre-theoretical everyday experience and the theoretical – for some people another type of everyday experience. With the term ‘reflexion-reflexive’, I follow a tradition that draws from the Germanic-Dutch conceptual and lingual toolbox, which distinguishes whether we are busy:

√ *reflective* everyday mainly unaware processes and patterns of sense making (or GLW) views. These are mainly unaware processes with scattered aware and conscious injections from philosophies, sciences and technology into our everyday life experience,

√ *reflexive*, that is, aware and conscious theoretical processes and patterns of philosophies, sciences and technology. These processes, which are also experiential in nature (= human beings are doing and performing philosophies and sciences) are mainly aware and conscious ones with scattered unaware and aware insertions and injections from everyday sense making (or GLW) views.” (Van Niekerk 2005:405).

One dares stating sense making views are mainly pre-theoretical *subconscious reflective experiential processes*. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) provides us with some markers in this regard. The hint I am picking up from him is our mind structures our experience of the world; we can never know the ‘things-in-themselves (*Ding-an-sich*), only the ‘things-as-they-seem’. This implies ‘*noumena*’ is not observable as such, only ‘*phenomena*’. He went on to suggest that certain categories, (particular substance and causality) might not be in the world-as-it-is, but conditions of our knowing it all. These ‘pure precepts of the understanding’ were ‘synthetic *a-priori* truths, because without them it would impossible to understand or making sense of the world.

The question arises is how do reflective and reflexive experiential processes actually function. Reflective and/or reflexive SMVs emerge from and return to remould new SMVs, from three interacting pointers: God, being human and nature. Problematic issues arising can be ascribed to the separation of these three pointers seldom been noticed on the level of awareness. Initial reflection about the threesome of God, human beings and nature being part of all experiences results in sceptic utterances: how can God be involved in the way I choose to walk, to talk? Too often God has been confined to religious life, religious thoughts, thus compartmentalised. When God and his Spirit are been revealed and recognised as suffused throughout creation, God's presence is recognised not only in religious action and thought, but also in all experience: I walk a certain way as I was created a certain way. Similarly too, nature – everything we are surrounded by, the air in our lungs, the cosmos of which are a part – is inseparable from life and God.

Where considerable reflection has taken place a person is consciously active with the area of aware and scientific reflexive patterning and theory formation. Interestingly the majority of dogmas, doctrines and conventions in the history of ecclesial Christianity are conscious and reflexive theoretical codes and modes gleaned from specific historical contexts. Even a particular church or community of faith, has agreed upon code and modes of what Word or Spirit is, expresses their aware, reflexive and theoretical sense-making experience of a particular historical period and context. In this regard, doctrines such as the trinity or the Word of God in its various forms take on lives of their own. The Bible as Word of God, Jesus Christ as Word of God or a word handed on to another person as a Word of God are agreed upon codes and modes within a faith community around which much aware, reflexive and theoretical patterning, codification and mode formation took place (Van Niekerk 2005:403). Unfortunately, the latter patterning and mode-formation in history were and are been done mainly by theologians, experts of faith, faith leaders and bureaucrats. One can almost gain the impression that a 'Divine deep throat' is speaking or interpreting reality (Van Niekerk 2005:421). You are at odds; no backchat or reasoning, feeling or doubt is been allowed in such a paradigm.

### **5.3.2 Second characteristic**

*"Sense making views and approaches have an embracing radical, differential and integral role in people's lives, that is in each field, mode or dimension of experience and in each scientific and philosophical field and perspective."* (Van Niekerk 2006/7:52)

One may argue that the individual is far too complex to navigate by means of one overarching SMV. The second characteristic of SMVs states that people are not restricted to one SMV that guides all experiences and that has evolved from a conglomeration of all experiences.

Each facet or field of human experience is been explained in a way that makes sense to that individual. The techniques, reflective or reflexive, employed by the individual, will differ from field to field, for example: making sense of emotions and feelings will differ from making sense of politics or economics. However, as feelings may be passionately aroused when making sense of the latter. Although differentiated, they remain, to a greater or lesser degree, interconnected. It becomes increasingly apparent that one cannot compartmentalise human experience. Reflexive is not been entirely separated from reflective, as the objectivity often claimed in theoretical, scientific or philosophical is a barely human concept.

The pointers that remain overarching present in each field of experience are those of God, being human and nature. These pointers model the interconnectedness and differentiation between the specific human fields of experience. Thus, although similarities between the fields may be slight, each is been affected by and affects the experience of these three pointers.

### **5.3.3 Third characteristic**

*“A sense making view and approach emerges in an ongoing computational process of regularities and changes, of order and chaos and of system and randomness.”(Van Niekerk 2006/7:53)*

I believe that there are great numbers of variables with a pattern SMVs. They begin on an almost primitive scale of connections and approaches within the whole network of experiences in our lives. At the beginning and at the end of the continuum are the triad of God, being human and the physical-organic world. The continuum begins with the most basic, least aware and almost instinctive views: walking, sitting, swallowing food in ones mouth. As the continuum progresses, things become more aware, more calculated: learning, investigating, avoiding interpersonal relations. Within each of these fields of experience are sub-fields relating to that field (Van Niekerk 2006/7:53).

The change that occurs within SMVs is usually so gradual that they are unnoticed in their evolution. One is been reminded of the chaos theory, and the gradually growing fractals, creating new patterns until a picture appears to develop from a slow, creeping nowhere. Without this change in pattern, adaptation would not take place, and reactions to experiences would gradually become irrelevant, inappropriate or impractical.

Naturally, there can be events that cause SMVs suddenly to change direction, but these too are reactions to events, the immediate reactions and change in view is largely uncalculated. When events are sudden or dramatic, after the initial unconscious reaction because of ones SMV, awareness increases as conscious coping mechanisms come into play, resulting in theory-praxis development, affecting scientific, aware reflexive thought. Change in SMVs is

affected by all fields of human experience, as well as the triad of God, being human and the natural world, and also affects the experience of this triad (Van Niekerk 2006/7:53).

#### 5.3.4 Fourth characteristic

*“Everyday and philosophical and scientific sense making views and approaches influence and support each other mutually.”*(Van Niekerk 2006/7:53).

Everyday sense making views and scientific and philosophical sense making views can be divorced but such a division is damaging. This division may arise due to the difference in awareness required for everyday SMVs and the awareness required for scientific and philosophical reflexion. I believe that everyday SMVs are the stuff from which science and philosophy originate. They may require less conscious thought, belief and verbalising, but they provide the foundations for further reflexion: what is taken for granted 364 days of a year may one day of the year prompt someone to reflect further, deeper and more consciously about it.

Everyday SMVs and scientific and philosophical SMVs are different, but depend on one another. Without my patterns of SMVs, I could not consider what I am discussing, for example! Further thinking naturally leads to an advanced level of givens, a new set of things taken for granted. Once again, the opportunity arises for further scientific thought, and so on.

Most SMVs in science and philosophy rely only on some sort of relationship between human beings and nature, leaving God out of the equation. Van Niekerk refers modern scientists and philosophers to what he termed as the struggle between the *theanthropocosmic* and the *anthropic-cosmological* principles:

“The basic modern struggle in the sciences and philosophy revolves around which of the *theanthropocosmic* and the *anthropic-cosmological* principles should be the determinative functional and operational composite principle or basic pointer system of every field, capacity, mode and dimension of human experience and of every science and philosophy. The current situation in the world is that the *anthropic-cosmological* principle is the driving force of the overwhelming majority of scientists and philosophers.” (2006/7:54).

Van Niekerk asserts that in the modern era (1600-2000) theoretical and scientific tool pairs and triads facing each other as two or three pointers on a continuum of pointers according to six trajectories:

“Diverse philosophical and scientific tools operate as tool pairs in peculiar and particular ways in people’s sense making experience, philosophies and sciences as an expression and embodiment of how things make sense to them in daily life,

philosophy and science. I choose to use the terms 'continuum' and 'pairs of pointers or triadic pointers' set on a continuum as the way in which these tools are accessed. Each of the more than 50 tool pairs and triads given in section 8 are operational through variables of these five or six ways in the modern era.

In Modernity a number of pairs of tools emerged which are been used in some way in the majority of academic disciplines. They function so strongly that they have become part of everyday language. Politicians and people who are politically involved, the media people in society (from journalists to television talk show hosts), professionals in many walks of life, priests, pastors and ministers of religion, legal people (from judges to prosecutors and police officials), and labour union officials and members use these tools to analyse, classify and make judgements about almost everything in society." (Van Niekerk 2006/7:55).

Van Niekerk further asserts that these tool pairs and sets of triads such as (...objective...subjective...), (...theory...praxis/practical...), (...facts /'is'...values/'ought'...) and (...cause...effect...) are been positioned in the modern era in the six ways:

"In the modern functional and operational processes of either a *struggle* between or *identification* of two of the three pointers, the remaining one of the tripartite alliance of God, human beings and nature as the physical-organic environment was functionally put on ice or taken out of the equation. The question in respect of every tool pair in this module is how to get out of the forceful attraction of the major modus operandi of modern people, i.e. to read every text, every theory, every physical-organic process and every human doing as either a struggle or an identification of any two of the threesome of main pointers, while one of the pointers is usually not accounted for in the constructed tool pair.

I stated earlier those tendencies of the 'struggle' sort of any two of the threesome of pointers (God, human beings and the physical-organic environment), or any two derivatives of these facing each other are that:

1. they operate as dualistic pointers in *opposition* to each other
2. they operate as dualistic pointers *complementary* to each other
3. they operate as dualistic pointers, which are set in a *dialectical* relationship
4. they operate as dualistic pointers in which one *irrupts* into the other

The main tendency of the 'identification' sort of two of the threesome of pointers in Modernity is that:

5. the dualistic pointers are been *identified* with each other through the annihilation, effacement, eradication or contraction of one pointer by the other.



The exception to the modernist rule of a struggle or identification of two of the threesome, or two of their derivatives is:

6. an *expanding and contracting rolling triad of experience, which emits traces of God, the human self and the natural physical environment* in each field of everyday human experience, as well as in each theoretical and reflexive process of the different sciences and philosophies. I have attempted to capture this operational strategy in the *theanthropocosmic* principle.” (Van Niekerk 2006/7:287-288).

Van Niekerk’s investigation into the theories of science and philosophy led him to a theoretical sense making approach of Modern scientific and philosophical tool pairs or triads set as ‘notional’ pointers facing each other on a continuum of pointers or grids. He discovered that these tool pairs emerged as derivatives from processes around the positioning of human beings in opposition to nature in the history of modern science and philosophy. These tool pairs are been positioned in *opposition* to each other but also *complementary* to each other, *dialectically* positioned to each other, one *irrupting* into the other, one *absorbed or effaced* by the other or positioned as part of a *rolling triad overlapping and including God, human beings and nature* (2006/7:285-288).

### **5.3.5 Fifth characteristic**

“A *sense making view and approach as a view of a singular person overlaps and differs within the person himself or herself and with the sense making views of other people.*” (Van Niekerk 2006/7:56).

There are multitudes of occurrences within human experience, whether within an individual or the human race. As the fields of experience are so varied, making sense of a certain aspect or reacting emotionally to another aspect of human relations can vary greatly from making sense of a SMV pattern of, for example, travelling safely. These fields maybe led by the same SM view of self-preservation, but his self-preservation view will also manifest itself in different ways in different circumstances. In terms of the overarching theanthropocosmic principle, this further adds to the complexity of SM views. If God is part of creation, and acknowledged as so, one will approach self-preservation, differently from one, whose SM views proceed from the anthropic-cosmic principle.

Every other SMV in individual experience will influence these set of beliefs, and as they vary so much within the individual, there are bound to be different nuances in so-called set of pointers or groups of SMVs. Moreover, as each person, whether in a particular group, culture, religion, is an individual, no set group SMVs will be 100 percent the same throughout the group, leading to many variables with an apparently set theme.

### **5.3.6 Sixth characteristic**

*“The Reality or realness of the threesome of God, humanity and the physical-organic world should intrinsically be part of every realm of Reality. The quality of the threesome realness built in the term Reality has to do with the realness of the Godness of God, the humanness of human beings and the naturalness of nature in the everyday and the scientific and philosophical realms.”(Van Niekerk 2006/7:57).*

The Godness of God, the humanness of human beings and the naturalness of nature are part of that which makes up reality for us. This is true in terms of both everyday non-theoretical SMVs and scientific, philosophical theoretical aware SMVs. The theoretical fields tend to reject God as being part of reality, but I believe this to be an incorrect way of reflexion in two ways: Firstly God is been rejected largely due to the image that God evokes: religion, places and times of worship, rituals and times apart from other everyday experiences. God is been perceived as separate from normal life, and life *in Christ* and *in the Spirit* (in the Christian-Spirit-directed view) is to deny the world, human and natural, and pay heed exclusively to God. This view must propagate the separateness view of God. Secondly, the denial or ignoring of God in most views - non-theoretical and theoretical - is that God is such an old fact that God's role in a God-human-and-world view is simply not been noticed by most. Because of God's multifarious involvement in and through creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment one cannot pinpoint God as the cause of everything. Thus, one cannot go back to an era before there were any of the cosmic universes as if we are capable of designating God as the all-initiating agent that has set everything in motion. The important point is that we only know our creatureliness and God's role in our everyday experience of us been created. He just is, was and will be he is not a new discovery or tangible in the way we accept most reality as being tangible. For most, God is easy to forget, but our humanness, and the physical-organic natural world we are been connected with and differ from in our more tangible reality is not easy to ignore.

Van Niekerk in this regard asserts:

“How the threesome or triad of God, human life and natural physical reality interlocks can be seen in one's everyday GLW (sense making) view and the theoretical reflexive philosophy and science in which one is engaged. In the field of a particular science or cluster of sciences a discerning person can philosophically easily detect whether there is an interlocking of some kind between the reality of God, human life and the natural physical reality, or only between two of the threesome, for instance human life and the natural physical reality as in most modern scientific enterprises. The word 'reality' is been introduced in three ways, i.e. concerning the realness of the Godness of God, the humanness of humanity and the naturalness of the natural world/universe. Many people use the term 'real' or 'reality' in many ways. Sometimes a person's real God or reality of God is another one's artificial or false God. The same is true with regard to some people's experience of the real world or their world as true reality and their experience of real human beings as true reality. The term 'Reality',

when used with a capital letter in this module, means that I am referring to the interlocking Reality of human life, the physical world/universe and God. I do not want to say more about the term 'Reality' other than that God, human life and the world/universe are *really* connected and interlocked and do overlap with each other in people's non-theoretical sense making patterns (or GLW views), people's theoretical and reflexive philosophies, sciences and technologies while they are *really* radically different realities and of other types of existence. I suggested earlier that we should approach the *realness* of the close interconnection and the radical otherness of God, humanity and the physical-organic environment as a mystery and not a problem that can yet be solved in the current world."(2006/7:57-58).

### **5.3.7 Seventh characteristic**

*"A sense making view or approach expresses itself in the pattern of theoretical pointers of any science and philosophy."*(Van Niekerk 2006/7:58).

Theoretical views, investigations and views need to claim objectivity in order to be accepted in the scientific world, but within the individual, one field of experience cannot but help colouring another field of experience, thus objectivity remains an unattainable concept. Although there are so many varied patterns within individual experience, I believe that they are been arranged in such a way as to cause minimal incongruence and conflict between the patterns. In order for this internal arrangement to be effective, there has to be a certain degree of overlap between SMVs within the individual. Certain pointers – work ethic, values, culture and religion – not necessarily only following the theanthropocosmic or anthropocosmic principles, will provide the spokes of the web - the framework already put in place according to aforementioned principles – and additional SMV patterns will fill in the continuing intricacies. This will ensure interconnectedness of the SMVs within an individual.

The SMVs of other people will add to and influence and individual's views. There can and will be certain pointers that are been adhered to by certain groups: a cultural norm, a health trend, but these also differ within the web of patterns. Many people believe that what they believe in terms of Christian doctrine is that what all Christians believe or at least should believe. Even in matters of basic doctrine – Jesus' death and resurrection, the incarnation, salvation through grace, etc – there are human induced sense making variables.

Nothing is really objective and neutral in matters of theoretical philosophy and science. What some philosophers, scientists and theorists call objectivity and neutrality is an approximation of the greatest possible amount of impartiality within a specific and particular situation and context in terms of a person's sense making or GLW view, etc. People cannot get rid of their sense making views even if they wanted to:

"Even those who seem to agree on a specific term or phrase for their shared set of pointers of meaning and values or their sense making views, orientations or patterns

have a particular understanding of the term or phrase they use depending on what make sense to them. I admit that such an overall and life-embracing set of points of departure is very complex, especially when people are not fully aware of certain factors or pointers that they mutually use or even of the linkages, they make between certain factors in the sense making views they share. Furthermore, while there is overlapping and agreement between many people's GLW views, there is something unique and singular to each person's approach and patterning of his or her experience of what makes sense to him or her."(Van Niekerk 2006/7:58).

A computational function is been noticed in the fluctuations of their SMVs: human beings order their lives around daily practices and beliefs in terms of their God-life-worldview (GLW). It is regulative in the sense that it articulates not only something of the existence, but also something about value and meaning thereof to the subject. Alternatively, it does not only mention various notions held on various realities, but on the whereto and why of these realities too (Nisbett 2003:29-45). It is computational in the adding of experience, compiling thus, deducting, multiplying and even dividing of experiences. Such a computational theory of mind is underpinning one's ideas about God, human beings and nature.

# Chapter 6

## A Spirit-directed approach

### 6.1 A Spirit-directed approach

God's Spirit is operational in the connecting and differentiating of God, human beings and the physical-organic natural world in each of God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation (cross and resurrection), renewal and fulfilment to the end of times. In the mystery of God, human beings and nature been interconnected and simultaneously radically different from each other, God the Holy Spirit is mysteriously involved and engaged in the being thereness (**Dasein**), being thus-and-thusness (**Sosein**), and being in actualness (**Aktsein**) of God, human beings and nature.

The major contribution of Pentecostal experience in the 20<sup>th</sup> century revolves around the *simultaneity* of the *Word* → *Spirit* and the *Spirit* → *Word* trajectories. The first trajectory is that of the Christ-directed movement from Word to Spirit (*Word* → *Spirit*) representing Jesus Christ, (yesterday and today and forever the same - Heb 13:8) as the *reconciling* saviour, healer, baptiser with the Holy Spirit and coming king through the enactment of the *renewal* work of the Holy Spirit. The second trajectory is that of the Spirit-directed movement from Spirit to Word (Spirit → Word) representing the Holy Spirit as the *renewing* saviour, healer, baptiser in the name of Jesus and enabling the coming of the future king through the enactment of the *reconciliation* work of Jesus Christ's cross and resurrection (Van Niekerk 2006:371-376).

The 'pushing' and 'pulling' thrust of the thesis is been consistently emphasised in threesomes, triads and trinitarian sense making schemes such as the triad of the *Dasein* as the being thereness, the *Sosein* as the being thus and thusness, and the *Aktsein* as the being in actualisation and becoming taken and drawn from the Heideggerian world. The latter threesome may appear to be of a highly philosophical speculative and metaphysical nature I am convinced that many of yesteryears speculative and metaphysical terms are today's practical notions that people cannot do without. The grounding triad for the temporality of human experience plays a determinative role in a person's experience of faith as one of a variety of fields of experience in which the mystery of the simultaneity of the connectedness and difference of God, human beings and nature drawn from Van Niekerk's approach is been consistently maintained and sustained in the study.

Van Niekerk is not been followed consistently. While the grounding triad of the thesis is set at the backdrop of his formulation of the quadrilateral processual array of God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment the propelling thrust of the thesis is of a primordial triadic nature, e.g. the emphasis on the work of the Triune God and the kenotic

clothing of creatureliness of God's Spirit in his being thereness, being thus and thusness and dynamic actuality of being.

In the process of operationalising the threesome I align myself firstly with the main Pentecostal line of classical Pentecostal experience as Spirit-directedness (pneuma-directed) in the movement from Spirit → Word (Spirit to Christ) as primary driver of processes in people's experience and life-worlds, and secondly but simultaneously with the movement from Word → Spirit (Christ to Spirit), the Christ-directed movement. In spite of the strong emphasis on the notion of the Triune God and triadic processes in the study, the axiological predisposition of the Spirit-directedness of processes in the natural world and people's daily experience forms the constant undercarriage of the study. After everything is been said and done, we live in the time of the Spirit as co-detectors, co-workers and co-writers of pneumacentric and pneuma-directed pointers and innuendos in all spheres of life.

## **6.2 Intertwined movements of Word → Spirit and Spirit → Word**

The more Pentecostal experience in the global world moved away from the Spirit → Word trajectory of the 1906-1916 period of Azusa Street into a Word → Spirit direction, the more the trajectory of Spirit → Word - intrinsically part of the historical happenings of the first decade of Azusa Street - is been underplayed. A strong emphasis on the Spirit → Word trajectory is been viewed as the typical way outsiders observe the Pentecostal tradition. In this way, House in an extremely well written Christcentric Pentecostal dissertation asserts:

“While outside observers commonly assume that Pentecostalism is pneumacentric, in reality it is a strongly Christcentric tradition. The common symbol of faith of the classical Pentecostal movement, in all its variations, is the fourfold gospel: Jesus as saviour, healer, baptizer with the Holy Spirit, and coming king. This symbol is in fact an Christological statement that conveys the heart and mind of Pentecostal devotion, belief, and practice. The fourfold gospel succinctly but richly expresses the relationship between Christ and the believer and the holistic work of salvation he performs in those who will receive it.” (House 2006:151).

In the view strongly advocated in this thesis the fourfold gospel, succinctly and richly, if read correctly as a simultaneous two-way movement, expresses the dynamics between God's grand act of reconciliation in Christ and God's act of renewal through the Spirit. The two-way movement described as Jesus Christ ↔ Holy Spirit, Word ↔ Spirit and Reconciliation ↔ Renewal points to the mystery of the simultaneous connectedness and difference between God, being human and the physical-organic environment. The grand acts of God's reconciliation and renewal are for the purposes of reflecting and describing of simultaneous intertwining of Word → Spirit : Spirit → Word episodically been lifted from the mysterious array of God's acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation.

The movements in a dynamic too and fro movement from Word to Spirit and from Spirit to Word are been intertwined (Versteeg 1978:16; Quispel 1976:8). In this sense the Spirit is not only ‘the Spirit of the living Lord, the Spirit of Jesus Christ’ but Jesus Christ is the Christ of the Holy Spirit through being raised and resurrected by the Spirit from the death which has found its affirmation on the day of Pentecost. Versteeg provides an important marker as he notes:

“...dat in het Nieuwe Testament het verband tussen Christus en de Geest niet met één lijn, maar met twee lijnen wordt aangegeven. Er is de lijn van de Geest naar Christus en de lijn van Christus naar de Geest. Bij de eerste lijn is de Geest subject en Christus de object, terwijl bij de tweede lijn – omgekeerd – Christus subject en de Geest object is. Bij de eerste lijn lijkt – naar de woorden van W Kasper – de Christologie bijna een functie van de pneumatologie, terwijl bij de tweede lijn – omgekeerd – de pneumatologie bijna een functie van de Christologie lijkt. Beide lijnen sluiten elkaar niet uit of zijn niet met elkaar in strijd. Ze vinden hun eenheid in de zeer concrete verbanden van de heilsgeschiedenis” (1978:17).

The Spirit-directed approach – we are living in the time of the Spirit - is been emphasising both the Christ → Spirit and Spirit → Christ trajectories as expressive of God’s reconciling work in Christ and renewing work through the Spirit.

Firstly, in a Christcentric process vigorously applied by many Pentecostals all over the world, the term ‘Word’ in the Christcentred Word → Spirit movement represents the *incarnated Christ as divine Son of God ascended to heaven sitting on the right hand side of the Father*. In this view, Christ is only divine on the right hand side of the Father without his resurrected humanity. The text from Hebrews 13:8 in which Jesus Christ is been viewed as yesterday, today and forever is been used as main undercarriage of this Christcentric approach. The divine Son of God sitting on the right hand side of the Father acts out his saving work through being the saviour, the healer, the baptizer (the sanctifier) and the coming king.

Secondly, the term Word represents in Christcentric approaches the notion of *the inscripturated Word, the Bible as the Word of God is Christ in book form* of which the human words and elements have disappeared as human entities to which God’s Spirit is intranaturally and not supernaturally, attached in an everyday way. The Bible as a book of supernatural making is no longer simultaneously God and human Word.

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Pentecostals had been moving closer to the Christcentred approach, strongly advocated by mainline neo-orthodox and evangelical Reformed theology of Barth, Brunner and others. In the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Pentecostals have been establishing stronger links with the ‘theology of hope’ of the Reformed German theologian Jürgen Moltmann. Karl Barth’s role in dragging Pentecostals along in a strong Christcentred direction cannot be overemphasised. What actually happened was that the Christological views of the Lutheran tradition on the ubiquity - everywhere presence - of Christ as the

ascended Son of God found are been affirmed in Pentecostal circles through their affinity with the views of Barth. Barth overplayed the centrality of Jesus Christ as the Son of God in his view of the Triune God being present everywhere and thereby underplaying the Calvinist-Reformed notion of the *extra-Calvinisticum* which is designating the notion of Christ only been present through the Holy Spirit in people's lives and the natural cosmic world. The heart of the extra-Calvinisticum is that Christ still has his resurrected humanity with him where he is presently been situated at the right hand side of the Father (Van Niekerk 1984:34, 58-69).

As early as the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century a pneuma-directed rectification and rightful addition to the main Christ enacted trajectory of the Reformation period from Word → Spirit was been emphasised with greater enthusiasm amongst Calvin's than Luther's followers. Calvin and Zwingli operated in large portions of their work with the Spirit → Word trajectory in which the notion of the *extra-calvinisticum* was a denotation of Christ not present everywhere as the "same yesterday, today and tomorrow" in the Lutheran sense as directly everywhere present through Christ himself. In Calvin and Zwingli's view, Jesus Christ is present through the Holy Spirit in people's lives and the natural world. Thus, the thrust of this notion reminds us that Christ was, is and will not be directly present everywhere and in every period and in such a way bypassing the Spirit of God as the one that makes Christ present (Van Niekerk 1984:34, 2006/7:224). The notion of the *extra-calvinisticum*, meant for Calvin and Zwingli that Christ after his ascension, still had his resurrected humanity, thus his full humanness with him (Weber1962:153; Van Niekerk 2006/7:224). Christ is not been present through his own actions but through the Holy Spirit who applies God's main reconciliatory actions of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus as the saving tools of God in this world, in churches and in people's lives.

For Calvin and Zwingli this meant firstly that Christ could not be directly everywhere present through himself as the Lutherans asserted. Calvin asserted in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1559) of the elements of bread and wine in Holy Communion:

"For as we do not doubt that Christ's body is limited by the general characteristics common to all human bodies, and is contained in heaven (where it was once for all received) until Christ return in judgment [Acts 3:21], so we deem it utterly unlawful to draw it back under these corruptible elements or to imagine it to be present everywhere." (Institutes Book IV, chapter 17, par 12).

Secondly, that Christ is not dwelling in a person's heart and life exclusively in a divine sense but was dwelling through the Holy Spirit in the total bodily existence of a human being (the temple of the Holy Spirit - according to Paul in 1 Cor 6:19). Calvin continues with his argument on the elements of bread and wine in the context of Holy Communion by saying:

"And there is no need of this for us to enjoy a participation in it (bread and wine – JN), since the Lord bestows this benefit upon us through his Spirit so that we may be



made one in body, spirit, and soul with him. The bond of this connection is therefore the Spirit of Christ, with whom we are joined in unity, and is like a channel through which all that Christ himself is and has, is conveyed to us." (Institutes Book IV, chapter 17, par 12 ).

Thirdly, the extra-Calvinisticum signifies that the greatest work of the Holy Spirit in salvation or reconciliation is the raising of Jesus from the dead affirmed in the events of the day of Pentecost (Van Niekerk 2006:374f, 379-381).

Van Niekerk (April 2007) in a conversation has been pointing to the remarkable contradictions in Calvin's life and work. Calvin to a certain degree has been taking back some of the positive contributions his notion of the extra-Calvinisticum made in the Christian world.

According to Van Niekerk: firstly, Calvin and the total Reformed/Presbyterian tradition are like the proverbial single eagle on the edge of the roof in their rejection of the continuation of the gifts of the Spirit beyond the era of the apostles. Calvin's rejection of a continuation of the gifts of the Spirit in the post apostolic era goes directly against the notion of the extra-Calvinisticum in which Christ is been depicted as still having his resurrected humanity, the Spirit's greatest gift, miracle and wonder done in the world. The question to Calvin why it is not possible that gifts, miracles and wonders are been actualised and eventuated (intra-naturally) by the Spirit in people's lives, similarly to the raising of Jesus Christ from the dead by the Spirit, would have struck at the heart of Calvin's contradiction according to Van Niekerk.

Secondly, van Niekerk sees Calvin's strong and consistent continuation with the traditional doctrine of the trinity in all of his work as also expressive of an anti-extra-calvinisticum tendency. According to Van Niekerk, Servetus who is been sent to die at the stake by Calvin in his views of the trinity is surprisingly closer to the thrust of Calvin's extra-Calvinisticum than Calvin's own views on the trinity. Calvin's trinitarian formula if he was to be consistent with his idea of the extra-Calvinisticum should have been something like the following: God, the Father, God, the divine and human Son, and God, the Holy Spirit. Van Niekerk's argument of God as One God with thousands of names, modes and dimensions not been incarcerated in a contextually designed web and doctrine of a triune God of three persons acquired from people's experience of the years 250-450 AD, is not followed in this study. God, the Triune God as the One with many names is the giver of faith, encouragement and organic inspiration and is a constant companion through all my journeys of life.

The notion that Christ was mainly present through the Spirit of God was very unpopular with Roman Catholics more trained in certain of Thomas Aquinas' views in which Aristotelian insights were dualistically been remoulded in neo-platonic vein. Luther's theology set against the backdrop of nominalist philosophies and various mysticist approaches would have no

truck with the notion a mystic Christ only indirectly present through the Holy Spirit. Interestingly, a very large group of Pentecostals align themselves with Luther regarding the omnipresence of Jesus Christ. Their reading of Heb 13:18 of Jesus Christ as “the same yesterday and today and forever” is expressive of a high Christology in which Christ is directly present through being everywhere present.

Ironically, the Spirit enacted trajectory of *Spirit* → *Word*, *death* → *(re)birth* (*death* → *resurrection*) and *renewing* → *reconciling salvation* supposedly been simultaneously intertwined with the first of *Word* → *Spirit*, *birth* → *death* and *reconciling* → *renewal* has been largely underplayed not only in history, surprisingly enough to a large degree amongst Pentecostals too.

Christcentric Pentecostal approaches following neo-orthodox reformed and evangelical theological views summate God’s grand acts of God’s creation, renewal, reconciliation and consummation under the divine reconciling agency of Jesus Christ (the Son as God yesterday and today and forever (Heb 13:8). This means that all of God’s works is mainly concentrated in Christ’s reconciling work through the four/fivefold gospel as saviour, healer, baptiser (and sanctifier) and coming king. The fifth element of sanctifier appearing as add on element to the list of the fourfold gospel usually effectuated in the Christ → Spirit trajectory, is an indication that a residue of the Spirit → Christ movement strongly lived in Christcentric approaches. The Holy Spirit is usually not as main actor brought into this extreme Christcentric approach, not even as the full executor of all four/five Pentecostal tools of Christ who is been primarily accepted as main divine actor of God’s Kingdom (Commonwealth) in history. The second trajectory we have seen earlier is that of the Spirit-directed movement from Spirit to Word (Spirit → Word) representing the Holy Spirit as the *renewing* saviour, healer, baptiser in the name of Jesus and coming prophet through the enactment of the *reconciliation* work of Jesus Christ’s cross and resurrection.

## **6.3 Notions of the Holy Spirit in the past**

### **6.3.1 Patristic and Medieval Theology**

The writings of the New Testament are unequivocal in their accounts of God and Jesus Christ as being close in the Spirit to the believer, to the community of faith as present in the Spirit, through the Spirit and indeed as Spirit. The presence of God and Jesus Christ here and now is a spiritual reality of renewing wholesomeness. What then, is the meaning of ‘Spirit’ here in and amongst us? People in ancient times imagined the ‘Spirit’ as invisible yet powerful and real like energetically charged air, storm, wind and as important as the air we breathe. According to the accounts of creation (Gen 1:2, 2:7, Job 27:3, 33:4, Ps 33:6, Ps 104:30, Rom. 8:1-11) in the Bible, ‘Spirit’ (Hebrew – *ruach*, Greek - *pneuma*) is the wind, the ‘tempest’ of God over the waters (Von Rad 1987:49). Westermann (1987: 31) argues that

'Spirit' in the Bible means – as opposed to 'flesh' – created, perishable reality – the force or power proceeding from God.

The invisible power of God is creative and destructive, and life giving and judgement delivering in the interactive events of the Commonwealth of God through God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation. The moving and meandering processes of the Commonwealth of God is the playground and workplace where the stewardship, thus the responsibility and accountability of God, human beings and physical-organic nature towards each other, are enacted and worked out in a vigorous Spirit-directed and embracing Spirit-filled sense (Van Niekerk 2006:381). The invisible power comes upon prophets and leaders, on sons and daughters, kings and singers, on God's people scattered mysteriously in interactive ways and through interlinked happenings of holiness all over the Holy Spirit's playground, the Commonwealth of God (Eichrodt 1985:46-68).

In the playground of the Commonwealth of God, Godself as Holy Spirit is close to human beings and the natural cosmic world as the embracing, bestowing, life-creating power and live-giving force. The Holy Spirit is not a third party between God and human beings and the natural cosmic world but God's closeness to humanity and the natural cosmic world (Kuyper 1969:112-116). Pentecost is not an appendix nor a supplement to 'Good Friday' and 'Easter', but the objective of Jesus' self-sacrifice in his death on the cross and the goal of his resurrection through God in all dimensions of the Godness of God.

Where the Holy Spirit is, there is God present in a special, particular and specific sense and as live-giving force and embracer of everything, the Spirit is experienced through that which is been brought forth fully (Moltmann 1996:4). One has to add that what is been fully brought forth and embraced by the Spirit is been done, intra-divinely, intra-humanly and intra-naturally. The threesome use of the term 'intra-' means that the Spirit is the all-initiating agent of the interlinked processes and interactive events of the Commonwealth of God in the most radical, integral and differential sense.

God as the main player in the processes and events of the Commonwealth of God is not 'a' or 'the' Spirit of God. Godself as Holy Spirit is intra-divinely in action. Godself as Holy Spirit is intra-humanly actively present in human beings, not the spirit, divine soul or God-spot of human beings. Godself as Holy Spirit is underlying and overlaying the macro and micro processes of the natural cosmic world, not the cosmic spirit of the natural cosmisation processes in the universe. Furthermore, Godself as the Holy Spirit is to be distinguished from the evil spirits of the world and the modern day anthropological modes of spirituality and the mind and spiritually inclined efforts of liberation in human beings. Finally, Godself as Holy Spirit is not a kind of magic, tantra, fantasy or supernatural aura of a dynamistic character or permeating animistic spirit.

Early Christian understanding of creation and the ultimate destiny of human beings and the natural cosmic world is inseparable in a Spirit-directed approach. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament and in the early fathers is not easily been reduced to a system of concepts (Gscwend 1975). Athanasius in his *Four epistles to Serapion* and Basil of Caesarea in his treatise on the Holy Spirit stated that the Holy Spirit could not be a creature: the Spirit is been consubstantially conjoined with the Father and the Son. Athanasius' *Four Epistles to Serapion*, a fellow bishop in exile, attacked the *Tropici* – the name Athanasius gave to a group of Egyptian theologians known for taking passages of Scripture out of context (i.e. 'troping'). The *Tropici* held to the doctrine of the creature-hood of the Spirit. The Spirit is an angel, superior to other angels, but a ministering spirit. The Tropici, although they acknowledged the deity of the Son of God derived the idea of the Spirit as angelic ministering agent possibly from an earlier connection with the Arians. In this they anticipated the Macedonians or *Pneumatomachi* who were anathematized in 381(CE) at the first council of Constantinople for their refusal to confess that the Holy Spirit, like the Son, had the same substance (*ὁμοούσιος*) as the Father. Their main line of argument that the Holy Spirit is neither God nor a mere creature, seemed – coupled with their interpreted support of Scripture – to indicate the inferiority of the Spirit to the Father and Son (Schaff 1968:639; 664-665; Ayer 1970).

Athanasius in the 4<sup>th</sup> century was compelled to elaborate his own theology of the Spirit. He argued that in Scripture the Spirit is been said to come from God, to bestow life and sanctification, to be omnipresent, unique, and unchangeable, thereby making us partakers of God, making humans divine (Davis 1990:107,113 and 125 –126:166; Burgess 1984:116 – 120). Herein we see embryotically the idea of Augustine's emphasis on the Spirit as a manifestation of the Word – which is also been an expression of the Western church's notion of the *filioque* of deriving the Spirit from both the Father and the Son.

The Eastern Church's notion of the Spirit deriving directly from the Father is interestingly more in line with the Pentecostal understanding of the Spirit of centuries later down the line as the access and opener of any working and application of the Word in people's lives and the world.

The Western Church's notion of the Spirit was been enveloped in expressions of the Word as Logos-directed rational explications thereof which is another way of expressing the preponderance and predominance of the Word either as Christ, the logos, or as the Word of God, the Bible. The Spirit in many instances became an appendix of the Word or as in some cases the 'Go-between-God' between the Father and the Son.

The development in the Eastern Church was more in line with certain neo-Platonic philosophical impulses, especially in the Holy Spirit been manifested and mirrored in liturgical procession and spiritual iconic experience (Burgess 1984:108-115). The reflection of the early centuries on especially the role of the Spirit in salvation and the trinity led too a slow but

sure erosion of the intertwinement of the interchange, exchange and fusion of the Word and the Spirit and has an impact on the one-sided reflection of later communities and churches. The 4<sup>th</sup> century's discussions on the divinity of the Spirit remained however locked in a spiritual elevated salvific context which is my way of saying that the denigration of the bodily and natural cosmic dimensions of that period were strongly viewed as of a lower order.

In the patristic period, we encounter little that moves beyond the biblical ideas of the Holy Spirit. The apostolic fathers reflected the New Testament idea that the spirit is operative in the church, inspiring prophecy and otherwise working within individuals (Barnabas 12:2; Ignatius, Phil. 7:1). Itinerant Christian prophets are been dealt with as a present reality in the Didache but, as time passes, such charismata are treated as theoretical. The view that the spirit of Old Testament prophecy is one and the same Holy Spirit that inspired the apostles is periodically encountered (Justin, Dialogues 1-7; 51; 82; 87; Irenaeus, Against Heresies II, 6.4; III, 21.3-4) and the apostles emerge as the 'Spirit-bearers' (*pneumatophoroi*) a designation given to the Old Testament prophets (Hos 9:7, LXX). The Holy Spirit is been credited with empowering the communities of churches, even with inspiring certain non-canonical writings, as late as the fourth century (Burgess 1984:108–120).

Even though the 'trinitarian' formula of Matt. 28:19 is found in the apostolic fathers, the word 'trinity' is first applied to the Godhead by Theophilus of Antioch (To Autolytus 2: 15). Tertullian clearly taught the divinity of the Holy Spirit, an idea that was later to occupy the church in discussion for a thousand years. Tertullian wrestled with the problem of the tension between the authority of the Spirit in the church versus apostolic tradition and Scripture as received revelation. He espoused Montanism for a time, a system placing primary importance on the inspiration of the Spirit in the body i.e. the church. The church, however, rejected Montanism in favour of the 'objective' authority of apostolic tradition as reflected in accepted Scripture, and Montanism eventually died out - or did it?

In today's world, the question is often been heard: 'What does the Holy Spirit have to do with the church as a historical organisational framework from long ago?' The contrast between those one might call charismatic who viewed themselves as Spirit-filled and those who draw heavily on being part of the apostolic succession in a community becomes not only immediately visible but it is one of the contributory causes of all sorts of tension between two sides with such opposite views. The church's stand against the Montanistic heresy was largely responsible for the demise of Christian prophecy and other charismata. The Muratorian Canon (lines 75ff.) states that the number of prophets is settled and even the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, which elevates charismatic leadership above ecclesiastical structure, restricts the term 'prophet' entirely to the canonical prophets. As early as the late fourth Century John Chrysostom already spoke of the spiritual gifts as belonging to an age in the past.

In the period immediately prior to Nicea the church was preoccupied with the famous

'Christological controversies' and paid scant attention to a doctrine of the Holy Spirit (González 1989:189). The Nicene Creed confesses faith in the Holy Spirit but without any development of the idea of the Spirit's divinity or essential relationship to the Father and the Son. This question became a major issue within the church in the late fourth century and following, and the Council of Constantinople added to the words of the Nicene Creed, describing the Holy Spirit as 'the Lord and Giver of Life, proceeding from the Father, to be worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son.' A controversy developed around the source of the Spirit, specifically whether the Spirit also ought to be confessed as 'proceeding from the Son.' Following Augustine's teaching, the phrase *filioque* ('and the Son') – coined by Epilandus – was added by the Western church to the above creed at the Council of Toledo in 589 AD (De Jong 1987:97). The Eastern Church rejected the *filioque* doctrine, and the creed has intrinsically constituted confessional grounds for the split between East and West as already been taken place in practice.

Although other aspects of the Spirit were occasionally been discussed, the procession of the Spirit continued to occupy theologians in the West. Anselm of Canterbury brought the debate into the era of scholasticism and, although reason as proof of doctrine was been unevenly received, the notion of *filioque* remained the standard of the church. Peter Lombard argued from Scripture for *filioque*, and the fourth Lateran Council again espoused Trinitarianism and *filioque*. Although Aquinas rejected reason as a means to know the distinctions of the Divine Persons, he affirmed that the Spirit proceeds from the special relationship that exists between the Father and the Son. Such discussions as this continued into the 15th century, when the Council of Florence again attempted to unite the Western and Eastern churches (1987:102). The *filioque* idea was been reaffirmed and, although a cosmetic change of wording was made in an attempt to satisfy the Eastern Church, the Greek Orthodox Church rejected the substance of the creed. The position of the Roman Catholic Church has remained essentially unchanged and the rift between East and West over this issue remains to the present

### **6.3.2 The Reformation**

Although other aspects of the Spirit's work were of importance in medieval theology, including sanctification and illumination, it was not until the Reformation that the work of the Spirit in the church and partially in society was truly been rediscovered. This was due at least in part to the rejection of Rome's dogma of church tradition as the guarantor of correct Scripture interpretation and formation of true doctrine. This reaction led to a Reformation stress on the idea of *sola Scriptura* and the work of the Spirit in salvation independent of the Catholic Church's 'unbroken succession back to Christ.' While Luther rejected 'enthusiasm' (the subjective claim of direct guidance by the Spirit independent of Scripture or church structure) he stressed the Spirit over structure and understood the Spirit to be at work through the Word (the gospel) primarily in preaching, and in the sacraments, and therefore in

salvation (González 1985:39). The Spirit works in salvation by influencing the soul to reliance by faith to Christ. Faith is itself a mystical gift of God whereby the believers *mit Gott ein Kuche werden* (become kneaded into one cake with God). Without the grace and work of the Spirit, man is incapable of making himself acceptable to God or of having saving faith.

Luther argues in *On the Bondage of the Will* (1525) that saving grace is been accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. Salvation is thus a gift bestowed by the grace of God, and Luther implies that the Word (the Gospel) as preached is primarily the efficacious Word of God after the Spirit had been working upon the heart and will of the hearer (González 1985: 32). For Luther, the Word is the main sacrament for faith and the Holy Spirit are conveyed through the preaching and the teaching of the gospel (Rom. 10:17); baptism and the Lord's Supper are signs of the 'sacrament of the Word' in that they proclaim the Word of God. Luther favoured the preached Word over the written Word, but did not hold the two to be mutually exclusive. To be Christian the preaching of the church had to be faithful to the Scripture; but to be faithful to Scripture, the church had to preach.

The Word, primarily the incarnate Logos, is God's channel for the Spirit. Man brings the Word of the Scripture to the ear but God infuses his Spirit into the heart; the word of Scripture thus becomes the Word of God (*Luther's Lectures on Psalms; Epistle to the Romans*). No one can rightly understand the Word of Scripture without the working of the Spirit; where the Word is, the Spirit inevitably follows. The Spirit does not operate independent of the Word. Luther resisted the enthusiasts' sharp distinction between inward and outward Word. On the other hand, he rejected the Roman Catholic idea that the Spirit is been identified with church office and that the sacraments are effective in and of themselves (*ex opere operatum*.) Thus the Spirit makes Christ present in the sacraments and in Scripture; only when the Spirit makes Christ present in the word is it God's own living Word (1985:34-35). Otherwise, the Scripture is letter, a law, it merely describes, and it is only history. However, as preaching, the Word is gospel (as opposed to law); the Spirit makes it so. The Spirit is not bound to the Word; he exists in God's eternal glory, away from the Word and our world. Nevertheless, as revealing Spirit he does not come without the Word.

Melancthon followed Luther with few exceptions (González 1985:43). Although allowing more room for man's response to the gospel than Luther, he still stressed the primary work of the Spirit in salvation. Melancthon, however, demonstrating more flexibility than Luther on the issue of the real presence in the Lord's Supper was in basic agreement with Luther as seen in the Augsburg Confession and its Apology. Eventually, he abandoned Luther's doctrine on the Last Supper, by looking more at Christ's spiritual communication with the faithful and their internal union with him as the essential feature of the Sacrament. Melancthon drifted more towards Calvin's theory. Lutheranism, narrow and harsh, won however the day with its Formula of Concord (1580).

Zwingli differed from Luther and Melancthon over the work of the Spirit in the sacraments,

denying the necessity of baptism and asserting the largely commemorative significance of the Lord's Supper. While Luther held that an inner divine action took place while outer human action was being performed, Zwingli refused to grant such efficacy to the sacraments, for this would limit the freedom of the Spirit. (González1985:51-52). The difference between Luther and Zwingli's view on the Lord's Supper is being ascribed to their respective interpretation of *communication idiomatic*, and *alioiosis*. This communication of properties provides some account of how both divine and human attributes are being ascribed to Christ (Cross 1995:105). Zwingli maintains that Christ is at the right side of God in his humanity, and cannot be present in the Lord's Supper at the same time. The material elements, and the physical actions that accompany them, can be no more than signs or symbols of spiritual reality. God is present in his divine nature. Luther held the opinion of a 'local presence' of Christ in the Lord's Supper; material elements serve as a conduit for the presence of Christ. Lutherans came to believe in the ubiquity of Christ's body and nature. Their differences regarding communion were the result of their divergent views on the relation between matter and spirit, and therefore on the nature of God's revelation (Cross 1995:119; Gonzáles 1985:52).

The radical Reformers, too, was at odds with Luther and Melancthon and taught the priority of immediate revelation over Scripture. Lutherans and Catholics alike were being condemned by the Schwärmer (fanatics) for their dependence upon the letter of Scripture instead of making the Bible subject to tests of religious experience (Clark 1997:32, 40). The Bible was to them not a textbook or merely human history, but of the divine in relationship with the human being – a testimony of the way God and human beings have related to one another; a history which could now be continued in the same way. The aim of the church was not to compile dogma, confessions and lectionaries – it was to live and act!

Calvin taught that the Spirit works in regeneration to illumine the mind to receive the benefits of Christ and seals them in the heart. The Spirit opens the heart of a man to the penetrating power of the Word and sacraments. Calvin went beyond Luther in asserting that not only is the preached Word the agent of the Spirit, but the Bible is in its essence the Word of God (Genevan Catechism). The Spirit works in the reading of Scripture as well as in the preaching of the Word, and the Word, preached or read, is efficacious through the work of the Holy Spirit. The witness of the Spirit certifies the divine origin of Scripture; the Scripture is the Word of God given by the Spirit's guidance through limited human speech. Thus, the exegete must inquire after God's intention in giving Scripture for us. Christ is 'Lord' because he reigns as king through Word and Spirit. The gospel is 'promise' and the sacraments are the guarantee thereof. In this manner Calvin believe the historic view that Christ's human body-and-soul is not infinite or omnipresent, but is only now at the right hand of the Father. Calvinists came to hold on to the principle of *Finitum non Capax Infiniti*, or the finite is not capable of the infinite. Thus, ever since the Incarnation, there is still infinite deity beyond Christ's human nature. This beyond is – resulting in the *Extra Calvinisticum*. Faith is a gift of



God. The Spirit empowers people to believe, and the Bible provides one with directions thereto in the law (Institutes 2.8.8). The highest proof of Scripture derives from the fact that God in person speaks in it, i.e. in the secret testimony of the Spirit (Inst. 1.7.4). We feel the testimony of the Spirit engraved like a seal on our hearts with the result that it seals the cleansing and sacrifice of Christ. The Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ unites us to himself (Inst. 3.1.1). Although Calvin rejected rational proofs as a basis for authenticating Scripture, inter-confessional battles later caused the rigidifying of Reformed thought, and a tradition of scholastic proofs was developed to overcome the subjectivism of Calvin's authentication theory (the Canons of Dordt).

As has been pointed out earlier in the chapter, Calvin and Zwingli the 16<sup>th</sup> century reformers presented a pneuma-directed rectification of the Spirit → Word movement as rightful addition to the main reformational trajectory of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, from Word → Spirit. The latter trajectory of Word Spirit was taken up with greater enthusiasm amongst 17<sup>th</sup> century, Reformed and Lutheran Orthodox theologians. Calvin and Zwingli operated partially with the Spirit → Word trajectory in their notion of the *extra-calvinisticum* designating that Christ is not experienced as the “same yesterday, today and tomorrow” directly everywhere in the sense of the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ but only by way of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the thrust of this notion reminds us that Christ was, is and will not be directly present everywhere and in every period and such a way thus bypassing the Spirit of God as the one that makes Christ present (Van Niekerk 2006/7:224). This notion was very unpopular with Lutherans and Roman Catholics more trained in line with Aristotelian schemes dualistically remoulded by Thomas Aquinas, nominalist influenced theologies, neo-platonic ideas and certain forms of mysticism. Interestingly, a very large group of Pentecostals align themselves with Luther regarding the ubiquity - everywhere presence - of Jesus Christ. Their reading of Heb 13:18 of Jesus Christ as “the same yesterday and today and forever” is expressive of a high Christology in which Christ is directly present through his omnipresence. The notion of the *extra-calvinisticum*, meant for Calvin and Zwingli that Christ after his ascension, still had his resurrected humanity and full humanness with him (Weber 1962:153; Van Niekerk 2006/7:224). Thus, Christ is not present through his own actions but through the Holy Spirit who applies the cross and the resurrection of Jesus as the present making and saving tools of God in this world, in churches and in people's lives.

A seventeenth century reaction to strict Reformed orthodoxy Calvinism arose in Holland among the followers of Arminius. Arminius' best known as the founder of the anti-Calvinist Orthodoxy school of Reformed theology resisted some of the tenets of Calvinism. Arminius, after whom the movement Arminianism was named, rejected the doctrine of predestination, allowing for a human being in freedom to reject God's offer of grace (González 1985:179). The early Dutch followers of Arminius' teaching were also called the Remonstrants, after they issued a document containing five points of disagreement with classic Calvinism, entitled *Remonstrantie* (1610). In attempting to defend Calvin's view on

predestination against the onslaughts of Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert, Arminius concluded Coornhert was correct in his views. Article one of the Five Articles of the Remonstrants give one an idea of the position Arminius held on conditional predestination against the absolute predestination of Calvin and the double predestination of Beza.

### **Article 1**

“That God, by an eternal and unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ his Son before the foundation of the world, has determined that out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ’s sake, and through Christ, those who through the grace of the Holy Spirit shall believe on this his son Jesus, and shall persevere in this faith and obedience of faith, through this grace, even to the end; and, on the other hand, to leave the incorrigible and unbelieving in sin and under wrath and to condemn them as alienated from Christ, according to the word of the Gospel in John 3:36: “He that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and he that does not believe the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him,” and according to other passages of Scripture also” (Bratcher 2006:2).

The connection between the Spirit, Christ and free will is evidently from Article 5 stating:

“That those who are incorporated into Christ by true faith, and have thereby become partakers of his life-giving Spirit, as a result have full power to strive against Satan, sin, the world, and their own flesh, and to win the victory; it being well understood that it is ever through the assisting grace of the Holy Spirit; and that Jesus Christ assists them through his Spirit in all temptations, extends to them his hand, and if only they are ready for the conflict, desire his help, and are not inactive, keeps them from falling, so that they, by no deceit or power of Satan, can be misled nor plucked out of Christ’s hands, according to the Word of Christ, John 10:28: “Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” But whether they are capable, through negligence, of forsaking again the first beginning of their life in Christ, of again returning to this present evil world, of turning away from the holy doctrine which was delivered them, of losing a good conscience, of neglecting grace, that must be more particularly determined out of the Holy Scripture, before we ourselves can teach it with the full confidence of our mind” (2006:3).

The five articles of the Remonstrants became the focus of the Synod of Dordrecht in the Netherlands, and occasioned The Canons of Dordt, a document of the Dutch Reformed Church that rejected the teachings of Arminius and the Remonstrants and essentially declared their position to be heretical (González 1985:181). Even though Arminius and the Remonstrants were condemned, the controversy did not end and had a liberalising effect on theology in Europe and England, as well as the American colonies. By the mid 1700s, the basic positions of Arminius were refined and expanded in England under the movement

begun by John and Charles Wesley. In both England and the newly formed United States, Methodism and an array of churches followed been known as Arminian-Wesleyan theology. Today, the five points of the Remonstrants still articulate the essential differences between Calvinistic/Reformed traditions and Arminian Wesleyan traditions.

John Wesley grew up in early 18<sup>th</sup> century England within a climate of Arminianism and through him Methodism is been given its distinctive Arminian character. For Wesley, God acts in co-operation with but not in violation of free human response in the matter of saving faith. God does not merely dispense upon man justifying grace, nor does man simply acquire such grace by believing. There is rather a unified process of God's giving and a human being's reception of grace. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin and bears the witness of justification. Thereafter the Holy Spirit continues to work in man in sanctification, such that the believer feels in his heart the mighty workings of the Spirit of God. God continually 'breathes' upon man's soul and the soul 'breathes unto God', a fellowship of spiritual respiration by which the life of God in the soul is sustained. Sanctification, the renewal of a human being in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, is been effected by the Spirit through faith (De Jong 1987:249-252). It includes been saved from sin and being perfected in love. Works are necessary to a continuance of faith and 'entire sanctification,' perfection, is the goal of every believer.

### **6.3.3 The Modern Period**

While seventeenth century radical Puritanism produced the Quakers with their emphasis on subjective experience of the Holy Spirit (the Inner Light of George Fox), such that Scripture is only a secondary source of knowledge for faith and practice (Robert Barclay's Apology), 18<sup>th</sup> century Methodism expressed a more balanced approach to the work of the Spirit. The focus of later Methodism on the work of the Spirit after conversion as an experience of divine grace has found development in the modern Holiness Movement, represented by churches in the Christian Holiness Association (Synan 1988: 291-293).

Another development been traced to Methodism's stress on sanctification is the twentieth century reawakening of Pentecostalism. Stemming from earlier emphasis upon 'second experience,' Pentecostalism has placed great importance upon the 'baptism of the Holy Spirit,' which is seen as the completion of a two-stage process of salvation (Burger 1987:34). Since the inception of this modern movement at the turn of the century, speaking in tongues has been proclaimed as the main sign of Spirit baptism, although other 'gifts of the Spirit', notably healing were also been emphasised. From its fundamentalist/Biblicist beginning the Pentecostal movement has grown into what is loosely been called the charismatic movement, which now touches all of Protestantism and has made inroads into Roman Catholicism. This movement generally proclaims a distinct experience of 'Spirit baptism' and, as a rule, focuses on speaking in tongues as the manifestation of that experience.

One of the most significant twentieth century developments in the understanding of the Holy Spirit was made in the teaching of Karl Barth. Barth, a Swiss Reformed theologian was largely responsible for the introduction of 20<sup>th</sup> century neo-orthodoxy, also called dialectical or crisis theology. Barth and others broke with 19<sup>th</sup> century classical liberalism in the first decades of the twentieth century denying liberal theology's tool of pious religious self-consciousness flowing from its extreme human-centred stance a place under the neo-orthodox sun (Schleiermacher; Ritschl; Feuerbach). Barth replaced the human-centred stance with an extreme God-centred stance by emphasising the 'infinite qualitative distinction' between human beings and God. Barth as a neo-orthodox prophet proclaimed God's *Nein* to the slightest attempt of taking humanly based religious and faith experience serious. All these amount to a human being's attempt to justify him/her in self-righteousness (Van Niekerk 1984:21-23; Küng 1991:515-517). Barth's 'Letter to the Romans' (1919) sounded this note of a human being's 'crisis', the acknowledgement that what a human being knows of God, God has himself revealed – a "theology of crisis, later called dialectical theology (Küng 1991:514). Barth developed his idea of God's self-revelation in terms of the doctrine of the Word of God Barth Church Dogmatics, Vol I, Part 2 – 1975: 6-10; Vol I, Part 2 -1956: 25-50).

First and most importantly, Jesus is the incarnate Logos, the Word of God. The Word of God is subsequently been found in the preaching of the gospel and "among the words of Scripture" (Luther's doctrine of Spirit and Word). The Word of God is God himself in Holy Scripture. Scripture is holy and the Word of God, because by the Holy Spirit it became and will become to the church a witness to divine revelation. This witness is not identical to the revelation; it is not itself revelation, but the witness to it. Faith in Jesus as the Christ, specifically in Jesus' resurrection, is been effectuated through the work of the Holy Spirit. The subjective "in Spirit" is the counterpart to the objective "in Christ". God's grace is manifested both in the objective revelation of God in Christ and man's subjective appropriation of this revelation through the Spirit. According to Scripture, God's revelation occurs in our enlightenment by the Holy Spirit to knowledge of God's Word. The outpouring of the Spirit is God's revelation by virtue of to be free to be God's children and to know, love, and praise him in his revelation. The Spirit as subjective reality of God's revelation makes possible and real the existence of Christianity in the world. For, Barth observes, "...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (II Cor. 3:17); God in his freedom discloses himself to man and so makes man free for him (Barth 1986: 53ff).

## **6.4 Current notions of the Holy Spirit**

### **6.4.1 Introductory comments**

Various notions were propounded in history to explain the work, role and person of the Holy Spirit. Many of these notions doing the round in contemporary discourses on the Spirit emerged from of ecclesial, individual-mystic, Cosmic Spiritual and pan-spiritual approaches

of the past (Dulles 1992:69-83; Küng 1991:696-699; Moltmann 1992:1-3). The overwhelming amount of books and articles produced as popular and theological reading material on the Holy Spirit attests to a moving away from the strong Christcentric views of people like Karl Barth who reduced and concentrated nearly every act and work of God's involvement with human beings and with the natural cosmic world in God's revelation in Jesus Christ. The increasing fashionable tendency of late 20<sup>th</sup> century Christianity of emphasising the Holy Spirit in theological and ecclesial reflection as the initiating actor of the avenues of access to God is in a sense new but also a recurrence of what happened in various periods in the history of Christendom. In several historical contexts when people were concentrating in their discourses on the relationship of God and Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit was been viewed as the indispensable unifying and binding element between them (Berkhof 1986:329-334).

What, then, can be the role and meaning of 'Holy Spirit'? How can we understand it today? Where is the Spirit of God (Welker 1994:338-339)? The invisible and incomprehensible God that Jesus Christ from the dead is truly close to believers, the community of faith: entirely, actually present and effective. How is this been expressed in early Christendom and expressed today? (Küng 1991:696-699).

The Spirit is God-Self close to human beings and the world as the incomprehensible, bestowing, life-creating, power and force. More importantly, the Holy Spirit is to been viewed not as a third party between God and human beings, but as God's closeness in presence to human beings and nature (Berkhof 1986:331-335). From the side of human beings we have to accept in trust that God's closeness in presence means a mysterious complexity of being involved in relations with human beings and nature. The Spirit can gain dominion over my inmost being, my person. At the same time, I can trust in faith that the Spirit of God is not an enslaving Spirit, but the Spirit of the living Lord, the Spirit of Jesus Christ as the standard for individual and community life (Parker 1992:5).

In Van Niekerk's view this classic concentration on faith as the only religious mode in which the Spirit is been operating directly in a human being is no longer acceptable from the perspective of a wholesome God-human-and-nature approach:

"Faith, belief or trust is not more important than thinking, feeling, producing, loving, speaking, etc. Faith and belief experience is not more religious or divine than other fields of human experience and is not a religious dimension beyond any comparison. In fact, in my view there is no special religious dimension, because God is directly involved in every field of experience as the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit. One could compare this with the engine of a motor car: every field of experience has its own spark plug, the nucleus or core of the field of experience where the Spirit of God is continually sparking and fusing, connecting God, being human and the physical-organic environment in each pattern of experience in an intranatural way. The idea of

a religious dimension amongst various human dimensions of experience in our lives creates the impression that God hovers outside non-religious 'ordinary' human dimensions, and is allowed to enter our lives only through a so-called religious and supernatural faith dimension." (2006/7:69).

Jesus Christ not only been anointed and resurrected by the Spirit is the Baptiser with the Spirit. It suffices therefore to speak of the *Christos praesens* and the *Spiritus praesens* (Del Colle 1992:12). It is sensible that no separation between the *Christos praesens* and the *Spiritus praesens* is been maintained without distortion of the intricate relation between Christ and Spirit. This approach deepens our reflective sense making that simultaneously introduces an evaluative moment as well. We may distinguish the *Christos praesens* from the *Spiritus praesens* preserving their mutual co-inherence (taking into account the Augustinian *Opera trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*) and correlating with the crucifixion, resurrection, renewal and fulfilment through which God mysteriously interconnects with and differentiates from human beings and the physical-organic cosmos (Kasper 1977:249-252).

First, the *Christos praesens* is experienced in the modality of a faith posture that is anametic and kerugmatic in nature whereas the *Spiritus praesens* is been known as epicletic and charismatic in nature (Hartvelt 1980:53).

Second, the *Christos praesens* is been marked by a corporeality that relates to the meaning of humanness in the light of the processes of his resurrection (Kasper 1977:251) whereas the *Spiritus praesens* engages the human beings and nature in its respective diversity with its attendant specificity of time-space and experiences.

Third, the *Christos praesens* confirms our corporeality and creatureliness by his self-giving in his passion and resurrection (Versteeg 1980:25-30). The *Spiritus praesens* creates in a mysterious manner an inner and outer directedness and awareness of the overlapping of God, human being and nature (Cordier 2000:198).

Dunn underscores the point that the presence of God in the world of human beings and nature is that of the Kingdom made present by the Spirit of God:

"Since it is by the *Spirit of God* that I cast out demons then upon you has come the kingdom of God". In other words, it is not so much a case of 'Where *Jesus* is there is the kingdom', as, 'Where the *Spirit* is there is the kingdom'. The kingdom is present in *Jesus* only because he has the *Spirit*" (1970:38-39).

Believing in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, means knowing that the Spirit is never my own possibility, but always the force and gift of God Self not to be used to justify absolute power or teaching, nor unsubstantiated theology, pious fanaticism and false security of faith (Küng 1991: 697; Del Colle 1992: 12). No one 'possesses' the Holy Spirit who graciously

invites and encourages us to be co-workers of God that has simultaneously experienced the power of God in Jesus (Clark 1989:43). Michael Welker phrased it as follows:

“In contrast to the so-called natural pneumatologies, it has become clear that the Spirit who acts in the fullness of time ‘rests’ decisively the selfless, suffering and despised Messiah. But in contrast to all ‘pneumatologies of the “beyond”’, it has become clear that God’s Spirit acts in, on, and through fleshy, perishable, earthly life, and precisely in this way wills to attest to God’s glory and to reveal the forces of eternal life”(1994: 338-339).

‘Natural’ pneumatologies are been understood as theologies that simply associate the Spirit with ‘life’ in general, and pneumatologies of the ‘beyond’ that associate the Spirit with strange and obscure actions and experiences removed from the ebb and flow of life. To be a co-worker of God will imply to us that God as Spirit not only guides us in his wisdom to make sense and interpret the meaning of the living God, but also work in, on, and through our common sense of believing, thinking, imagining, etc. (Tillich 1968: 79). The activities of the Spirit become in this sense specific and definite, which means actually liberating and redemptive as been understood from a Christ-directed perspective.

This grants us opportunity to pray all the time: *Veni Creator Spiritus!* Come Creator Spirit! Or in the words of the twelve hymn ‘*Veni Sancte Spiritus*’, written by Stephan Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury describing the acts of the Spirit of God and Jesus Christ:

O Holy Ghost  
Come down from heaven’s height,  
Give us thy light  
O Father of the poor,  
All gifts to men are Thine  
Within us shine  
O Comforter beyond man’s comforting,  
O stranger sweet  
Our hearts await Thy feet.  
In passion, Thou are peace,  
Rest from our labouring,  
Our cooling spring.  
O solace of our tears,  
Upon the secrets of our sins and fears,  
Pour Thy great light.  
Apart from Thee,  
Man has no truth unfeigned,  
No good unstained.  
Our hearts are dry.  
O River, flow thou through the parched ground,

Quicken those near to die.  
Our hearts are hard, o bend them to Thy will, Eternal Lord,  
To go Thy way.  
Thy sevenfold power  
Give to Thy faithful folk  
Who bear Thy yoke.  
Give strength to endure,  
And then to die in peace  
And live for ever in Thy blessedness.<sup>1</sup>

Receiving the Holy Spirit and enter into a relation with God Tri-une in toto as person means opening me inwardly and in relation to the message of Jesus Christ and God, and permitting myself then to be seized by the Spirit of God and Jesus Christ. The freedom of sin, legalism and death, freedom in the world, a freedom for action, for love, joy, peace, justice, hope and gratitude are to be experienced with the Holy Spirit. And, like many fellow believers, encouragement, comfort in troubling times, in great and small decisions, I will be directed to the future by, in, with and through the Spirit (2 Cor. 3). Through the Holy Spirit new possibilities of life or renewal and fulfilment in the fullness of God is been created. My hope is thus set on the Spirit; I believe in God as Spirit and Jesus Christ. My trust is been based on this Spirit, life creating Holy Spirit (McQueen 1995:41). The Holy Spirit determines fundamentally the existence of the believer. This is so because the Holy Spirit is but entirely the giver, the power, the strength and closeness as God.

The Spirit, God's Holy Spirit not to be confused with the human spirit and selfhood, transcends all sin. He is the Spirit of the Son, the Father, of himself. My point of view thus is that God remains God, human beings remain human, and nature remains nature, but open-ended (Meyendorff 1979:135-136). When God interacts with humanity and the physical-organic natural cosmos, the goal of such interaction is not to negate the singularities of his creation, but instead to emphasise the individuality and universality of it. The interactive overlapping, irrupting, and disclosure of God and our cognisance of reconciling and renewing (justifying and sanctifying) salvation, directs human beings and the physical-organic cosmos towards participation and communion with the 'deified humanity' and creatureliness of the incarnate Logos. It is impossible to see the Spirit, but in him, one sees the Son, while the Son himself is the image of the Father (1979:171). In various experiences of people experiencing God's activities as Spirit, discipleship and the effect thereof in people's lives becomes important (Berkhof 1986:329-334). Subtly, the message is been conveyed to be a disciple is that of following in the footsteps of Jesus. On the one hand, we become imitators of God by loving him – on the other God is been mirrored in our lives (Eph 5: 1).

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<sup>1</sup> Translated by Helen Waddell, *More Latin Lyrics*. From Virgil to Milton, ed. Dame Felicitas Corrigan, Golancz, London, 1976, pp.298-301.



The strong emphasis on the Triune God involved in interactive overlapping, irrupting, and disclosure of God and the cognisance of the salvation of human beings and the physical-organic cosmos, may be seen as contradicting the statement above of the major contribution of Pentecostalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century revolving around the *simultaneity* of the trajectories of *Word* → *Spirit* and *Spirit* → *Word*. A notion of salvation as both the Triune God's reconciling work in Christ and renewing work through the Spirit is important in establishing the dynamic connection and difference of the directions of God's work through Christ and the Spirit. Jesus Christ is the *reconciling* saviour, healer, baptiser with the Holy Spirit and coming king through the *renewing* work of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the *renewing* saviour, healer, baptiser in the name of Jesus and the enabling actor of the coming of the king through the *reconciling* work of Jesus Christ's cross and resurrection.

Against the background of the simultaneity of the trajectories of *Word* → *Spirit* and *Spirit* → *Word* in this study the multitude of Pentecostal approaches are been measured too on the simultaneity of the Holy Spirit making people children of God while interceding on their behalves.

Both series of the simultaneity of the *Word* → *Spirit* and *Spirit* → *Word* movements as well as the simultaneity of the Holy Spirit making people children of God while interceding on their behalves are been one-sidedly approached and presented by Pentecostals. It is not surprising that the one-sidedness is been found in two important areas viewed by Pentecostals as determinative of their legacy:

Firstly, Pentecostal approaches of how people are equipped for service by the Spirit revolved around the various gifts of the Spirit mentioned in the Bible. The approach in this study is not that of the supernatural character of the gifts of the Spirit but of their consistent eventuated happening and undergirding by the intra-natural workings of the Spirit who as Creator Spirit is at home within the creaturely world since the creation of the universe.

Secondly, Pentecostal approaches of how people are becoming God's children in the world were usually been clothed with the age-old dualist societal view of church and world. Pentecostalist and Charismatic faith and church communities viewed themselves as been representing the real Spirit-filled and Spirit-directed children of God tasked to witness through evangelisation and missionary work to a world of having far less of the Spirit's presence than those of the Spirit-filled communities. The second leg of the witnessing task of Spirit-filled and Spirit-directed communities has been to other churches whose experience of the Spirit had become vague and without the direction of the Spirit. The approach in this study is not a perpetuation of the dualist societal view of church and world which has lost the plot of the meandering of God's Kingdom is to be viewed as

“the all-embracing ambience of the Commonwealth (=Kingdom, Priesthood, Prophetdom, etc) of God which oscillates in narrowing and widening histories,

percolates in deepening and heightening dimensions, fusing, moving and meandering in, through and with God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation."(Van Niekerk 2006:317).

The experiences of being a church and a faith community in society are been addressed as that of a pentecostal-charismatic community operating against the following background:

"The concrete and material expression and encapsulation of the holy at-one-ment and at-other-ment of the Godness of God, the humanness of human beings, and the naturalness of the physical-organic nature in the cross, the tearing of the veil and the resurrection of the person Jesus, happens through God the Spirit as the realising agent of the nomadic, disseminating and localising processes of holiness anywhere and at any time in the world." (Van Niekerk 2006:374).

People who are part of a pentecostal-charismatic community should be more aware and alert to the fact that the Spirit-directed coming together in fellowship and community experience of holiness can happen and be eventuated everywhere in the world. Happenings and doings of holiness are coming into existence where the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God, as God's Spirit in human beings and as God's Spirit undergirding all mega and micro processes in the natural cosmic world is managing, implementing and eventuating the Godness of God, the humanness of human beings, and the naturalness of the physical-organic nature.

The involvement of God's Spirit in creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation touches ground in the meanderings of the Kingdom of God in the world as one of the determinative pneumatological pointers of this study:

"The Spirit of God - the operating and implementing agent of the cross, the torn veil and resurrection of the person of Jesus - goes through a process of change which culminates in the announcement and proclamation in and through Pentecost by which the Spirit of God has been affirmed and vindicated as the Spirit of holiness, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit on the one hand, drives and guides the holiness and renewal processes in the world as choreographer of renewal and on the other hand is been constantly activated as participating companion in the world by the dynamics of the cross, the torn veil and the resurrection of Jesus. The Holy Spirit embodies and participates, contributes and guides new pockets and packages, new contexts and localisations of at-one-ment and at-other-ment of God, being human and the physical-organic environment in the world. In this sense the Holy Spirit incorporates and embeds every atom and molecule in the physical-chemical world, every cell and organism in the biotic world, every emotion and feeling, every thought and belief, every love action, and every bit of justice in human experience. We do not know how and in what sense the Spirit of God incorporates and embeds thing after thing and being after being in the many universes." (Van Niekerk 2006:374-5).

A dynamic wholesome directed Pentecostal is asserting on the one hand that Christ is the reconciling saviour and the norm and theme of our experiences of being reconciled with the Holy Spirit. The same Pentecostal is also asserting on the other hand that the Holy Spirit is the renewing saviour and the norm and theme of our experiences of being in a renewal process undergirded by the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

A dynamic wholesome pentecostal-charismatic community strongly evangelical in character confesses with a song in the heart that

- ▶ Christ the reconciling saviour and baptiser with the Spirit is the Good News as a message of radical proclamation
- ▶ The Holy Spirit as the renewing saviour and the baptiser in Christ's name is the Good News as a message of renewing wholesomeness

Not all of this are been loosened from the pneuma-directed and pneumacentric thrust behind all. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 6:2) is a testimony hereof. The ethos of Pentecostal thinking is thus: we are people who live *Coram Deo* (before the countenance of God) as human beings standing in a specific relation to God, other human beings and the physical-organic environment. More specifically, however, we live every day, hour, minute and second *Coram Spiritus!*

#### **6.4.2 M Clark: the Spirit's role in creation**

God the Creator, calls his creatures into life, quickens and preserves them through the Spirit. This involvement of God through the Spirit entails an anthropological and cosmological understanding of the Spirit. In order to evaluate God's immanence through the Spirit within the ambience of the world as God's creation, we have theologically to differentiate the active presence and experiences of the Holy Spirit in the life-world of believers, and in creation. Creation in this contexts is not been understood as referring solely to the physical-organic natural world as such. The term 'creation' indicates the whole of our creatureliness expressive of the border that exists between God and creation.

In an article, *A pneumatological perspective on creation and ecology*, Mathew Clark expounds the following premises regarding creation and God:

“This Pentecostal perspective upon creation and ecology must thus remain true to the central message of the Pentecostal movement: Jesus Christ is Saviour, Healer, Baptizer in the Holy Spirit, and Coming King.” To this four-square formula, we might add Jesus Christ, Creator and Sustainer of all things, by His Spirit (Clark 1997:145).

In addition, he continues:

“Pentecostals often appear to be unique in their understanding that the Spirit of creation is still dynamically active on the face of the planet today, not merely mysteriously, not in the salvation of the souls of men alone: but visibly involved in the midst of created physical reality through the charismata which accompany the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. While the gifts of the Spirit include the gift of miracles (working of *dunamis*) and the gifts of healings, *Creator Spiritus* must be understood to be involved with creation today” (1997:147).

This involvement is been understood as:

“The work of the Spirit is not understood primarily in recreating a universe without spot or blemish, but in establishing an eternal fellowship between the resurrected Christ and his resurrected followers” (1997:150).

What Clark thus sets out to do, is to anchor a pneumacentred approach in creation through a Christcentric and thus salvific understanding of the involvement of the Spirit by which the charismata will be the tokens of an eschatological age awaiting creation. The notion of fallen creation and humanity is prevalent, and the clues for Clark of the Spirit’s involvement in creation he finds in the regenerate Spirit-filled children of God with the charismata as visible signs. In the essay, Clark does mention that the Spirit is involved in forms of life from the highest to those with the lowest meaning (1997:145). Clark does not elaborate on the latter but rather prefer to theologise about the purposes of God with and in creation. These purposes are been summed up as that both creation and human beings were made for God in which human stewardship obtains the quality of being a strong notion. This implies:

- The work of the Spirit has as purpose to redeem (*soteria*) physical and spiritual reality. These realities are predominantly been understood as aspects of humanity. The charisma of the Spirit, the gifts of healing and miracles are involved here.
- The purpose of God with creation is, through the power of the Spirit, to lead creation in fellowship with Jesus as destination of all of creation.
- The redeeming of humanity and the activity of the Spirit has as goal the perfect and eternal relationship between the Lamb and the Bride in the eschatological age.

Besides the three-partite scheme that Clark employs (maybe subconsciously?), I have a strong hunch that the eschatological negotiation of the creation and Spirit’s work by Clark is seen as a kind of an action of ‘perfection’ by the Spirit with the primary focus on believers and secondarily on creation as such. The Spirit is however been reduced to an instrument of power or dynamic of perfection placing the emphasis squarely on the Lamb, Jesus. A strong division occurs in the theological scheme proposed by Clark in the simultaneity of the two-way movement of Jesus Christ ↔ Holy Spirit, Word ↔ Spirit and Reconciliation ↔ Renewal expressed against the background of the mystery of the linkages between the grand acts of God’s creation, reconciliation, renewal and future directed consummation. In conclusion, I

rather join the company of Basil the Great and Cyril of Alexandria, (Burgess 1989; Gschwend 1975: 162-177) of which the clue is been drawn that the 'perfecting' action of the Spirit in apocalyptic sense is not belonging to the 'miraculous' action of the Spirit. Clark in stating that the visibility of the Spirit is in the charismata elicits the question whether the Spirit is there and then showing his charismatic face. If that is indeed the case, why is it not happening in other macro and micro events and processes of which God self as Spirit is the initiating agent and life-giving force? In line with what Basil and Cyril assert both the 'perfecting' and 'miraculous' action of the Spirit forms a part of the emergent involvement, overlapping and engagement of God with human beings and the natural cosmic world. This occurs somehow in a radical, integrating and differential manner against the backdrop of the simultaneous complexity and simplicity of the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and future directed consummation. In other words, since creation is an act of the same one God that initiated the reconciling process of the cross and the resurrection, the renewal process in which the Spirit is engaged in its proprium and God drawing of everything to the future consummation.

#### **6.4.3 AA van Ruler: Christ intermezzo between Creation and the Renewal of the Spirit**

Any of the successive grand acts of God is been reflexively approximated in discussing the case in point. Reflexive negotiation in the christological and soteriological sense within the sphere of events around Christ is just such a vantage point. The Dutch theologian, AA Van Ruler in the 1960ties has set out to answer the question whether Christ is been making himself redundant when the Kingdom of God comes finally. The mediatorship and vicariousness of Christ is been seen purely in terms of substitution for us, as an expiatory sacrifice. In this sense, Van Ruler follows Calvin in accepting the 'radical Anselmian understanding of substitution'. God is in the form of Christ only in order to bear the guilt of sin and take it away from created reality so that created reality may once again stand before the countenance of God. The act of the *assumption carnis* is only necessary because of sin. This is because God is not concerned with Christ but with creation, with the Kingdom of glory, thus with humanity. Protologically and eschatological the purpose of God does not lie in the Immanuel, but in humanity, in people before God. In the Eschaton, the form of God in Christ is been laid aside. Thus, in the Christ event there is a negation of the negative (sin). The positive element is reality itself, which is been understood as creation and as Kingdom of God.

The laying aside of the form of God in Christ implies a taking on of form – hereto the incarnation plays a role. Van Ruler refuses to confuse the two natures of Christ, but does not exclude their union 'without division' and 'without separation'. He maintains:

“In Christology the doctrine of the *unio personalis sive hypostatica* is decisive. It expresses that in the Logos the divine and human nature, the being of God and the

being of man are united. It also contains the idea that the human nature taken on by the Logos, the *natura humana assumpta*, is not an own hypostasis, not an own I, not an own person, but rather finds its hypostasis in the Logos himself. There was never a Mister Jesus, but always only God-the-Son-in-human-flesh. In my opinion this is the indispensable kernel of the mystery of the incarnation – however fragmented these formulas of dogma must be” (1968:5 – translation JN; also 1969:169-170).

Van Ruler adhering to the notion of the *extra Calvinisticum* accepts that in Christ we have received the true humanity, the common humanity, solidarity and thus the original creation. Christ is more than an ideogram; he is an historical figure. Perhaps he displayed true humanity, but he did it in our place and above all, he displayed this true humanity as God and not purely as human being. Moreover, he not only displayed true humanity but also is centrally concerned with the deepest part of being human.

“These four elements: the historicity, substitution, divinity and redemption are the constitutive elements in Christology, these make it impossible to stop at the idea that in eschatological reality, which Christ is, there is only a return of the original creation” (Van Ruler 1969:170 – translation JN).

It becomes therefore impossible from an eschatological point of view to say the eschaton is restitution *in integrum* because history is been taken up in the eschaton. One could state that without history, there is no eschaton. Differently phrased, history is the totality of the ingredients from which the eschaton is been made up. Everything that is been saved, is saved unto the eschaton. The proton, Van Ruler argues, returns to the eschaton, but a plus is been acknowledged in the eschaton. This plus is been understood in terms of the history of sin and grace. Through the experience of confession of sin and the proclamation of grace we are been transcended from the *posse non peccare* to the *non posse peccare*. There is no *restitutio in integrum*. There is not an identity between the original creation and the eschatological kingdom. If the kingdom was the same as creation then been true in the fullest sense of the word God was ‘all in all’, but with the ‘plus’ exhibited in the eschaton above the proton. What is thus not possible is to say in exactly the same sense God is been all in all of both proton and eschaton. Before the ‘fall’ God assumed of been having a direct relationship with human beings (Gen. 3:8) but there was room for growth toward perfection (Berkhof 1986:145-148). Creation was and is not a closed event in which static and perfect results are been produced exemplifying a complete world in a ‘state of rectitude’. The proton must be thought of in terms of the *posse non peccare* before we actualised our freedom (Tillich 1957-Vol2:38-47) and chosen for good or evil while the eschaton is been understood in terms of the *non posse peccare*.

The whole thrust of Van Ruler’s theology revolves around the Christ-infused space between creation and the Spirit. Within the constructed space, the person and the work of Christ has been saving all of reality. The guilt of existence has been reconciled and death and demons are been overcome. The kingdom of God has been set up for once and all in Christ. The

kingdom of God is present as salvation in Christ and the kingdom of Christ exists in the present as a modality of the kingdom of God. In such a way reconciliation is been understood as substitution through which creation is been respected as creation and held fast in the array of God's grand acts of continuing creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment as the continuous newness under constant revision and renewal through the Spirit of God. The character of the new is, however, precisely the old, only radically renewed and totally redeemed from all forms of corruption. The way this happens is through the Spirit. It assumes, inspires and verifies everything that is fundamentally good and beautiful, in spite of the 'fall', is been maintained in creation as the first fruits of eschatological affirmation. These actions of the Spirit have as goal the participation of human beings and creation in the kingdom of God through Jesus Christ. Participation means that the Spirit, from the exclusive centre, which is Christ, constantly draws new circles in time and space. Such 'new' – partakers of creation, crucifixion, resurrection, renewal and fulfilment – humanity on the grounds of the incarnation embraces - not only some - all people as well as the whole of Nature too.

In conclusion, I extend, firstly, an insight of Dunn (1972:55) regarding 'the new humanity as a pneumatic humanity' into the extended capturing of the mystery of the connectedness and difference of a pneumatic humanity, pneumatic cosmos and pneumatic God. I extend, secondly, van Ruler's reflexive constructed space of Christ's incarnation as a disappearing intermezzo between God's creation and creation's renewal through the Spirit to include the plus factors of both the resurrection and the fulfilling acts of the creation of a new heaven and earth.

#### **6.4.4 W Heisenberg: uncertainty principle and the drawing of circles**

The drawing of new circles as purifying and identifying actions of the Spirit, indicates that where human beings in their 'fall' became dependent on nature, and nature in its 'fall' became dependent on human beings, Godself as Spirit liberates human beings from dependence upon nature and nature from the dominance and exploitation of human beings. Instead of dominating a human being, nature became what it was supposed to be an environment where a human being is able living out the multiplicity of his or her event-shapes (Gestalten) in relationship with God, fellow humans, nature and the human self. The descent of the Spirit anticipates the face-to-face relation with God as ultimate fulfilment when God will be 'all in all'.

The anticipation been referred to, however, is not expecting a magical operation, nor of a miraculous existence. Anticipation is a result of the Spirit's Spirit-directed promises through which people can call God 'Abba' (Gal 4:6) and thereby experience in expanded consciousness the ultimate truth about nature and creation as an interlinked totality in which they are participating in the widest and deepest sense possible.

Late (post) modern insights of certain natural sciences serve also to clarify the point. The wave-particle duality problem researched by Heisenberg that the position of the observer has

a distinct-observable influence on the object been observed brought a total new set of 'rules' regarding scientific laws, proofs and predictability onto the scientific scene. The influence of the observer leading to a change in position and speed of an electron has the simultaneous effect that the observer cannot discover the definite position and definite momentum at the same time (Ferguson 1994:106-108). The new late (post) modern science speaks of regularities instead of laws, strong affirmations instead of proofs and futuristic scopes instead of predictability.

Reflexive patterns of faith that revolves around the experience of God, oneself, other human beings and the physical-organic environment constantly let traces, clues and cues loose of within the mode of Faith Studies, or traditionally called theology. Many of the insights in the late modern sense of the word contributed to the opening up of the mystery of the connectedness and the difference of God, human beings and nature in (new) ways never been thought of before as been part of the mystery of the connectedness and difference of a pneumatic humanity, pneumatic cosmos and pneumatic God. What the current version of the mystery is been expressing is the regularising, affirming and future scoping of people's meandering, oscillating and percolating experiences as real Spirit-filled children of God through God self, the Spirit as regularising, affirming and scoping agent of future events (Van Niekerk 2006:383; Dunn 1972:7-12).

However, Spirit-filled people cannot determine the speed and duration with which the future-directed eschatological era is breaking into the present age. They, as a follow up, do not determine the position and context where the holiness of the Godness of God, the humanness of human beings and the naturalness of nature are been demonstrated in ordinary human situations and contexts as the concentrated focus and context of holiness.

Vice versa, in focussing on the speed and duration in which the holiness of the Godness of God, the humanness of human beings and the naturalness of nature are been acted out the position and context is simultaneously losing its emphasis. Maybe this is part of the mysterious working of the Spirit that no drawn pattern and patterned drawing of the Spirit is exactly been processed as a pinpointing element determining when and how the Spirit is drawing circles in space and time.

In a similar sense, the Spirit is more varied and natural than traditional theologians and Christians are been acknowledging in their lives and life-worlds. What does the drawing of circles then entail by the Spirit? Moreover, how does it involve a human being? Earlier the cosmic and anthropological understanding of the Spirit is been discussed.

Reintroducing the notion of Spirit here calls for a clarification of terms. When talking about 'Spirit' a wide range of semantic meanings are been called up. For the purpose of this chapter, the directives set by Moltmann and Berkhof stating that the Spirit is the active presence of God in creation that is the Spirit presence in the natural cosmic world and the histories of human beings, thus the presence of the infinite in the finite (Berkhof 1986; Moltmann 1996:9; cf Tillich 1968:372-378; Küng 1991:69).



The strongest clue drawn from the latter is that the Spirit is the creative unity of the universe as a whole. A follow up clue from the latter is that the finite is in the infinite a potentiality of been open-ended to the future. The consequence of the open-endedness is that of a dynamic presenting and revealing itself in a freedom of happenings, events and processes. The theology of the late 20th century reflects a courageous retrieval of God as beauty, but integrating such perspectives into the practice of teaching theology is difficult (Barrett 2000: 164-165, Green 2000:205). This field has suffered both from a disproportionate academic focus on systematic thinking and from an excessive emphasis on ministerial professionalism. How can we acknowledge the role of imagination as an alternative wavelength of knowing, a mode more receptive than an analytical approach? Should imagination not be a key and wavelength of translating the inevitably unreachable and inaccessible into the existentially energised worlds of human histories and natural processes?

#### **6.4.5 G MacDonald: daring imagination and imaginative likenesses**

McIntyre (1987) discusses an essay by George MacDonald, *The Imagination: Its Function and its Culture* (1867/1990), wherein MacDonald sketched imagination as a dynamic creativity and potential anthropological descriptive enabler. George MacDonald (1824-1905), a key figure in shaping the fantasy and mythopoeic literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, exercised influence on C.S. Lewis, T.S.Eliot and J.R.R.Tolkien. He struggled with the very nature of truth centred in the question: 'Who is God?' His struggle was been intensified by the divergent views of God presented to him, and the conflicting implications of these views for the arts and for life itself. McIntyre (1987:13) – he used an earlier edition - points out that MacDonald aimed to provide a theological standing to the notion of Imagination.

The place of imagination especially among doctrines such as that of the incarnation and the Holy Spirit is of interest to the discussion here. Discussion on imagination within a radical, integrating and, differential approach to faith studies could help providing and denoting cues, clues and hues in opening new avenues of reflexion on faith. In fact, MacDonald saw the imagination of human beings as the 'Imago Dei', linking the image of God and imagination to God's own creative activity (1990:2). An enquiring into what God has made as the main function of the imagination refuses to regard science as the sole interpreter of nature, or the laws of science as the only region of discovery. Imagination is been defined as *imaging* or a making of likenesses. The imagination is that faculty which gives form to thought – not necessarily uttered form, but forms capable of being been uttered in shape or in sound, or in any mode upon which the senses can lay hold (1990:1). Thus, such a faculty in humans is the likest of been the prime operation of the power of God, and has, therefore, been called the *creative* faculty, and its exercise *creation*.

MacDonald differentiates between *Poet* and *maker*. Between creator and poet lies the one impassable gulf distinguishing, not divides, all that is God's from all of what is been regarded as human, a gulf teeming with infinite revelations but a gulf over which no human being can

pass to find God. God, however, needs not to pass over the gulf of that which calls, and that which is been called into being, between that which makes in its own image and that which is made in that image.

The word *creation* for the calling out of nothing as the imagination of God is an occasional symbolic expression of daring when the likeness of a human being's work to the work of his maker is fully recognised. The necessary unlikeness between the creator and the created holds within it the equally necessary likeness of the thing made to him/her who making it and thus of the work been made to the work of the maker.

When therefore, one refuses to employ the word *creation* for the work of human beings, yet one uses the word *imagination* for the work of God, one can not been said to have dared at all but only to express the name giving of a human being's faculty after the power by which it was fashioned. The imagination of human beings is been made in the image of the imagination of God (1990:2). Everything of humans must have been of God first; and it will help much towards our understanding of the imagination and its functions in human beings if we first succeed in regarding aright the imagination of God, in which the imagination of human beings lives and moves and has its being.

As a follow up the latter MacDonald has been stating the function of imagination of enquiring into what God has made follows from the divine function of putting thought into form. Imagination procures in such a way a role in relation to the undiscovered, the unexplored (1990:11). The province of imagination is intellectual-constructive imagination:

“...to discover its laws, the cycles in which the events return, with the reasons for their return,...to perceive the vital motions of this spiritual body of mankind, to learn from its facts the rule of God; to construct from a succession of broken indications a whole accordant with human nature ... to illuminate all from the analogy with individual life and from the predominant phases of the individual character which are taken as the mind of the people” (1990:7).

MacDonald anticipated the kind of thing said by a symbolic interaction communication theory too that states the subjectivity of knowledge is that people are socialised actors that have inter- and intra relations and communication always has a social setting (1990:2). Of importance in context of this article, is the kinship MacDonald draws between imagination and faith:

“Life has within it large spaces of uncertainty, and in them a ‘wise imagination’ which is the presence of the Spirit of God, is the best guide that man or woman can have” (1990: 12).

Imagination is a particular capacity, he said earlier, to deal with the fringe of the unknown; imagination becomes thus the form which faith takes in face of the unknown. A stance taken like this seems to me to assist in the development of a differential theological approach to

anthropology and the Spirit. Not only does it entails the whole of human existence, but simultaneously provides tools to approach reality. Hence, MacDonald asserts:

“Moreover, as to keeping to that which is known and leaving the rest – how many affairs of this world are so well-defined, so capable of being clearly understood, as not to leave large spaces of uncertainty, whose very correlate faculty is the imagination? Indeed, it must, work after some fashion, filling the gaps after some possible plan, before action can even begin. The things we see the most clearly that influence us the most powerfully; undefined, yet vivid visions of something beyond, something which eye has not seen nor ear heard, have far more influence than any logical sequences whereby the same things may be demonstrated to the intellect. It is the nature of the thing, not the clearness of its outline that determines its operation. We live by faith and not by sight.” (1990:11-12).

In addition, that calls for action on the part of human beings in the form of imagination. McIntyre using the phrase 'daring imagination' (1987:54), has been applying it to some theological doctrines, especially the Incarnation. The Incarnation, he reasons comes to us as a kind of negative cultural shock, though it opens up a creative way of reflexivity on the presence of God. It is so for two reasons. First, we have heard the Gospel story so many times it has lost its novelty for us. Such familiarity makes it extremely difficult for us to place into the original situations of Christ coming among men and women, living and walking in the physical-organic natural cosmos, and virtually impossible for us to grasp what Kierkegaard meant when he spoke of our being contemporary disciples of Christ. Moreover, when we do make the effort, we rather anachronistically carry our familiarity with us, and imagine what we would perceptively have beheld in Jesus Christ the Son of God the Father. We probably would have been part of those scribes and Pharisees – we would probably have been, as contemporary disciples, no more aware of the true character of Jesus than the disciples originally were! In this sense many of our attempts, of capturing the sheer unexpectedness, the stunning imaginativeness of the way God chose of been involved in love and forgiveness to humanity and the natural world cosmos, in terms of our sense making experiences of today are met with similar misunderstanding and recalcitrance to make sense than the contemporaries of Jesus Christ.

A second circumstance McIntyre (1987:55) discerns of the daring imaginativeness of the Incarnation, is been underscored by the centrality of prophecy in the kerugma of the early church. The intention of his argument is as follows: first, that Jesus was the deliverer that Israel was been promised by God. Secondly, to derive from the prophecies the terms in which to interpret the person and mission of Jesus – very much according to the Synopsis's Jesus himself used in Isaiah 53 to interpret his death; Isaiah 6-9:6. The Memorial book of Isaiah, served to this purpose as well as quoted by Matthew 1:23, viewing Isaiah 7:14 as a messianic prophecy finding its fulfilment in Jesus Christ (Auret 1989:11-12; Bosch 1991).

An unintended consequence of the wide use of the argument was that it introduced an almost logical necessity operating between the prophecy and its fulfilment, thereby eliminating the element of novelty and unexpectedness from the event of the Incarnation itself. This methodology was, in my opinion, applied on the day of Pentecost, and is still very much alive in Christian circles (Clark et al 1989:52; Möller 1998:9). Prior to the event, however, it would be extremely difficult to predict which elements in the prophecies were the most likely to be fulfilled as the wide range of messianic movements around and in Israel around the end of the pre-Christian period demonstrates (McIntyre 1987:55; Lohse 1989:55-73). Tying in with this observation is the distinctive feature of the fulfilment of such prophecies in Christ, what we call the Incarnation, the presence of God in person amidst human beings and living a human life, is totally absent from the prophecies of the Old Testament (Carroll 1997:18-19). What it boils down to is that there is a gap between prophecies and fulfilment; it seems it has to be so, there is no point-to-point correlation between the two, so if you have the one you can predict the other. Such a stance allows for irruption and negotiation, the percolation of God in the humanness of us as beings and the physical-organic natural cosmos.

Considering McIntyre's observation of the 'Word made flesh, an event so unexpected, so unpredictable, that those who might have done so because they were of his chosen company, failed to grasp the full wonder of what was happening before their eyes', the day of Pentecost immediately jumps to mind. I have argued for the interconnectedness of the trajectories of Word → Spirit and Spirit → Word throughout this study. On the one hand, it is the Spirit who begat Jesus, resurrected and exalted him, and on the other, the same Spirit is sent by the Christ. According to Lucan history, this happened on the Day of Pentecost.

How daring may God be in his affirming of the new, of the tearing of the veil, in the heralding of the age of the Spirit? Considering imagination by a closer reading of Acts 2:1-36 brings to attention being whole is neither simply a process of getting older nor the development of techniques for coping and living. In biblical faith, wholeness depends on having our imagination fed in regular and intentional ways so that we are not been reduced to one-dimensional living (Marcuse 1964; Brueggemann 1991:174) is this: Who or what feeds our imagination? Who has provided the images around which lives have been organised in new ways? Craig Dykstra (1981) focused on imagination as the guide to wholeness of character, and Stanley Hauerwas (1983:377-388) on the power of stories to shape character. Both Dykstra and Hauerwas urge that the formation of character depend on an alternative vision of the world. The alternative vision is been mediated precisely through narratives, metaphors, and memories of biblical faith. Imagination is been understood then as the practice of the biblical memory in ways that transforms our presumed world.

Understood correctly, the meta-paradigm of biblical tradition is not about control, but vulnerability, not about self-sufficiency but about risky reception of life as gift. The cross is

one of God's strange realities to be present in the historical process, in the process of identity, identities and the drawing of circles by the Spirit in creational space and time. The cross is not a magic amulet or sign but is the modelling of an alternative way of living. It is one of our normative claims about God, about us, about our life with God, and about our life with each other and nature. In this sense is the gospel not simply a religious teaching. It is, rather,

“...a proposal about greed and economics. It is a proposal about the psychological wars we wage in our families. It is a proposal about public policy, public security, and arms. It is a proposal that our hurt and loss cannot be ‘mastered’, only embraced. It is about the possibility of wellbeing that this alternative affirmation makes available. This evangelical tradition claims that the embrace of pathos and the practice of community pain is the locus from which God's new life is been given...that claim is not naïve or romantic. It reckons with the power of evil and the reality of death. It reckons also with the power of God's goodness that overrides evil, the power of God's life that overcomes the real power of death” (Brueggemann 1991:176).

The possibility of wellbeing depends on the shapes of imagination through which one perceives self and through which energy and authority are been mediated. Not only is the substance of imagination crucial, but so is the where and in what ways it is practised and distributed among us. This alternative imagination is been shaped, mediated and made available through the practice of ‘liturgy’ in a variety of modes. Liturgy is been understood here as the management and practice a creation of symbols around which to organise life. Liturgy's purpose here is been the emphasis and the evening out process of the grand themes of biblical faith, that is the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation of the Commonwealth of God.

The Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41) together with the incarnation of Jesus presents itself as a strong indicator of the daring imagination of God. Not only does he become one of us, but also directs his communication through and to us (the disciples) in various understandable languages. Herewith the Kingdom of God is been affirmed in tangible manner, causing an ongoing awareness of creation, resurrection, renewal and consummation. Through a corporate, intentional practice of a concrete imagination, people could reread their life in fresh and beautiful ways, for there would be present in the conversations of life a ‘third voice’, the voice of the Holy Spirit. We find an indication in Daniel 3:25 of the ‘third voice,’ the presence of someone we did not expect in the midst of the conversation. It is that surprising presence where least expected that changes the conversation and makes rescue and change possible. The ‘third voice is to contrasted with the ‘fourth man,’ the one for whom there are no other voices than his own (Miskotte 1967:1-6)

# Chapter 7

## Inclusive Spirit-directedness of the First Fruit

### 7.1 Pneuma-directed theology of the First Fruit

In Western theology, one observes a tendency to over-accentuate Christology, to the detriment of Pneumatology affecting Ecclesiology as a result. This preference is been attributed to the fact that Christology is chiefly preoccupied with historical realities: the Incarnation, the life of Christ, etc. Western thought is inclined to focus on history. The Holy Spirit, Pneumatology, on the other hand, is the opposite. The role of the Holy Spirit in providence was to liberate the Son from the bonds of history, because the incarnated Son took upon himself all of the consequences of human beings' fall: He became Adam and entered history accompanied by the negative aspects of the fall bestowed upon him. In entering the history of time and space - the Son of God was been born in Nazareth of Palestine - during the rule of Caesar Augustus, during a specific point in time; he was crucified during the time of Pontius Pilate, etc. In other words, he participates in history in exactly the same manner that we do becoming part of that history.

The irony of God's eschatological gift of peace to humankind been a point of contention and division has evaded many Christians. Since the road ahead appears no less difficult than the way we have come, we would do well to be humbly mindful of God's sovereignty and of our weakness. Because God in Christ has initiated the Messianic Age with its outpouring of the Spirit, human beings' relationship to God has changed forever. No longer can the law been use as a means of exclusion and oppression of the disenfranchised: Jesus has preached the messianic gospel of release to the captive, sight to the blind and good news to the poor; the new law of life is been written on the hearts of men. Thus, we must abhor any new legalism, which uses the Scripture to exclude and oppress, turning the good news of Christ into 'the letter that kills.' We must rather recognise the 'God-breathed' character of Scripture, and the 'Spirit that makes alive.' Only so will the Scripture be profitable. Conversely, the Spirit is not to be claim as the mark of elite, as that which distinguishes and divides. The gospel of Jesus Christ includes the message that the Holy Spirit is been poured out on all flesh (Williams 1971:59). All abusers of Scripture and the Spirit must hear God's message:

"The promise is to those who are near, and to those who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

JR Williams made something of the mysterious, yet dynamic movement of the Holy Spirit. He wrote:

"...by noting the fact that the dynamic movement of the Spirit does not fit very well into traditional theological categories. Our inherited theology – in both historical

Protestantism and Roman Catholicism – has dealt in various ways with the work of the Holy Spirit, for example, in creation (as “Lord and Giver of Life”), in the incarnation (as the divine power of conception), in regeneration (as bringer of “new life”), in sanctification (as the Spirit of Holiness), in word and sacraments (as inspirer, sealer and so on) and, in the final redemption (as the perfecting one). But none of these categories adequately expresses this movement of the Spirit” (1971:39).

An assumption and proposition that no categories would be ever able to explain the mystery of the Holy Spirit is widely been accepted. The latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw renewed interest in Pneumatological studies which not to be seen as a rediscovery of the work and role of Spirit, but instead as re-appreciation thereof (Pinnock 2004:4-5). For quite some time Eastern Orthodox theologians, such as of Vladimir Lossky (1989) have been quick to point out the Pneumatological ‘forgetfulness’ in Western Theological circles. In the Pentecostal world, similar cries went up for a treatise of the work, role and theology of the Holy Spirit (Bruner 1970; Clark et al 1989; Dunn 1970:36-40). Although the Spirit was never absent in the histories of the Church, he was not a central role player in the confessions and excursions of church dogma. Even in treatises during times of theological and church crises, Christology received more attention than Pneumatology.

To maintain however, that total neglect of the Spirit was the norm of the day is half a truth. Such notions are entertained on reason of the resurgence of interest in the Holy Spirit, prior to which only a thin thread of the Spirit’s activity is been detected throughout history and coming to conclusion, God sent a new outpouring of His Spirit. These notions are been enhanced by teachings and writings of persons who, with great gusto proclaim the Pentecostal movement of the twentieth century as a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Burger 1987:1-30; Williams 1971:65-66). Theologians such as Barth (d.1968), Berkhof (d.1992), Brunner (d.1966), Bultmann (d.1976), Clark, Hollenweger, Kuyper (d.1920), Möller, Tillich (d.1965), Van Ruler (d.1970) and others have written exhaustively on Pneumatology. Popular writers have written on Pneumatology as well, mostly in soft, easy reading style and in pietistic vein. It is probably inaccurate therefore to claim that a total *Geistesvergessenheit* occurred. Rather, in taking the renewed interest in Pneumatology to heart, it would suffice to speak of a Pneumatology deficit (Hilberath 1997:67-69). What it boils down to is, although one can have an abundance of references to the Holy Spirit, a serious Pneumatology deficit is still been displayed. Such a deficit refers to a secondary role assigned to the Spirit as been controlled by the primary role of the exegete.

Four developments are been distinguished during the history of the Church that contributed to this deficit (1997:67-69). The first impetus came from Augustine’s ‘de-personalised’ approach to the Spirit (with his idea of the Spirit as *vinculum amoris/pacis* expounded in *De Trinitate* 6.7) that not only laid the groundwork for the *filioque*, but also divested the Spirit of full personality. The second impetus is from the classic theological Pneumatological

trajectory in which the Holy Spirit from the time of the Church Fathers onwards is been introduced as 'the Unknown Third'. On basis of biblical hints, it was been reasoned that the Spirit is 'shy', hiding himself. Closely tied up with this, is a *psychological or spiritual reason*. A fear that self-transcendence towards others would mean the loss of one's identity; hence the loss of the charismatic elements and the dominion of the institutional, juridical and formally dogmatic elements in the church. On the contrary, The Spirit's transcendence means *kenosis* rather than abusing others by a means of self-discovery (Dabney 1997). A final reason Hilberath distinguishes is the *ecclesial*, experience of the Church with charismatic and prophetic movements responsible for greater ecclesial and ministry discipline taking control. Major emphasis on the Word became preferred to the 'uncontrolled' Spirit. This resulted in the classical formulas and confessions of the Church that rather paid attention to Jesus Christ and God proper. Even in the confession developed by the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA, one of the oldest Pentecostal churches in South Africa, little attention is been given to the third article on the Holy Spirit.

The confession reads as follows:

"We believe in:

The one true God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – Three persons each with particular attributes, yet in absolute and perfect unity.

The divinely inspired and written Word of God, given to us as the complete rule of faith and

The fallen nature and depravity of human beings caused the inability of themselves to please God.

The elect purpose and grace of God, whereby He through the sacrificial death, resurrection and ascension of His Son Jesus Christ, provided for man a means of Justification, Regeneration and Sanctification, which blessings are granted upon a person's repentance and faith.

The Church, the Body of Christ, the fellowship of saints, governed by Christ, the Head His Church, through His Word and the Scriptural Ministries.

The Christian Sacraments (ordinances) of Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of His Fruit, Gifts and Graces.

The Pre-millennial Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bodily Resurrection of mankind; the Eternal Judgements of God; the final doom of Satan; a new heaven and earth".

(In: General Business Meeting. September 14-15, 2005: 91).

The confession reiterates the major emphasis of the Word (i.e. Jesus and the Christian Bible) instead of disclosing a balanced mutual appreciation of Christ and Spirit involved in a continuum of kenosis and identity, identity and kenosis. In reading such a statement of faith, one is been forced to ask why so little is made of the interconnectedness and differentiation of <God...human beings...and the physical-organic cosmos>. Why the emphasis solely on God taking initiative to 'enter' into the created cosmic natural world as though the creation is



an separate and closed entity in need of being permeated by a God who is already intranaturally at work and at home? God been present in creation opens up creation for the intervening work of God as an interventionist divine power. Do the latter not result in human beings and natural worldly forces been left on their own for most of the time? A meaningful emphasis of the simultaneity of the connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural world elicits the question whether human beings and the natural world do not have the 'right' to approach and encounter God in terms of their creaturely character, their creatureliness. A crucial point in this regard is the Trinitarian character of the revelation of God exclusively in Jesus Christ which as revelation concentrated solely in God's reconciliatory act of the cross and the resurrection and thereby totally underemphasising God's acts of creation, renewal through the Spirit and fulfilment after 'the Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

In passing, a second point is to be made regarding the reductionist methodology picked up in the Confession revolving around Creation, fall, resurrection and Advent of God as the second Godhead, Jesus Christ. The Spirit is an appendix, almost understood as a neutral power or sole manifestation of his Fruit, Gifts and Graces, mainly through the Baptism of the Spirit. Herewith the salvific renewal work of the Spirit in whole of creation is limited to a spiritual level of our reality while the 'materiality of salvation' and the 'materiality of renewal' of everything are been underemphasised. The Confession document is therefore urgently in need of a balanced mutual appreciation of God's acts of Creation of everything, Reconciliation through Jesus Christ, ongoing Renewal by the Holy Spirit and fulfilling and consummating actions through God the fulfiller of the whole of creation as the new heaven and earth.

Opposite to the Pneumatology deficit, Dabney (1999:69-72) identified three major perspectives having contributed to the emergence of a Pneumatology orientation in more recent theologising. The first perspective is been related to developments in philosophy. Some thinkers, both criticising and appropriating nineteenth-century German Idealism with its focus on *Geist* have come to argue for the priority of talking about spirit. What draws one's attention is the emphasis being put on the pluralistic account of 'spirit' and 'spiritual' in contradiction to the objectifying and totalising philosophy of Hegel. Hereto Steven G Smith's *The Concept of the Spiritual*, which repudiates Hegel and Idealism, serves to illustrate Dabney's observation. Smith, after finding earlier approaches to a 'first philosophy' wanting (the approach from ontology, from epistemology and from language), advances the Spirit as the foundation that makes relationships possible, and the question of relationship is *the* basic question for Smith (Dabney 1996:3-28).

The second perspective offered by Dabney is that of Michael Welker. Welker proposed in his *God the Spirit* (1994) a 'realistic theology', that is "a theology that is related to various structural patterns of experience and that cultivates sensitivity to the differences of those

various patterns” (1994:x). Welker’s view is anti-idealistic and pluralistic paralleling Smith’s work in philosophy. He sets out to trace the presence of the Spirit in the midst of our everyday realities. He explains his approach as:

“...I proposed working from the bottom up and on a biblical-theological basis to gather new insights in Pneumatology, Christology and the doctrine of creation. These insights would in turn enable us to develop more complex approaches in Trinitarian theology – approaches more closely related to experience... This orientation obliges one to work with a network of images, metaphors and figures of thought whose power to sort and integrate falls short of such simple and impressive figures in the history of dogma as the ‘Spirit as the subjective side of revelation (Karl Barth)’ (Welker 1994:30-31).

For Welker, Pneumatology is *‘die Sache selbst’*, the foundation of theologising for a postmodern era. Methodologically it leads him to after tracing diverse attestations of God’s presence, to test the various biblical traditions, in the charismatic movement and in liberation and feminist theologies for interconnections, authenticity, continuity and fruitfulness of difference. His motivation for this method is to question conceptions that God’s Spirit is a universal force that infuses all reality (Conradie 2001:295). God does not fit into metaphysical constructs that we have designed. Welker is more eloquent when he writes:

“In contrast to all so-called Pneumatology, it has...become clear that the Spirit does not ‘somehow or other’ enlist the services of ‘everything’. Instead, the Spirit who acts in the fullness of time ‘rests’ decisively on the selfless, suffering and despised Messiah... But in contrast to all ‘Pneumatology’ of the “beyond”, it has become clear that God’s Spirit acts in, on, and through fleshly, perishable earthly life, and precisely in the way wills to attest to God’s glory and to reveal the forces of eternal life” (1994:338-339).

It follows that Welker perceives Pneumatology to be the point of departure for doing theology, since it gives superior resources for addressing a world rent completely asunder (1994:11). Such a world needs a theology that is relevant and faithful to the biblical and historical witnesses. Thus, the first perspective is philosophical in scope, while the second perspective Dabney distinguished is a realistic approach.

Dabney developed a third perspective himself in his identification of three different models of doing theology (1999:71–72). The oldest model, called the scholastic Thomistic model, or theology of the ‘first article’ finds its point of departure in the goodness of God’s creation. The basic axiom of this type of theology is that grace fulfils that which is in nature. Thomas Aquinas wrote:

*‘Gratia non destruit, sed supponit et perficit naturam’ (Summa Theologica 1a1.8. al).*

This orientation has been very influential in Roman Catholic theology, as is also evident in the approach to cultures and other religions seen in the encyclical *Nostra Aetate*. Against this approach is the sixteenth-century's approach which focused predominantly on the second article, on Christology, and following and assuming to a large extent discontinuity rather than continuity between nature and grace. This manner of theologising, running from Luther to Barth, showed many nuances but the same compatibility of human nature and God's grace. Hunting and gathering some clues, phrases and pointers, he suggests a third approach; namely a theology 'of the third article'. It finds its orientation in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, incorporating eschatology and ecclesiology. It represents:

“...continuity through discontinuity which begins its witness to Christ with the Holy Spirit, is rooted in the Trinitarian event of the cross, and then defines the Christian community in those categories” (Dabney 1999:19)

The cross of Christ and the Trinitarian rooting of Pneumatology espouse two parameters, which is quite appealing. However, Dabney is not unique in his theological approach. Faith theorists or theologians of the likes of Colin Gunton, Jürgen Moltmann and AA van Ruler have all argued along similar lines. Therefore, has Karl Barth envisioned a possibility of a theology of the third article, articulating everything one believes, reflects, and says about God the Father and God the Son in understanding that the first and second articles are been demonstrated and clarified through God, the Holy Spirit. Pneumatology has been proposed and expounded, in that it was not always fully Trinitarian. In both Protestant and Roman Catholic circles there is a tendency to view the Holy Spirit solely as *the Spirit of redemption*. The place of this Spirit is the ecclesiastical arena where people find the assurance of the eternal blessedness of their souls. It follows that the redemptive Spirit is been cut off from bodily, concrete, historical, particular and earthly existence (Conradie 2001:288). A form of escapism develops. Textbooks, I am thinking of FP Möller's approach, talks about the Holy Spirit in connection with God, faith, the Christian life, the Word (Bible) and prayer, but seldom in connection with body and nature (Moltmann 1992:8). Unfortunately, it leads among people to view reality in a theologistic perspective.

Moltmann (1992:8-10), in answering what is behind this state of affairs, identifies two reasons. One reason is the ongoing Platonising of Christianity. It takes the form of hostility to the body, a kind of remoteness from the world and a preference for the inner experiences of the soul, rather the sensory experiences of sociality and reality. Could it be modern day Charismatic fellowships trying to combine among other things music (modern hip-hop and contemporary) with liturgical practice which gives the impression that a form of inversion is present – faith informed sensory experiences are experienced in a ghetto, called church?

Another reason pointed out is the far-reaching decision in favour of the *filioque*. Implications hereof are been viewed solely in Christological terms and not at the same time as the *Spirit* of the *Father*. This has led Pentecostals to state explicitly that Pentecostal experience is

experience of Jesus Christ (Clark 1989; Möller 1998:53-85). This Christological emphasis means for a Pentecostal, that Christ is not just an object, but also, someone in whom belief is directed at and to whom one is been attached by faith. The risen Lord is the subject of a Pentecostal's experience of God. By the agency of his Spirit, it is Christ who saves, who heals, who baptizes in the Spirit and who will come again for his people. Spirit-filled ambassadors of Christ can thus act in the name and authority of Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. If I understand the above citation and the broad lines as indicated by Möller (1997) correctly, the suspicion is been raised of the pneumatology of some Pentecostals been very close to Barth's early modalist trinitarian concept. Implication thereof is visible and been experienced by people in practice, over-emphasising that some people are more been imbued with the Spirit or power of God than others. So-called hierarchical faith statures develop which negate the common sense making tools of a person in general also experiencing the interconnectedness and difference of God.

It means to accept in trust that God himself can become present to me inwardly in faith. He can gain dominion over my inmost being, my person. At the same time, I can trust in faith that the Spirit of God is not an enslaving Spirit, but the Spirit of the living Lord, the Spirit of Jesus Christ the standard for individual and community life. Believing in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, means knowing that the Spirit is never my own possibility, but always the force and gift of God himself to be used to justify absolute power or teaching, not unsubstantiated theology, pious fanaticism and false security of faith. No one 'possesses' the Holy Spirit; we are to be graciously invited and encouraged by the Spirit to be co-workers of God. God turns his face to us (Moltmann 1996:6). This grants us opportunity to pray all the time: *Veni Creator Spiritus!* Come Creator Spirit!

In the various experiences of people, an experience of God in his activity as Spirit (Berkhof 1986), discipleship and the effect thereof in people's lives becomes important. In a subtle manner, the message is been conveyed that to be a disciple is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. We become imitators of God. That we love him is conscientiously been mirrored in our lives (Eph.5:1). Another aspect is the manner in which the Holy Spirit makes us children of God and how he intercedes on our behalf. God equips us for service by the Spirit via the various gifts received. The experiences of being church and witness in the world are been addressed as well. Being part of a charismatic community, experiences with God, his people and the Holy Spirit, do need to be addressed (1996:7-10). Such a faith - community states that Christ is the norm and theme of our experiences with the Holy Spirit. Hence, a charismatic community is evangelical in character – Christ is the Saviour and Baptiser with the Spirit: it is Good News. People are been saved and baptised with the Holy Spirit. It is also a Bible-directed community: together with the predecessors of faith of whom we read about in the Bible, we can believe God involves himself with our lives (Crone 1981:24-31). The involvement of God touches ground in the development of our character. Therefore,

gradually and increasingly we are been transformed to the image of Jesus Christ. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 6:2) is testimony thereof.

The ethos of Pentecostal faith reflexivity is thus: we are people who live *coram Deo*, before the countenance of God, as human beings *coram hominibus* before the countenance of human beings and *coram mundibus* before the countenance of the natural cosmic environment. More specifically however, we live *coram Spiritus!*

## **7.2 Pentecost vindication and affirmation of Creation, Crucifixion-Resurrection and Fulfilment in the future**

A second-temple period Jew (Wright (1998) 2006:1), Jesus of Nazareth, came to announce, amplify, embody and disseminate the Kingdom of God (Commonwealth) after the 'mysterious' and 'temporary episode' of narrowed down history of God's presence among the patriarchs and Israel (Van Niekerk 2006:373). He is God incarnated. The inauguration of the Commonwealth of God is been happening in the creation of everything, the reconciliatory concentration, amplification and extension in Jesus' death on the cross, the tearing of the veil between the holier than holy and the holy space of the temple and the resurrection of Jesus in the power of the Spirit (Van Niekerk 2006:373-374; Watson 2003:7). The actions of Jesus during the last week of his earthly life focused on the temple. First century Judaism had two great incarnation symbols: Temple and Torah. Jesus seems to believe it was his vocation to upstage the one and outflank the other (Wright 2006:15-16). Judaism spoke of the presence of her God in her midst, in the pillar of cloud and fire, in the Presence (*Shekinah*) in the Temple.

Jesus acted and spoke as if he thought he were a one-man counter-temple movement. So, too, Judaism believed in a God who was not only high-and-mighty, but also compassionate and caring, tending his flock like a shepherd, gathering the lambs in his arms. Jesus had been using the God-image, more than once, to explain his own actions. Judaism believed that her God would triumph over the powers of evil, within Israel as well as outside. Jesus spoke of his own coming vindication, after his meeting the Beast in mortal combat. Jesus, too, used the language of the Father sending the Son. The so-called Parable of the Wicked Tenants (Matt 21:33-45, Mark 12: 1-12, Luke 20:9-19) could just as well be the Parable of the Son Sent at Last. His awareness, in faith, of the one he called *Abba*, Father, sustained him in his messianic vocation to Israel and enabled him to act as his Father's personal agent to her. Approach the incarnation from such an angle and it is no category mistake, but the appropriate climax of creation. Wisdom, God's blueprint for humans, at last herself becomes human. The *Shekinah* glory turns out to have a human face (Wright 1996, especially chapter 13).

What are we therefore saying about the earthly Jesus? “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall carry the lambs in his arms; and gently lead those that are with young” (Isa 40:11). The OT portrait of YHWH fits the man Jesus like a glove.

In the man Jesus the biblical portrayal of YHWH comes to life as  
a *loving God* with rolled up sleeves (Isa 52:10) doing a job no one is been able of doing,  
a *mobilising and operational God* giving new life to everything and everyone,  
a *powerful God* empowering the created world and human creatures,  
a *faithful God* trusting and dwelling in the midst of people,  
a *sensitive God* empathising, risking fully and recklessly with those in need and distress,  
a *just and tender God* relentlessly opposing all human and non-human creatures destroying and distorting the goodness of creation.

In the man Jesus’ person and ‘cause’ is not been separated while he is the cause in person. He is the physical embodiment and personal form of the coming of the Kingdom of God (Kasper 1976:101). Because of that, the whole message about the coming Kingdom of God, his manners and actions, contain and implicit or indirect Christology which after Easter was put into an explicit and direct creed (Bultmann 1952:43). Historical scholarship tends to maintain a tension between the historical Jesus and the Jesus of the gospels. Concurring with Wright (2006:13-14), I hold that the true Jesus is not significantly different from the Jesus of the Gospels, nor do I think we will know who the Jesus of the text of the Gospels actually was and is, unless we take the texts serious and find out what they actually meant in the contexts they emerged. The Renaissance with its study of Greek has been enabling Erasmus and others going behind the text of the Vulgate thereby discovering meanings in the Greek text of the NT set within the language world of NT times.

The unsuspecting clues emerging from tackling the contexts of the Greek texts proved quite revolutionary. Similarly, the explosion of the study of Second Temple Judaism in our day, enables people of placing the customary interpretational ways of the words, sentences, paragraphs and chapters of the New Testament within the sense making contexts these had been emerging (Wright 2006: 12-13).

Studying Jesus within the contexts of his life-worlds and using all the tools at our disposal of doing so, is been directly linked with the meaning of Israel within the purpose of God (Jeremias 1971: 114ff). In been biblical theologians, it simply will not do, to tell the story of salvation as simply creation, fall, Jesus, salvation. We are in desperate need of proclaiming: creation, fall, Israel, Jesus, salvation (Wright 2006:11). Although Wright has a valid point, my assertion is that the grand acts of the Kingdom of God incorporate more inclusively the scheme that Wright proposes. There is not a progress from the inception of creation, building up to salvation in pre-ordained steps or phases, but a dynamic involvement of God in all of time and history. If we ask the question of how this particular human being (Jesus) is the instrument of salvation and do not say as our first answer, ‘because in him God’s Israel-shaped plan to save the world came to fulfilment,’ then we

leave a huge vacuum in our thinking (and in our reading of scripture). I believe it is because of this vacuum that people have elevated minor themes, such as the sinless character of Jesus to position of prominence, though not of insignificance as such does not have such prominence in the broader picture of the New Testament. Thus, it is not enough merely to say 'earthly' when speaking of Jesus or to allude to Jesus' sandals, and then to proceed forthwith in constructing a Christ-figure as a back-projection of a full-formed theology.

At the human level, Jesus is like us precisely in this: he did not exist or think or feel or pray in a vacuum, but rather within a continuum, a web of socio-cultural symbolic resonances, a universe of discourse within which deeds, thoughts, and words carried layers of meaning (Watson 2003:2-4; Wright 2006:15). The question of Jesus and God's relationship as a difficult matter gave rise to an abundance of caricatures: Jesus who wanders round with a faraway look, listening to the music of the angels, remembering the time when he was sitting up in heaven with the other members of Trinity, having angels bring him bananas on golden dishes.

Equally, what passes for historical scholarship sometimes produces an equal and opposite caricature: the Jesus who wandered around totally unreflective, telling stories without perceiving how they would be heard, announcing God's kingdom, speaking of bringing it about, yet failing to ruminate on his own role within the drama. We must not, as many have done, lose our nerve, and start asking the 'sort of' questions (e.g., 'what sort of person would think he was divine?') that depend for their rhetorical force on the implied assumptions 'within our culture.' Too many have been content with the cheap retort that anyone supposing himself to be God incarnate must be mad, and we do not think Jesus was mad. As it stands, this invites an obvious retort: some of Jesus' opponents, and some even in his own family, thought he was out of his mind (John 7:1-9, Matt 12:46-50), and it is unlikely in the extreme that the early church made these charges up.

However, the question is still wrongly phrased. We have to ask not what would count in our culture, but how a first century Jew have been approaching and thinking about these matters. In Jesus' socio-cultural setting, it is assumed that personal identity is determined definitively by God; and it is widely held that this will take place in the eschatological event of the judgment, at which the righteousness of the (resurrected) righteous will be vindicated and the ungodliness of the ungodly exposed (Kasper 1976:77). Life is lived in the expectation of this final divine word of vindication or rejection. Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom is itself a (highly distinctive) variant of this eschatological scenario (Pannenberg 1988:52-54); and, in announcing the future vindication of the poor, the hungry and the oppressed, the proclamation and the proclaimed seek their own future vindication. Jesus' definitive identity will consist in the divine vindication of his own uniquely significant role in the announcement of the kingdom (Padgett 2006:16). God will finally determine who Jesus is, and in doing so will also finally determine who God is (Watson 2003:3). Van Niekerk writes:

“In terms of the New/Second Testament the processes of the reconciliatory simultaneity of the *at-one-ment* and *at-other-ness* of God, human beings and nature are narrated as a series of events of Jesus’ death on a cross, the torn veil of the temple and Jesus being raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit as the first act and fruit of the renewal process in creation. The raising of the dead is affirmed and endorsed on the day of Pentecost as the negotiation process of renewal with human beings and natural universes as to how narrow and how broad, how deep and how high, and where and when locality and intensity of the interconnectivity and otherness of God, human beings and nature are to be experienced” (2006: 340-341).

The tearing of the veil is been effectuating, real contact between history and time, creation and consummation. Ontological and cosmological renewal was been heralded. Jesus’ death on the cross is the spelling out of the coming of the Kingdom of God. This death is in the form in which the Kingdom of God exists under the conditions of this age, the Kingdom of God in human powerlessness, wealth in poverty, love in desolation, and life in death (Kasper 1976:119, Moltmann 1996:7-8). Unfortunately, we flatten this happening and the world of Jesus out or declare it of little relevance, because we want to be able to carry him, his message, and his timeless achievement of salvation across to our world without losing anything in the process.

In the eagerness, we forget what the New Testament writers and above all Jesus himself never forgot: that salvation is of the Jews, not in some trivial sense, but in the rich sense that in order to save the world the creator God chose Abraham and said ‘in your seed all the families of the earth will he blessed.’ It is precisely because Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfilment of this promise that he is relevant in all times and places (Wright 2006:11, Moltmann 1996:13, Pannenberg 1988:97ff., Trakelis 1998:3). It is precisely because he is *The Jew* par excellence that he is relevant to all Gentiles as well as Jews. This is the ultimately humiliating move for Gentile and Jew alike, precipitating an epistemology of humiliation whereby all may know this Jesus as the living, saving word of God, as different from us in the way that makes him the same as us, as over against us and therefore relevant to us. God consigned all to disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all, a comment that is as relevant to epistemology as it is to soteriology (Meyer 1989; 1992).

All the episodes with the risen Lord in John 20, the episode with Thomas included, project in a clear manner the notion that the post-resurrection experiences with Christ were real, visible, and accessible through the bodily senses. Not only Thomas, but the other disciples as well, have believed because they have seen the risen Jesus. This is a fundamental truth which makes the resurrection a firm reality, established on pragmatic and verifiable data, on plenty of eyewitnesses who were people difficult and *slow of heart to believe* (Lk 24:25). A few decades before John, Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, had already presented in a masterful way the same idea, i.e. the veracity and facticity of Christ’s bodily resurrection based on a large



number of eyewitnesses. There, Paul repetitively uses for the risen Lord the verb  $\omega\phi\theta\eta$  (he was seen), namely the basic verb for seeing. The important thing is that Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, considers the visual direct evidence an indispensable component of the Gospel, an essential article of the real Christian faith.

The insistence on the visual experience as an undeniable evidence for the veracity and facticity of the resurrection emphasises the fact that the risen Lord is not a bodiless spirit but a complete human being. Perhaps this is the reason why John proceeds in chapter 21 of his Gospel with the narration of the lengthy story of the meeting between the risen Christ and his disciples by the Sea of Tiberias (Jn. 21:1-22), a meeting involving talking, fishing, eating and walking. Here at the very end of his Gospel, John is eager to maintain what he has declared at its very beginning: 'The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14). Christ being a full and whole human being, being in the flesh even after his resurrection, is for John a fundamental Christological truth (Cyril: Commentary on John, PG 74: 724, 732). This truth reveals the necessity for visual contact, optical evidence, direct seeing. Thus, the inseparable connection between seeing and believing proclaims the reality of Jesus' resurrection and, at the same time, his true, full, undeniable humanity (Trakelis 1998:5).

After the resurrection of Jesus, the Spirit of God goes through a process of change culminating in the announcement and proclamation in and through Pentecost by which the Spirit is been affirmed and vindicated as the Spirit of Holiness. The Holy Spirit drives and directs the sanctification and renewal processes in the world. In been constantly activated, the Spirit, is the constant participating companion in the world. This happens by the dynamics of the cross, the torn veil and the resurrection of Jesus (Van Niekerk 2006:375). Van Niekerk proceeds:

"The Holy Spirit embodies and participates, contributes and guides new pockets and packages, new contexts and localisations of at-one-ment and at-other-ment of God, being human and the physical-organic environment in the world. In this sense the Holy Spirit incorporates and embeds every atom and molecule in the physical-chemical world, every cell and organism in the biotic world, every emotion and feeling, every thought and belief, every love action, and every bit of justice in human experience. We do not know how and in what sense the Spirit of God incorporates and embeds thing after thing and being after being in the many universes. What we do know is that to have insight through a cosmic Spirit of the universes is far too meager, lean and reductionist. Moreover, to pretend that we know through an omniscient human spirit in and amongst the many universes is been trapped in a similar meagre, lean and reductionist impasse. Finally, to been dragged into the quagmire of the modern notion of the domesticated Self-revelation of God in the human and the natural worlds, is to adorn oneself with holy certainty, obtained through theologistic speculation pretending to have insight into the self-acting side of

God through the human and natural worlds. The closest and the furthest one can get to the Godness of God, the humanness of being human and the naturalness of nature is to experience and encounter God, oneself and nature through living one's life with the awareness of being in creaturely, reconciling, renewing and consummating mode."(2006:375).

The notion of the raising of Jesus by the Spirit belongs to the same creational-historical context as been preceded by the life of Jesus but with a radical difference not seen before. The Spirit's work gives this context a new foundation, and sets it in an entirely new light, by bringing the final endorsement of Jesus' earthly activity and his incomparable claim to authority in an unforeseen way, in the light of the last judgment, though not yet a the discontinuance of mankind's history through divine judgment. Retrospectively, the resurrection of Jesus is on the one hand, bound up with his earthly activity. On the other hand, pointing forward to the future, it is been linked to the eschatological expectation of the last judgment and the transformation of all things. To a certain extent, we can say the emergence of life and the presence of God in every part of creation is been highlighted.

### **7.3 One-sided Pentecostal perspectives**

#### **7.3.1 One-sided emphasis: resurrected Christ or renewing Spirit?**

The corporeality of the resurrection means that Jesus Christ while entering God's dimension through his resurrection and exaltation is at the same time connected and differentiated in the world in a new way which is breaking into our daily lives in expanding and contracting ways 'to the close of the age' (Matt. 28:20). Through Jesus' resurrection and exaltation, a 'piece of the world' finally reached God and is been accepted by God. The newness coming into our sphere through Jesus' arrival with God and through his new coming to us, is traditionally been called 'heaven', borrowing from the language of myth. Heaven means originally the upper place, the floor that is above the earth (the empyrean). This heaven is commonly been imagined as empty space into which Jesus was taken up and into which the saints will march in solemn procession at the end of time. Other mythological ideas of heaven are the following: in classic theology, heaven is the dimension arising when the creature finally arrives with God. In neo-orthodox theology going to heaven means to go to God or to be in heaven, means to be with God. Some theologians view heaven as an eschatological phenomenon simply not *existing* somewhere but coming into being, more precisely, at the moment of the first created being eschatologically been finally taken up by God.

In the present study, the event of heaven takes shape amongst other in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ as part of the irruption of heaven as a direct, immediate encountering, communion and communication of God with human beings and the natural cosmic world in and through God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation.

Particularly, humans amongst other as created, reconciled, renewed and fulfilled beings are been brought into the relationship of being sons and daughters of God in a similar sense as the earthly resurrected existence of Jesus the precursor of the humanness of these relationships. After Easter, the distinction between the earthly person Jesus and the future world judge coming from heaven disappeared because been raised from the dead by the Spirit means that the Spirit through Pentecost became the applicator and presenter of the cross and the resurrection in the world. The metaphor of Jesus becoming a heavenly figure just like the Son of man in Jewish views means practically that his time has passed and that we are in a full-blown sense in the time of the Spirit operating as God the renewer applying and presenting the cross and resurrection as renewing instruments of God in the world.

The basic ground of the direction of the reconciling → renewing, Word → Spirit movement is the Cross and Easter event, universally *vindicated* and *affirmed* by the event of Pentecost as the *inauguration* and *authentication* of the renewing reconciling movement of Spirit → Word. After Jesus' mission seems to have collapsed with his crucifixion and his supporters were scattered, God vindicated and affirmed him through the power of the Spirit, raising him from the dead. The cross and the resurrection as the central message of Jesus' life, is been simultaneously vindicated and affirmed by the Spirit of Pentecost, and inaugurated and authenticated by the Spirit of Pentecost as the genuine renewal tools of the Spirit of God in the lives of human beings and the natural cosmic world.

On the one hand, the claim that the salvation of humankind, depends solely on people's attitude towards God coming from the future as the cruciform and resurrected person of Jesus Christ, is been vindicated and affirmed by the event of Pentecost. On the other hand, the claim that people should operate as co-workers and co-actors of the Spirit, thus as workers and actors of the sanctifying renewal work of the Spirit's 'first of the fruit' awaiting the coming of the resurrected person of Jesus Christ is been *inaugurated* and *authenticated* by the event of Pentecost. The ultimate vindication and affirmation of the reconciled new human being in the cross and the resurrection of Jesus and the inauguration and authentication of the new human being under sanctifying renewing construction by the Spirit designate the range of our experience of Jesus and the Spirit, reconciliation and renewal or justification and sanctification.

#### **7.4.2 One-sided notion of a Christcentric fulfilled future**

The first of these one-sided Pentecostal perspectives is an over concentrated viewing of every event, process and happening of our life-world in the light of Christ, the Son of God, as the self-initiating worker of his own second coming. In this type of eschatology and fulfilment procedure in which Christ is effectuating and operationalising his own second coming, the experience of Christians is that of been already taken up in Christ as a temporary comfort zone where they take cover until Jesus, the coming king, comes back to take them home (Clark et al 1989:148-149).

The metaphor of Jesus sitting at the right hand of God, the Father as the Lord of the whole world is of interest here. In an extreme Christcentric view a statement on the Lordship of Jesus Christ positioned at the right hand side of the Father is also a statement on the future world rule of the Messiah as already an existing reality in heaven (Pannenberg 1988:125-126). This corresponds to the general Jewish view of the events of the last days, at the end, already been prepared in heaven – i.e. in God's eternity that will become manifest on earth.

The major question here to all who insists on the Lordship of Jesus Christ from beginning to end, thus from creation to his positioning at the right hand side of the Father comprises two parts. Firstly, why are the dimensions of Jesus Christ as being 'the Priest' and 'the Prophet' of God in the world left out and not on an equal footing with the one-sided emphasis on the Lordship of Christ? Secondly, why is the Holy Spirit as the driver and champion of God's grand act of sanctifying renewal processes in the era of the Spirit replaced with Christ the Lord as driver and champion of these processes? This question of the Spirit's all embracing renewal work in human life and the natural cosmic world has to be repeatedly directed at all neo-orthodox Christcentred theologies in the Pentecostal, Charismatic and Evangelical world.

In chapter 6 above, we pointed to Calvin and Zwingli the 16<sup>th</sup> century reformers who presented us with the initial clues as to how to rectify the situation in which the Christcentred movement of Word → Spirit holds sway over the Spirit → Word movement. We also pointed to the notion of the *extra-calvinisticum* which meant for Calvin and Zwingli that Christ after his ascension, still had his resurrected humanity and full humanness with him (Van Niekerk 2006/7:224). Any emphasis on the notion of the *extra-calvinisticum* entails two aspects: firstly, that Jesus Christ's salvific work of the cross and the resurrection is been applied and operationalised by the Spirit in the era we are living. Secondly, Christ is not 'directly everywhere present through himself' as the 'same yesterday, today and tomorrow' in the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ. Christ is present only in and through the Holy Spirit in human lives and the natural cosmic world. Thus, Christ is not been present through his own actions but through the Holy Spirit who applies the salvific actions of Jesus Christ, thus, the cross and the resurrection as the present making and saving tools of God in this world, in churches and in people's lives.

Interestingly, a very large group of Pentecostals align themselves with the doctrine regarding the extreme centrality of Jesus Christ that spills over into the ubiquity, the everywhere present Jesus Christ. Moreover, a Christcentric reading of God's future fulfilment and consummation, eschatology in the classic sense, drives the Spirit out of his own era, our era as the era of Pentecost.

We have seen earlier in chapter 6 that by taking up the clues presented to us by the early phase of Pentecostal experience in Azusa Street both grand acts of God's reconciliation and renewal are been translated into the movements of Word → Spirit and Spirit → Word. The

impact of the simultaneous emphasis on both movements results according to Van Niekerk in a rephrasing of the classic Christcentred view of fulfilment and eschatology (Van Niekerk conversation April 2007). The emphasis of the Christcentric statement of waiting, living and hoping-in-Christ on the return of Christ to a Spirit-directed and Spirit-embracing phrasing of waiting, living and hoping-in-and-with-the-Spirit on the return of Christ

### **7.4.3 One-sided notion of purity and perfection**

A second one-sided Pentecostal perspective deals with the distinction of Law and Gospel. In the past accusations have been levelled at Pentecostals of propagating a theology of glory at the cost of a theology of the cross. The danger herein is that Pentecostals can deny the way of the cross and suffering while only holding on to a sense of premature resurrection victory and glory. This leads to some sort of legalism and a striving for perfection having no regard for the renewing work of the Spirit in individual and singular expressions and embodiment of human acts and doings in a person's pilgrimage through life. On the one hand, Pentecostal believers operating within a legalistic and perfectionist life paradigm view themselves as were set free from sin by the event of the cross. Moreover, by especially being baptised in the Spirit in terms of the motto of 'pure and perfect' is driving them to heavenly heights in a premature way. On the other hand, the doctrine of purity and perfection carried premature experiences of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is driving Pentecostals into the demonic depths of a disregard for the material worldly side of physical bodily dimensions. Pentecostals should acknowledge the permeation and embrace of wholesome snippets and dimensions of sanctified and heavenly life in their present life through the renewal operations of the Spirit applying the cross and the resurrection in all fields of experience and not only in faith experience.

When the term sanctification and holiness is used early Pentecostal extraction of clues from the Holiness Movement of the Wesleyan-Methodist history comes to mind. On the one hand, in terms of the old distinction of justification and sanctification, Pentecostals overemphasise God's justification of Jesus in the cross as a premature sanctifying legal application in the lives of Christians. Thus, if one is justified partaking in the perfect justification of Jesus then one has to be perfect even if one has to pretend perfection when one is not perfect.

In this thesis, the mystery of the continuity of God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment in the future has been emphasised. In concentrating our attention on the grand acts of reconciliation and renewal we have emphasised the simultaneity of the two movements of Jesus the Baptiser through and with the Spirit, and the Spirit doing his continuing renewal directed 'in-filling' and 'filling-in' baptising work in the name of Christ as the one that has been crucified and resurrected.

According to Van Niekerk the traditional word pair of 'purity and perfection' though contributing positively to people's lives, produced more negative results in the modern era in terms of 'renewing sanctification of people' than the emphasis on 'excellence in uniqueness':

On the one, hand the age-old emphasis on doctrinal, religious and spiritual purity and perfection, holiness and sanctification in faith and spiritual affairs as well as modern critical and rational pureness and perfection in philosophies and sciences, religions and churches, families and cultures, clubs and universities has contributed greatly to many people's lives, cultures and societies. On the other hand, however, the ideal of purity and perfection has bullied and disempowered more people than anything else I am aware of in modern history because people who were not adhering to, complying with and obeying the standardised rules, doctrines, dogmas, spiritual gurus' enlightenment and holy ancestors as prototypes of purity and perfection could not or were not allowed to work out the plans for their lives and to strive for the excellence they were capable of in terms of the irreplaceable uniqueness of their lives." (2006/7:46).

The way the traditional word pair is been used, exacerbated the problem of a theology of premature purity and perfection causing in a paradoxical sense states of depravity and depression as a result of not acquiring and achieving the pure and perfect state prescribed by role models of the particular holiness ideal. In Pentecostal circles, the one-sided view of the Spirit's sanctification work been forced and funnelled through the act of Baptism of the Spirit by Jesus Christ as the initiating agent of Spirit baptism created the impression that the Baptism of the Spirit is a one time, once for life event.

#### **7.4.4 One-sided notion of theologia crucis**

A third one-sided perspective of a theology of premature glory stays a reality as long as Pentecostals operate within the 'purity and perfection paradigm' in which the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is treated legalistically as the fulfilment and completion of a doctrine of purity, sanctification and perfection. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Pentecostals aligned themselves with Karl Barth's extreme Christcentric view in which the resurrection of Jesus Christ is seen as only the revelation of the events of the humiliation of God and the exaltation of human beings both happening exclusively in and at the cross of Jesus of Nazareth. Van Niekerk summarises Barth's view as that through the power of the resurrection, Christians share in Christ's exaltation on the cross by experiencing the exaltation in a new life. The problem of Barth's view is that Christ and Christians are exalted in the cross and not in and through the resurrection as the grand introduction to the Spirit's renewal work. The resurrection fulfils two functions in Church Dogmatics:

(a) It reveals the humiliation and exaltation of Christ on the cross, and,

(b) it discloses to Christians an awareness of the correspondence whereby they are been incorporated into Christ's humiliation and exaltation on the cross. The resurrection effects the Christian's hidden participatory humiliation and exaltation in the humiliation and exaltation of Christ on the cross (Van Niekerk 1984:144).

Van Niekerk asserts that Barth because of his negative reaction against a theology of glory and a theology of the enjoyment of heavenly moments and fragments in the current creaturely world had a disregard for the Holy Spirit's resurrective energy and power of raising the human Jesus (newly) from the dead. This disregard of Barth is been transferred onto the Spirit's ongoing renewing work of raising and renewing umpteen moments and fragments, dimensions and elements from death in the current creaturely world. Van Niekerk surprisingly points to what is been referred to as Barth's constructed irreversible relationship of God on the one hand, and human beings and the natural cosmic world on the other totally concentrated in Jesus Christ. God as subject is been copositing human beings and the natural cosmic world in an anhypostatic fashion. Van Niekerk in his 1984 doctoral thesis has stated regarding the anhypostatic tendency in Barth's *Church Dogmatics*:

"The irreversibility of the relationship between God and man is evident from Barth's use of the terms subject and predicate to describe it. Man is been coposited as predicate in this relationship initiated by God the subject. This thesis - also known as Barth's "anhypostatic" view of man and the world - is pursued throughout *Church Dogmatics*: man's subjectivity in his faith is seen as the predicate of the subject (God); history is the predicate of revelation; and in all of Barth's christological comments in *Church Dogmatics*: Jesus' humanity is the predicate of his divinity (anhypostasis). Barth does not see this predicate as self-positing (as the divine subject is) but as the copositing of the human subject by the divine Subject." (1984:189)

Van Niekerk has turned neo-orthodox theology's wholehearted acceptance of a **theologia crucis** as a positive doctrine and a *theologia gloria* as a negative rejectable piece of triumphalist theology around. In his view both a **theologia crucis et gloria** are expressive of the simultaneous processes from Word → Spirit and from Spirit → Word. These processes happen in terms of the mysterious connection between God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. In emphasising God's acts of reconciliation in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ and ongoing renewal through the Spirit it means that Christ has been raised from the dead by the same Spirit of God who continues with its renewal work in human beings and the natural cosmic world through continuous renewed affirmation of the cross and application of the power of the resurrection. Until when? Until the fulfilment and consummation of everyone and everything in the immediate and the far away future are fulfilled in the creation of the new heaven and the new earth (Van Niekerk conversation April 2007).

Thus, when a theology of both suffering and glory is been linked to the cross and the resurrection as the unique and excellent event of newness in history, the power of the resurrection as the liberating force of newness within the creaturely character of reality is continuously been released through the Spirit of God. A human person been taken up in the process of renewal through the Spirit strives as a singular irreplaceable human being in the

ambience of the radical newness of the resurrection of attaining uniqueness and excellence and is been relieved of the spasm of purity and perfection (Van Niekerk 2006/7:45-48).

## **7.4 Spirit-direction of <God... human beings... physical-organic cosmic world> embedded in *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein***

### **7.4.1 The intradivine, intrahuman and intranatural coherence**

I hinted above that a dimension of the Holy Spirit's activity does call for fresh thinking about many matters and new reflexive engagement on being and identity. The point implicitly made above, is been directly made here about the dynamic ongoing renewing work of the Spirit in the creaturely world (González 1989:305-311; Pannenberg 1988:128-130). The Holy Spirit in its ongoing renewing work is continuously providing us with various pointers of what, where and how the *humanness of human beings*, an inclination of the envelopment and fulfilment of creation as the *naturalness of nature*, and, the mysterious *Godness of God's presence* in human beings and the physical-organic cosmos make sense to us (Van Niekerk 2006:374-375).

My reflexion on a theory of faith entices me from personal experience of Pentecostalism, being widely influenced by ecumenism and as a sojourner (1 Peter 3) through life to adhere to a dynamic evolving process of the Holy Spirit engaging and affirming the identities of human beings and the natural cosmic world. A complex number of cues and clues, phrases and phases from people such as Karl Barth (d1968), Emil Brunner (d1966), Paul Tillich (d1965), Rudolph Bultmann (d1976), Alexander Schmemmann (1983) and the Great Cappadocians from the early part of the first millennium coalesced into the following view:

the pneuma-centric and pneuma-directed approach of faith experience is expressed and demonstrated in a theory of faith through the threesome of God, being human and the natural cosmic world by virtue of the pointers of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* in radical, connective and differential everyday experience in the 'intra' sense of the word, thus, intranatural, intrahuman and intradivine.

In a theological manner a pneuma-centric and pneuma-directed approach is been defined as the '*Missio Dei*' (Bosch 1991: 370,392; The Willingen meeting in 1952 of the IMC). Herewith the pneuma-centric and pneuma-directed experiential view of <God...being human...natural cosmic world> of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* is been anchored in the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. In the words of Aring:

“In the final analysis '*Missio Dei*' means that God articulates himself, without any need of assisting him through our missionary efforts in this respect (1971: 88). In fact, it is unnecessary for the world to “*become*” what is already since Easter: the reconciled world of God...After all, God is not imaginable without the reconciled world, neither without God's dynamic presence” (1971: 24).



Aring speaks of *Mission Dei* as the incarnated dynamic of God's salvific grace in all of the cosmos, involving God the creator, God the Saviour and God the sustainer. This implies the incarnated embodied presence of God in every human situation and natural process. Whether this incarnated presence is dependent on the mission of the Christian religion only or an independent incarnated dynamic at work in the cosmos through all religions and even without religions, is here not been elaborated in greater detail. Van Ruler provides us with an important pointer of the *Missio Dei* as the Kingdom of God sent in our time and in the world at large – finding expression in thousand and one everyday ways (1953:16). The result thereof is:

“De kerstening van de samenlevingsverband is geen toevallig bijproduct, maar wezenlijk opgenomen in Gods bedoeling. De zin van de wereld als schouwplaats van Gods heerlijkheid (*theatrum gloriae Dei* – Calvijn) licht voor ons op: dat de naam van God geheiligd wordt, dat zijn rijk wordt opgericht, dat zijn wil geschiedt ook op de aarde – dat is de bestemming van alles” (Van Ruler 1954:47).

This statement by Van Ruler releases the reality and relevance of the overall Christian commitment to God, human beings and the natural cosmic world from metaphysical construction and doctrinal schemes. Faith is been experienced in all societal doing and living as an everyday action in the ambit of the Kingdom of God. The *Mission Dei* points on the one hand to the action of God of irrupting realities, in his interconnectedness and differentialness. On the other hand, the trinitarian structuring of the operations of God's Kingdom has been opening and availing an enormous playfield (Ruler 1954:17) – with all the time and space for human beings and the natural cosmic world to play out their historical and natural roles. Particularly, the playing of humans is been directed to the demonstration of faith through incarnation. The Word must become flesh among the people as in Jesus of Nazareth. In a similar sense as the trinitarian, structuring of God's Kingdom-directed operations the *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* of believers are to be in congruence with their being. Jesus of Nazareth while sharing experiences of life, being among others like one of them and sharing the joys and sufferings of people, witnesses to people and creation about the *for them in an incarnated manner* that the *incarnated state is been made their own* through the Holy Spirit. The *Missio Dei* makes us in the words of Van Ruler attentive to:

“...dat de vreemde Woord ons eigen kan worden. Het wordt ons toegeëigen en wij eigenen het onszelf toe. Het wordt opgenomen en geïntegreerd in onze existentie. Het word ons op den duur zó eigen, dat het bijkans ons eigen woordt wordt. De Geest scheidt of wekt bij ons het geweten, de con-sciëntie, het mede-weten en mede-oordelen met God” (Van Ruler 1954:24).

The nucleus of Van Ruler's statement is ‘that the foreign Word becoming our own through being appropriated *for us* and through appropriation *by ourselves* means that the Spirit

creates and awakens in us *a conscience, thus a con-scientising, a co-knowing, and co-discerning with God.*'

Being awakened by the Spirit of having a *conscience, a con-scientising, a co-knowing, and co-discerning with God* bring us into a new context in which we employ our sense making tools and skills in a new creative and fulfilling way. The shifting and meandering movement of the *Missio Dei* to the *Missio Hominum* brings about the detection of an awareness of the importance of life and abundance of life to *all* people in the world. Life in abundance should not only be interpreted as eternal salvation, but also life brought about by those willing to agonise, sweat and bleed for justice, being co-partners with God declaring and heralding the shalom of the Kingdom of God. The *Dasein, Sosein* and *Aktsein* of the physical-organic cosmos and of humanity are the *locus* of the continuing encounter, involvement and dealings of God with human beings and the natural cosmic world. *Missio Hominum* means human beings are active in the world, involved in the affairs of neighbours in their contexts, identifying with them and demonstrating God's love and concern for creation at the beginning and fulfilment at the end of the process.

#### **7.4.2 Presence of the Spirit**

A mode of interpretation and negotiation within Christian theology namely sacramental theology informs us of the doctrine of *Real Presence* (Ellwood 1983: 81-85). This doctrine, according to Williams (1971:42-43), is visible and edible in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. According to many traditions it is understood not only as a memorial of Christ's death – wherein the past is re-presented – but also Christ is said to be present at the Holy Communion. Exactly how he is present is differently been worded, depending on the tradition, but that he *really* is present – his body and blood – is deemed quite important. According to my tradition, and in my understanding thereof, namely Pentecostalism, such presence does not intend to signify only a partial or a symbolic presence, but a presence that is other than corporeal. However, what is 'spiritual presence'? Even if one adheres to the presence of Christ's presence at the Eucharist, it does seem many a person views it as a reliving or re-enactment of a past event, a renewal of fellowship with other people, and a rededication to Christ's mission (Lima 1982 § 2). The *Real Presence* seems to be vague and indefinable. I maintain that the 'Real Presence' lies not in the symbols or the ritual per se, but instead in the affirmation of our being, somehow mysteriously experiencing and enjoying God, each other as human beings and the tastes of bread and wine as part of the natural cosmic world through our partaking in the meal of faith and communion. In this sense, it is the Eucharist, the graceful gift of *sacra-(mo) mentum* in which the faith mode of our interconnectedness and real differences of being human, God and the natural surrounding environment is confessed in a celebratory way.

In my sense-making pattern, hereof I am of the opinion that the Holy Spirit acts as a vitalising agent, making the 'Real Presence' *Real*. For it is the Spirit who opens our eyes to what is unclear, and brings about a fellowship with God, fellow human beings and the physical-organic Cosmos (Pahls 2003: 3). John Calvin placed emphasis on the Holy Spirit as basic to the Eucharistic presence.

“And there is no need of this for us to enjoy a participation in it (bread and wine – JN), since the Lord bestows this benefit upon us through his Spirit so that we may be made one in body, spirit, and soul with him. The bond of this connection is therefore the Spirit of Christ, with whom we are joined in unity, and is like a channel through which all that Christ himself is and has, is conveyed to us.” (Institutes Book IV, chapter 17, par 12).

Moreover, this is what 'spiritual presence' signifies, namely, Christ's presence through the Spirit. When the Spirit of God breaks through, the presence of Christ becomes a reality in experience (Clark et al 58-59). Thus, in fellowship of the Spirit we sit down together at the Lord's Table not to discuss it, but to enjoy it! (WCC, Lima 1982: §14). It is important to note that even in the Eucharist, God comes close to us by means of bread and wine which is indicative of our labour (our connectedness with the earth) and of transformation (an embedded socio-economic component) (Lima 1982: § 20). In our reflexivity of the dynamic movement of the Holy Spirit, the question does arise how is one to understand him from the perspective of a theory of Faith. In addition, how does such an understanding aid us in becoming and being, establishing identity in other words? Important to our discussion is to keep in mind that in Christian understanding, believers are those people who have heard the call of God in Christ by the Spirit, having received forgiveness in his name, a new identity as people of God, and have become tabernacles for his Spirit (Horton 1991: 6-10; Williams 1972: 47).

The status of Christians in the full sense of the word is that they are 'born of the Spirit'. One has passed from death (i.e. estrangement from God, the self and the physical-organic cosmos) into life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ which is inaugurated and affirmed on Pentecost day as the salvific tools the Spirit is been using in the renewal processes through history and in our day as the era of the Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells within reality and in people's lives. The intranatural dwelling of the Spirit is a fact given within the ambit of the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment of all things. Seen from the perspective of the intrinsic involvement of human beings and the natural cosmic world the intranatural dwelling and the presence of the Spirit can be viewed as a fact of human existence per se. Surely God is present everywhere, and human beings are said to have their Being in God (Meyendorff 1979: 141), but it is only in the person of the Spirit that God resides in creation, Christ, in renewal and future-directed fulfilment processes (Williams 1972:47). This suggests and points strongly to *creatio continua* - through Word and

Spirit, the multidimensional (Triune) one God creates, redeems, renews and guides to fulfilment. Faith as enhanced trust, thinking as enhanced thought reflection, verbalising as enhanced word permeation and thus all other fields of experience for that matter are been experienced and appropriated by human beings through what God has done in the cross and resurrection of Christ Jesus. This implies that only when a person has heard the word of the Gospel and appropriates it through any field of experience such as faith, thinking, imagination, justifying apportion, fear, wonder and intuitiveness – the Word brings with the Spirit conviction of sin, guilt and repentance from evil, bringing about repentance, being and identity with the Spirit's indwelling. The Spirit is an inward as well as an outward actuality. In this sense Paul writes

“...we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:13).

One is to keep in mind that regeneration (new birth, conversion) is the presupposition for the movement of the Spirit in which the very same Spirit works sanctification, wholeness and excellence based on the cross and the resurrection. The latter is been described by the tradition as justification. Justification, is been understood as God's free grace or total acceptance, and to be a Christian is to live as a 'free person' unburdened by the past and accepted in the present and opened to the future (Williams 1972:49, Pannenberg 1988:97). No genuine appropriation of God's turn in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit towards human life and the natural cosmic world is possible without realising (experiencing) that God has re-created a part of his creation through his Spirit that came to dwell within us.

#### **7.4.3 Christ- and Spirit-directed faith reflexive approach**

From a faith theoretical perspective, our identity is been defined, so eloquently written by Paul to the Corinthians in the words:

“16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regard Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this from God, who reconciled us unto himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God was making his appeal through us – we implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 6:1 As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. 2 For he says, “At the time of my favour I heard you, and on the day of salvation I helped you. I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. 5: 16-6:2).

The movement of the Holy Spirit is happening through the simultaneous appropriation and acting of human beings in their being surrounded and accompanied by the physical-organic cosmos (Rom 8). We find the very important starting point in the array of God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. Renewal has taken place, and there has been a transformation through entering the Commonwealth (Kingdom) of God from being a non-Christian into Christian existence (Williams 1972:50; Küng 1977).

Witnessing to the difficulty in finding the right language of the Holy Spirit's dynamic activity is been provided by the markers and pointers in the manuscripts of the writers and composers of the bible books (Wessels et al 1992). Our attention is drawn to the observation of the Holy Spirit's activity permeating and loading the present with dynamic possibilities. The Spirit coming as token and seal of God's work in and through Jesus Christ, acts in such fashion as to possess human existence and the surrounding natural world as creaturely clothes, thereby renewingly moving upon, into, and through God's grand acts continuously. The Holy Spirit is not solely a movement from the outside, an external movement but is intra-naturally moving in and through human beings and the surrounding natural world from the heights to the depths and from curved space to straight time. Spatial language is in many regards inadequate of dealing with the Spirit: words such as 'external' and 'internal', however, convey something of the uncircumscribing nature of the Spirit's movements.

It is worth noting that the external movement of the Spirit is denoted as effusion, the inward as pervasion. Alternatively, biblical metaphors and language such as 'outpouring' of the Spirit for the former, 'filling' with the Spirit for the latter may be used. A deluge 'from above', a 'flooding from within' – such is the Spirit's dynamic operation (Williams 1972:52). Or, to keep closer to the biblical texts, 'wind' and 'fire', blowing and blazing – who can tell whether without or within? The point made is that the Spirit applies and makes real and concrete in renewing what God has done in Christ in reconciliation. Nevertheless, without leaving Christ behind, in talking about the activity of the Spirit redemption is been presupposed. Renewing work of the Spirit is no longer an auxiliary to reconciliation but moves freely in another dimension and era of history (Gräbe 1997:111). The Spirit creates a climactic environment in which the operational mode is done and exacted in a very creaturely manner (Moltmann 1991:x-xiii; Gunton 2002:191-193). The Spirit moves in freedom, pervading and filling not only human reality but also the surrounding natural world. As a result, the markers of a new world of the Spirit are God, human beings and surrounding natural cosmic world in dynamic interaction with the powers and life-giving energies of the Spirit of God. Ontology and doxology forms a continuum. After all, *Vita est Adoratio* (Gunton 2002:204).

“...praise God, to witness in his name, to perform 'signs and wonders'; there is a new sense of His immediate presence whereby His joy, peace and love become radiant; also there is the commencement of the transformation of all things into the likeness and image of God!” (Williams 1972:53).

In general, the Spirit is been subordinated to the work of Christ (Möller (Vol. 2)1998:17-49) whereby the Spirit is largely viewed in terms of an allotted instrumentality ignoring any other activity to a large extent. Actually, in the main tradition of Western theology this has resulted in an essential subordinationism in terms of Trinitarian theology. The Holy Spirit, by classic dogmatic definition is 'consubstantial' with Father and Son, and proceeds from the Father exemplifying the Son (Berkhof 1986:331-334; Burgess 1989:10-17; Davies 1993:128). This procession or the dynamic involvement of the Spirit, in its singularity and end, is been dealt with less than with the work of Christ. On the matter of viewing the Holy Spirit as applicative and instrumental Berkhof's dissatisfaction with the long tradition comes to mind:

"This is the main pneumatological trend in ecclesiastical theology. The Spirit is customarily treated in noetical, applicative, subjective terms. He is that power which directs our attention to Christ and opens our eyes to his work. The main result of his work is the awakening of faith in Christ. His work is merely instrumental...So the Spirit is a second reality beside Christ, but entirely subordinate to him, serving in the application of His atoning work...the Spirit is more than an instrumental reality, the subjective reverse of Christ's work" (1964:23).

But to be fair, we do find other in some traditions strong emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit as making human beings 'partakers of the divine nature – the concept of theosis (2 Peter 1:4) in which the Spirit's work is largely viewed as that of the deification of human beings (Meyendorff 1979:162-164). In this, the work of Christ is been subordinated to that of the Spirit as the transmuting of humanity into divinity. In various other circles, the activity of the Spirit, is viewed as been identified with the process of sanctification. (Sanctification as process is not the 'dynamic movement' of the Spirit, but only the effect). In another trajectory, the Spirit is thought of largely as the inspirer of Scripture, 'soul' of the Church or the anointer of offices (Williams 1972:54). The point I am driving at is though there is an element of truth in all these dispositions, it seems that the peculiar and dynamic movement of the Spirit upon and within the community of faith is generally been neglected. The result hereof is that the community exists partially without the actualisation of its potential. Such a community may be a Christcentred but not by necessity a Pneumacentred community.

The Spirit's involvement in our daily existence opens up fresh thinking, sense making belief patterns and imaginative circles in the most ordinary ways possible. Our challenge is to recognise it – or to assume what is already operative. In the Pentecostal tradition, what is already operative is generally ascribed to the day of Pentecost (Burger 1988:14-18). Moreover, the regular clarion call to rally people of experiencing a fresh 'baptism' of the Spirit, a kind of spiritual pickup, a move towards increased commitment, a rededication to witness and service is the call to honour and be aware of the grand act of God's renewal of everything of which the Holy Spirit is the driver and the champion. However, and we need to take note, the action of God the Spirit in the sense of renewal occurs everywhere and

everyday and not only in the institutional and structural setting of the church and the fellowship of the community of faith. Instead, it happens *to* people, *in* people, who are been projected into a dynamic realm, hardly imagined beforehand, of immense material spiritual dimensions (Van Ruler 1954:37). As long as the movement of the Spirit is that of the understanding of something only happening to the structural sides of an institution, or to people, as a kind of booster, nothing significant is going to occur. The event of Pentecost can be misused to suggest only an external addition to people's wholesome experience before the countenance of God, themselves, other human beings and the surrounding natural world while in actual fact the Spirit as we have said is the champion and the driver of all renewal processes in the totality of reality.

Tied in with this, the effusion of the Spirit is been seen as profoundly existentially and personally. Williams (1972:56) has pointed to the fact that the movement and action of the Spirit is no mere supplement, but the movement through the whole being (community and/or individual) of a mighty power that *renews* the total situation. This enables people to communicate with God, re-orienting them in the world, and exercising responsibility in their sense-making endeavours. Thus a new world is heralded which started with the creation of the world, is been reconciled in Jesus Christ. What is central to this effusion of the Spirit is the anointing of people so richly with the presence and power of God that they are witnesses to Jesus Christ (Möller 1975:65).

We are therefore encountering people, whose existence is been marked by a sense of belonging and identity, embodying a reality confirming the testimony to Christ and giving it the ring of living credibly. What is exciting about this new world is that through the effusion of the Holy Spirit a new immediacy between God, oneself, other people and the surrounding natural world is been realised (1975:53-57). The implication hereof is re-orientation of human beings; firstly with oneself, secondly with other people, thirdly with God, and fourthly with the natural cosmic world. Immediacy becomes thus a multi-relational orienting. Thus, through conjoining of the spiritual and the natural the powers of the Spirit that are already at home penetrate and invigorate the natural realm, the vast area of aesthetic, the moral, the intellectual, and effectuated a renewal and advancement of the total human condition (Williams 1972:58).

What basically, is been taking place, through this dynamic movement of the Spirit is in accordance with the future directed fulfilment of all things. In other words: knowing the reality of God's presence, and participating in the ultimate mystery surrounding and pervading the universe the 'end' of creation is at hand in the embracing working of the Spirit of God. The whole of creation, long in bondage to deterioration worked by the Nothingness of sin (i.e. broken relations and meaninglessness), emancipated by the reconciliatory action of Jesus Christ, and is been suffused with God's presence and power. For reconciliation is not the final goal of the activity of God as a restoration of creation to its original purpose (Berkhof

1986:324-335; Wessels 1997:62), but moves on to the fulfilling consummation in which God comes to his redeemed world to occupy and possess, to pervade and permeate, to fill and fulfil from the future.

Herein, lies the mystery of the 'coalesced presences' of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world as the 'material' of revelation through which the intradivine, intrahuman and intranatural connection (immanence) and difference (transcendence) of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are revelationally been disclosed. God affirms his wholesome 'immanence' and 'transcendence' within his creation. For, while remaining God as God, by his movement as Spirit, he claims, affirms and infuses the depths and widths of creaturely existence. This does not indicate a divinisation of creation, instead, it points to the glory of God of a God at work and at home in his creation. Moreover, this is the inauguration of the transformation of all things: when we will no longer see as if in a mirror, but face to face. Mirrorisation or imitation will fall by the wayside. Mutual cognisance and affirmation of identity and the resurrection, renewal and fulfilment are the new directions and markers that we have to follow.



# Chapter 8

## Kenosis, Incarnation and Reflection

### 8.1 Pneumacentric and Christcentric sense making negotiation

In what follows in this chapter the notions of 'kenosis' and 'incarnation' are been operatively combined as a hermeneutic key in our consensual negotiatory reflection about these notions against the backdrop of the mystery of simultaneous connectedness and difference of the threesome of <God...human beings...surrounding natural cosmos>. Contrary to the metaphysical and dogmatic approaches of theologism in which theo-logicians derive and extract theological guidelines from God, the approach of consensual negotiation in Faith Studies are operatively 'pushed' and 'pulled' by at least two concrete processes which form the *backdrop of the field* and the *ambience and perspective* of faith experience.

The backdrop of the field of the experience of faith experience is been expressed in this study in line with Van Niekerk as a four some awareness of being created (*being thereness*), being reconciled in the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ (*being thus and thusness*), being under renewal through the Holy Spirit (*being active and actualness*) and being involved in the processes and events of consummation and fulfilment (*being this and wheretness*) (Van Niekerk 2006:371-373).

The ambience and perspective of faith experience is embedded and embodied in a quadrilateral dynamic pattern of *I believe God* and *I believe myself* and *I believe my human neighbours* and *I believe my neighbours of the natural cosmic environment* (=animals, plants and things). The mystery, which finds its expression in foursome patterns in every field, mode and dimension of experience, is a movement from pointer to pointer as active and embodied experience of faith and belief. In addition, the foursome pointer pattern of God, one self, other human beings and the physical-natural environment takes turns to roll and evolve through other fields of experience such as thinking, feeling, apportioning justness, loving, imagining, verbalising, etc. as series and patterns in which the mystery is been expressed (Van Niekerk 2006:368-371; 2008:42f).

The two processes of faith experience serves as a guide a guide in our consensual negation with the notions of 'kenosis' and 'incarnation'. The principles of both notions are not been derived from a purported divine reality which coercively imposes itself on it, but takes its bearings from traces, clues, hues and words of experience disclosed in the array of pointers in each pattern of experience. Divine transcendence for instance does not become known as a solitary experience in which God is breaking into his own handiwork where he is already at work. The ancient notions of divine transcendence – God outside reality - and divine immanence – God inside reality - are embodied and embedded as part of the four some

pattern of experience and it is in the experience of the foursome pattern of pointers where the clues, cues and ideas continuously emerge. In the Christian tradition, the strangeness of God particularly shows up in the clues around the notion of kenosis and the closeness of God shows up in the notion of incarnation. For many the notion of kenosis refers to the destruction and humiliation of God in Jesus Christ who gives up his divine privileges on behalf of humankind while the notion of incarnation denotes in general the overwhelming closeness to humankind and the natural cosmic world. Here I will limit myself to the remark that this destruction does not mean the annihilation of the 'Self' of God, the 'selves' of human beings or the 'self' propelling processes of the natural cosmic world. The destruction is a complete surrender to the full patterns, not only of love as Williams (2000:217f) purports but of belief and trust, thinking and rationality, feeling and compassion and words and symbols. The anti-metaphysical thrust of our four some patterns of experience in particular prompts us in faith studies to reflect on the language for instance of the word pair of transcendence and immanence - read into the Bible - yet again.

## **8.2 Kenosis, incarnation and reflexion**

The notion of kenosis imparts to our understanding (dogma) and theoretical constructs (dogmatics) a connotation that differs quite a bit from what these words are usually understood to mean. Dogma is associated with an authoritarian church, a centralist authority, rigid rules, and an inflexible attitude toward all that deviates from the doctrine of the church. In the contribution I want to show that dogma is not, the objectionable ecclesiastical decision that puts us under tutelage, and that its content has rules for a language in which the generous in particular can be articulated in speaking about God. As the notion of kenosis already indicates, 'language of transcendence' refers to a language in which God completely gives himself. This gift of God already resounds in the first verses of Genesis; one hears them again in John's prologue, and once again in the gift of Pentecost. As it appears, God completely empties himself in various ways in his speaking.

We have no settled answers to questions about the meaning of life, about what we humans really are, about the ultimate reality with which we humans have to do, about which of the problems of life are the most important, about how we should live out our lives making sense of it all. We seek to orient and order ourselves, of course, in terms of what we (quite properly) think of as knowledge of the envioning world within which we live, and of our place within that world. The wider and deeper context of our lives is inscrutable mystery – indeed, many mysteries – leaving us with the paradox that ultimately it is in terms of that which is beyond our knowing that we must understand ourselves. In the operating and dynamics of a theory of faith the concept of kenosis came about as an explication for some questions we are facing. Kenosis can be described as one of the key notions that evoke the complex relationship between God, humanity and the physical-organic cosmos. Oscillation between transcendence and immanence, sacred and profane, the 'other' and the 'self', the 'then' and

'now' takes place and is occurring (Zisek 2000:158; Milbank 1999:1-20). A mystery, following Kaufman (1993:60ff), is understood by me as something we find we cannot think clearly about, cannot get our minds around, cannot manage to grasp. We are indicating that what we are dealing with here, seems in addition beyond what our minds can handle. 'Mystery' is a grammatical or linguistic operator by means of which we remind ourselves of something about ourselves: that at this point we are using our language in an unusual, limited, and potentially misleading way.

The notion of incarnation is the mystery and the dogma of the Word made Flesh. Technically the word '*incarnation*' was adopted during the twelfth century, from the Norman French, which in turn had taken the word over from the Latin *incarnatio*. The Latin Fathers, from the fourth century, made common use of the word, so Jerome, Ambrose and Hilary (Küng 1991:684). The Latin *in-carnatio* (*in-caro* – becoming flesh, corresponds to the Greek σαρκόσις, or ἐν σαρκόσις, which words depend on John 1: 14 "Καί ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο" - And the Word was made/become flesh. These two terms were in use by the Greek Fathers from the time of Irenaeus – CE. 181-189 (Iren., "Adv. Haer." III, 19, n.i.; Migne, VII, 939). The verb σαρκόσθαι – to be made flesh, occurs in the creed of the Council of Nicaea. In the language of Holy Writ, flesh means, by synecdoche, human nature or man (Luke 3:6; Romans 3:20). The name and concept of incarnation was strongly suggested especially by the hymn of John's prologue (John 1). Here alone in the New Testament is found that the idea of the divine "Logos", or 'Word' – pre-existing from eternity with God and as God in God's being – which becomes 'flesh' for human beings. When the Word is said to have been incarnate, to have been made flesh, the Divine goodness is better expressed by the notion of kenosis whereby God "emptied himself . . . and was found in outward bearing (*schemati*) like a man" (Phil. 2:7). God took upon himself not only the nature of man, a nature capable of suffering and sickness and death, he became like a man in all save only sin (Suárez *De Incarnatione, Praef.* n. 5). The Fathers now and then use the word ἐνάθρωπις, the act of becoming man, to which the terms *inhumanatio*, used by some Latin Fathers, and '*Menschwerdung*', current in German correspond. The notion of incarnation is expressed in Scripture by other terms: ἐπιλαμβάνομαι – the act of taking on a nature (Hebrews 2:16); ἐπιφανείας – appearance (2 Timothy 1:10); ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί – manifestation in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16); σωμα...κατηρίσω – the fitting of a body, what some Latin Fathers call *incorporatio* (Hebrews 10:5); κένωσις – the act of emptying one's self (Phil. 2: 7).

The history of the idea of kenosis embedded in various Christologies expressed various theological notions. Some are embedded in a broader history of Christian doctrine and theology; others are not. Some deal with the more technical aspects of Christological dogma, doctrine and theology, while others deal more with the changing images of Christ which Christians and perhaps others have held through the centuries (Pelikan 1985:xv, 5). Some Christologies are as intimately tied up with the soteriological aspects of Christ's work that it serves at the same time as the embodiment of the being of Christ. In this regard, Martin

Kähler makes it clear that 'soteriology' is based on 'soteriology', i.e. faith's knowledge of Jesus as the saviour (Kähler 1964:95). Tied up with this is the ineluctable and continuing difficulties of the traditional and continuing difficulties of the traditional high Alexandrian two-nature Christology, with its presuppositions in the doctrines of the pre-existence of Christ (Talbert 1967:141), the Incarnation, and the Trinity (doctrines finally declared orthodox in the fourth and fifth centuries). Moreover, their increasing incredibility and indeed incomprehensibility in the face of modern secularization and its necessary demythologization of the inherited notion concepts made it extremely difficult for these doctrines of been wholeheartedly accepted by modern people. On the other hand, we have the ongoing dialectic of our own modern christological 'doctrine' with the ongoing development of our extra-biblical knowledge of what it means to be a human being (Dickenson 2006:4).

By the time the New Testament was been written – viz. 2 Peter (CE.140?) some very considerable Christological developments have taken place. Three particular notions playing a role hereto, that would become of increasing importance later (Dickenson 2006:29-31):

Firstly, the notion of the Incarnation (of Christ, of the Son of God, of the Word) which is present not in all but in many parts of the New Testament. The hymn in Philippians 2:6-9, the deutero-Pauline literature (e.g. Ephesians, Colossians), Hebrews, and the Johannine Prologue (John 1:1-18) come immediately to mind.

Secondly, the conception of the pre-existence of Christ, though not often explicit, is implicit throughout the New Testament. Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly (1973), in his *Pre-existence, Wisdom, and the Son of Man* has put this beyond doubt.

Finally, even an incipient doctrine of the Trinity seems to have found its way into the New Testament, most explicitly in the late baptismal formula expressed in the risen Jesus' command to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." (Matt. 28:19).

Ensuing centuries saw the formulation of the 'Apostles' creed, the council of Nicaea (325CE.) where concentration was primarily on the doctrine of the Trinity, deciding that the One God subsisted in three 'persons' (πρόσωπα, per-sonae: Father, Son, Holy Spirit), and that the Son was 'con-substantial' (ὁμο-ούσιος) with the Father and with us humans. The council of Constantinople (381CE) re-affirmed the Nicene Creed. The Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) saw the annulment of the *Latrocinium* or 'Robber Council' of Ephesus (A.D. 449), turning their attention from the doctrine of the Trinity to Christology, and specifically to the relationship of the two natures (divine and human) in the one person of Jesus Christ. Under the 'Tome of Leo' (CE. 449; Pope CE. 440-461) the council issued the Chalcedonian Definition stating that, in the one person (in the modern sense of that term) or sub-sistence (υπόστασις) of Jesus Christ, the two natures—divine and human—are united 'unconfusedly

and unchangeably' yet 'indivisibly and inseparably.' Along with the 'Apostles' Creed (at least in the West) and the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed, the Chalcedonian Definition became the matrix for Christian orthodoxy for the next millennium and a half. A so-called high Christology became the norm of the church (Dickenson 2006:1; Kaufman 2004:19).

Quoting seemingly an Aramaic hymn that is in composition of Jewish-Christian origin (Martin 1997:39-41; Fitzmeyer 1988: 483) Paul addresses the Christian community in Philippi with the following words:

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men...”(Phil. 2:5-7).

However, questions arise: Does such “self-emptying” mean that Christ surrendered his divinity entirely? On the other hand, did he only hide it? Or did he surrender not the possession but only the use of it? Is it possible to glean something of the pre-existence of Christ? Such questions greatly exercised the Protestant orthodox theologians of early 17th-century Germany, especially the Lutherans at the universities of Tübingen (in Swabia) and of Giessen (in Hesse-Darmstadt) (Dickenson 2006:16). According to one version, whereas the Tübingen theologians said that Christ ‘emptied himself’ only of the ‘use’ of his divinity (κένωσις χρῆσεως), the more radical Giessen theologians maintained that he ‘emptied himself’ of the very ‘possession’ of his divinity (κενωσις κτησεως). According the church historian Karl Heussi (1957), however, it was a distinction between the mere ‘hiding’ (κρυψις) of his divinity (Tübingen) and the out-and-out ‘emptying’ (κένωσις) of his divinity (Giessen).

“Of the theological struggles within Lutherdom we may mention first of all Christological disputation between Tübingen and Giessen. The Tübingen theologians (Haffenreffer) maintained that, in his status of abasement, Christ hid (κρυψις) the use of certain divine attributes; the Giessen theologians (Mentzer) maintained he renounced (κένωσις) their use. In their *Solida decisio* of 1642, the theologians of Electoral Saxony essentially opted for the construction of the Giessen theologians, which became dominant; the Swabians stuck by their southwest German ‘extra-orthodoxy...(Heussi 1957: 366).

The fact that all such distinctions – although already operative *avant la lettre* even in the Gospel according to John – seem a waste of time at the beginning of the twenty-first century, only sharpens the question whether they do not presuppose conceptions of divinity and humanity which must now be abandoned as ultimate mythological and a remaining mystery. The hypostasis of Christ was a pivotal aspect in the formulation of various Christologies. This was understood in light of the notion of kenosis. Acceptance of the hypostasis and kenosis led to various dispositions in attempts to answer what Christ surrendered which led to

various methodologies employed attempting to explain the mystery of God's involvement in life and with human beings.

### **8.3 A Pneuma- and Christ-directed theory of faith**

God as Holy Spirit is directly interconnected with the natural surrounding cosmos and with human beings through the senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, thinking, feeling, etc. He is present for example in the feeling and emotions through the senses in a feeling way and in the experience of believing in a believing way. In a similar way, whichever number of fields of experience we agree on like thinking, feeling, believing, speaking, socialising, economising, loving, imagining, et cetera; they do not have to be programmed or pre-programmed to flow through believing and faith as is the confessional and doctrinal position of many people from church-centred Christian traditions (Van Niekerk 2006b: 20).

One of the themes we shall seek to emphasise in our theory of faith is the relatively paradoxical relationship between God's activity on the one hand, and human and natural activities and processes on the other. In developing our kenotic theology, we take a number of cues from the paradoxical mystery of the divine and human aspects of Jesus Christ. From this divine-human mystery of Christ we draw extricate clues in order to make the paradoxical mystery operative for the relationship God has with human beings and the natural world, the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility not only in regard to salvation and choice (Meyendorff 1983: 138-140) but also with regard to human involvement and the acknowledgement of the involvement in the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. This mysterious paradoxical relationship of divine and human activity can also be connected to the notion of providence, which has to undergo a total review in terms of the backdrop of the four, grand acts of God in which human beings and the natural world are involved and engaged.

A central part of the biblical witness, which needs to be investigated, is the repeated presence of 'dual agency.' This means that actions or activities are simultaneously attributed to both God and to a human or a creaturely actor. This can sometimes take the form of indeterminacy, where the role of a specific actor is unclear and sometimes a more deliberate form of attributing the same thing to more than one actor.

A number of instances of the mysterious paradoxical phenomenon of the closeness and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic environment is been expressed as the threesome 'co-acting, co-working, co-trusting, co-feeling and co-speaking' as a covenantal team in human experience and from where we can seek to glean from a deeper understanding of the relation between God, human beings and the natural cosmic environment.

The first area we shall look at is creation. The notion of kenosis can be a helpful lens through which to view God's activity of creation, in that it helps us understand and affirm God's role as sovereign Creator and Lord of all that is, and at the same time allows us to investigate what it means for beings other than God to exist. In formulating a doctrine of creation, the first issue that shall be undertaken is that of beginning or origin. Where did the universe come from? How is it upheld? Theologians have typically discussed creation in two ways, *creatio ex nihilo* and *creatio continua*. *Ex nihilo* implies that the cosmos was brought into being from non-being by God, who is able to create being. This places God in the position of Creator, Redeemer, Father, and Giver of life (Berkhof 1986:155-161, Brunner 1949:5-9; Moltmann 1985:86-90). The notion of *creatio continua* set forth an ongoing creation of the world by God. God's interaction with the world is continuous, and creation is viewed as being ongoing, instead of once and for all act at the beginning of time. Of first importance in discussing these two notions of creation is to observe that there does not need to be a fundamental conflict between the two. *Creatio ex nihilo* emphasises what was present before creation, and *creatio continua* emphasises what occurred after that initial moment and is still occurring. A kenotic view of creation encompasses both of these traditional notions and most fully describes God's creative interaction with human beings and the world.

In my faith-theoretical reflection, the possible implications that this paradigm has for other areas of faith studies are investigated by negotiating with the classic texts and positions that have emerged over the centuries. The text and position of Philippians 2 on the notion of Kenosis as the *carmen Christi* is the *locus classicus* for Christian reflection of the incarnation, the Word becoming flesh, allowing us to trace the association between kenosis and the naming of the event of God's love in which the form and the embodiment of that love has taken place (Ward 1999:235; Ford 1995:199-201). There is, however, a lack of consensus on how exactly to interpret the passage, and still less agreement on the role, it should play in the life of the community of faith (Bratcher 2006:1; Ten Kate 2000:1).

However, few would deny the centrality of this particular passage in the Book of Philippians or its broader importance for a deeper understanding of the relationship between God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. It is easy to forget, accustomed as we are to viewing the Bible through large theological categories such as 'Word of God' or 'Truth,' that much of the Bible emerged from communities of faith grappling with the down-to-earth problems of service to God, themselves and each other. In this regard, the context or *in situ* theology of the Philippian exposition delivers when negotiated from a meaningful approach the clues, cues and ideas regarding the God-human-cosmic threesome that is concretely applicable in the experience of everyday life. The words of Downing highlight my point:

"There may be momentarily certainties for the Christian; but never an assurance into which he may relax. All attempts to build these false certainties are idolatrous. Bible, Pope, Church, Tradition, Experience, Encounter, Sex, Prosperity, Society, Learning, Arts, the list of gods is very long. For the man who wishes to commit himself in the

pattern that is at the centre of Christian life, none of these gods can receive the unconditional allegiance he must offer to the One who still insists on hiding himself, and leaving us unsure” (1964:286).

Within this grappling with God, ourselves, neighbours and nature sense making tools are employed which resulted in the writings of the Biblical texts. These texts hint and suggest something of the overlapping, irrupting and mirroring of the mystery of God, human beings and the natural cosmic environment. It also provides us with some clues and guidelines as to how we can negotiate these texts such as the Kenosis Hymn in Philippians. The recognition of this fact establishes some guidelines for negotiating the Kenosis hymn in Phil 2:5-11:

“5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should, in heaven and on the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Cognisance of some of the problems of interpretation is to be heeded (Bratcher 2006: 1-2). The introductory line to the Kenosis Hymn (2:5) presents several problems of interpretation (or negotiation in terms of our approach),

First, there is no clear referent for ‘this’ (τοῦτο). From the present context, it is reasonable to conclude that Paul is referring to the whole attitude of like-mindedness, unity, and humility that has been the Epistle's focus since 1:27. While Paul did not hesitate to use lofty and magnificent theological formulations to address the rather mundane problems of the New Testament churches, this particular passage is not a theological treatise (Craddock 1985: 43). The assumption that the passage is a mine out of which propositional truths about divine reality may be dug has led to some bitter divisions within the Body of Christ (Talbert 1967: 141). Rather, the passage should be approached initially in terms of the context and purpose of the letter itself, and its function within that context. Talbert underwrites it by stating that a proper delineation of *form* leads to a correct interpretation of *meaning*.

Second, the Kenosis Hymn is generally recognised by scholars to be an early Christian hymned affirmation of faith quoted secondarily by Paul. Much ink has been spilled trying to establish the ‘original’ meaning of the hymn to the early church. However, if we take seriously the fact that Paul is writing to a community of faith to deal with practical matters, then the original meaning of the hymn must be subordinate to its present context and function within the Epistle. The phrase ἐν ὑμῖν, usually translated ‘in yourselves,’ as a personal attitude each person should have, probably should be understood within the context of the strong



emphasis on community as "among all of you"; that is, as an attitude toward each other (Fee 1992: 45).

Third, the last phrase lacks a verb in Greek. The usual practice is to supply a form of the verb 'to be': "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus" (2:5, NASB; cf. NIV, KJV). While this is permissible, it is also possible to use the original verb ('have ... attitude') in the second clause, a common Hebrew usage found less frequently in Greek. Understood in this way, the verse reads, "Think this (in this manner of humility) toward each other which you also think in Christ Jesus (as Christians)." 'In Christ Jesus' refers to those who have been baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:11, 23; Gal. 3:28; *et al.*). Therefore, being 'in Christ' is the basis for having the attitude of humility that Paul has just shown to be necessary: based on the attitude of humility that you have before Christ as Christians, you should also have the same attitude in your relationships with one another (cf. NEB). This understanding of 2:5 fits well with the context as Paul elaborates the nature of the worthy conduct that is the obligation of Christians.

The actual hymn itself begins in 2:6. It can be divided into three parts: verse 6, introduced by the pronoun 'who' referring to 'Christ Jesus,' which focuses on the privileged status of Christ; verses 7-8, introduced by the disjunctive 'but,' contrasting with verse 6, which focuses on the self-abasement of Christ; and verses 9-11, introduced by a strong referential conjunction (*διο και*, 'therefore also'), implying that the last part is a necessary result of the preceding, which focus on the activity of God exalting Christ. Thus, there is a movement of the status of Christ within the hymn (Bratcher 2006:4; Fee 1992:30). He first appears on a level of equality with God (v. 6). Then, by his own choice, he lays aside that equality and takes on the role of a servant (vv. 7-8). Finally, he is exalted by God to a status equal with God (vv. 10-11).

This pattern of privilege-servant hood-exaltation, which is presented in the hymn as Paul's elaboration of the proper Christian life-style, is a demonstration of Paul's own life experience and is used as a basic structural element of the entire Epistle (Bekker 2006:7; Bratcher 2006:4). Paul has clearly cast himself in the servant role by the initial greeting (1:1) and the recounting of his circumstances (vv. 12-16). He also testifies that he himself has enjoyed privilege, which he has gladly and freely laid aside and has "counted as loss for the sake of Christ" (3:7, NASB; cf. vv. 8-14). He makes it clear that he anticipates a day of exaltation so eagerly that "to die is gain" (1:21). Paul sees himself so clearly following the path of servant hood that was established by Christ, especially in his present circumstances, that he can refer to 'the fellowship of his sufferings' and 'being conformed to his death' (3:10, NASB). It is in this spirit that Paul can point to himself and say, without trace of arrogance or pride, "Follow my example" (3:17; 1 Cor 11:1).

Paul deliberately uses himself and his circumstances to illustrate the proper exercise of the role of servant exemplified by Christ. Paul repeatedly uses the word *φρονειώ* – to set one's mind on, to have an attitude) to refer to the mind-set of humility and selflessness to which he

originally called the Philippians and which the Kenosis Hymn illustrates (2:5; 2:2; 1:7). He also uses it to refer to his own attitude of selfless commitment, which he invites them to share (3:15). He uses the same word to highlight the wrong mind-set, that of selfish preoccupation with earthly values (3:19), and to commend their own concrete expression of the proper concern for others (4:10). Finally, being a letter, the letter to the faith community of Philippians will to some degree reflect the needs and concerns of the persons involved, both the author's and the recipients'. While a complete portrait of neither Paul nor the church can be painted from the Epistle, the life situation of both, their relationships to each other, and the matters that concern each of them have shaped both its content and its manner of expression. An awareness and expression of these factors will provide both a social and a literary context in which to set the Kenosis Hymn while providing a basis for application to the modern church.

The willingness to lay aside all rights of personal privilege, to submit in the spirit of servant hood to the needs and concerns of others; that is the heart of this letter. From Paul's side we see it as one who is a faithful servant following the Servant-Christ. From the Philippians' side it is as those who are obligated to exhibit that servant hood as followers of Christ. To show Christ as a servant, then, is to illustrate what being 'in Christ' entails (Bekker 2006:14-15). Paul argues that to fulfil one's obligation, as a citizen of the heavenly kingdom is to empty oneself as he did, and to take on the role of a servant. One must commit oneself not only to sharing grace but also to suffering (1:5, 7, 29-30). S/he must be willing to be "poured out" in the service of others (2:17), to have a mind-set and lifestyle that is different from the values of the world (3:18-19). S/he must exhibit true humility, understanding that to be "in Christ" means to be a servant because Christ came to the world, not as Lord but as Servant (cf. John 13:2-20)!

#### **8.4 Kenosis hymn: Situatedness**

However, what is the historical context of this hymn and epistle? Paul's relationship with the group at Philippi had been warm and cordial. Although he had been imprisoned on his first visit there (Acts 16:11-40), it was the first group who followed the teachings of Paul in Europe. The initial success there was fondly recalled by Paul (Phil. 1:3-5). They had continued to support Paul in his missionary efforts (4:15-18). The warm introduction to the Epistle, its cordiality second only to 1 Thessalonians, reflects the continuing close relationship between Paul and the Philippians (note 4:1). The backdrop for Paul to address the needs and concerns of the group at Philippi is the warm relationship between the Philippian church and Paul, and his portrayal of himself as the faithful bondservant of God who suffers and rejoices in choosing the path of service to others.

However, it is clear that Paul is in perilous circumstances. Not only is the gospel that he has preached faithfully being threatened by self-serving, ambitious preachers (1:15-17; 2:20-21; 3:18-19), but he himself is in prison, facing imminent death (1:7, 12-16; 2:17; 3:8-14). Yet

there is no depression or gloom in this epistle. On the contrary, joy and rejoicing are prominent (1:4, 8, 25; 2:2, 17-18, 29; 3:1; 4:1, 4, 10). Paul faces his circumstances with a faith born not only out of God's past sustenance and provision (4:11-13) but also out of a lively hope in the future. His hope is based on his own commitment to a set of values that so transcend earthly concerns that he can refer to things highly valued by earthly standards as rubbish (3:4-11; cf. 1:1 9-26; 3:20-21)! Paul is so committed to values beyond himself that he can actually rejoice in his own dire circumstances because they have advanced the opportunity for the proclamation of Christ (1:12-14). This attitude is reflected in the opening line of the epistle by a self-designation common of Paul: servant (or 'slave'; Greek, *doulos*, Gal. 1:10; 2 Cor 4:5; 1 Cor. 7:22). It is significant to note that while Paul customarily establishes his authority as an apostle in writing to the churches (as in the first verses of Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians), in this Epistle, he simply calls himself (along with his co-worker, Timothy) 'servant.'

The literary context is in accord with the historical context. Paul's introduction in this epistle is cordial, including a prayer (1:3-12) in which he emphasizes the communal nature of the gospel by the repeated use of 'all of you' (1:4, 7 (twice), 8, also 1:25; 2:17, 26). He also emphasizes the commonality between them ('sharing,' *koinonia*, 1:5; 'partners,' *sunkoinonous*, 1:7; cf. 4:4-16). He then expresses his earnest desire to continue serving and working with them (1:23-25). While the whole tenor of the letter to this point has evoked images of community, close relationship, and selfless servant hood to God, the first hint of a problem emerges in 1:27. Here Paul begins addressing practical concerns relating to the life of the community of faith at Philippi. The emphasis on being 'steadfast in the spirit' and 'struggling together with one mind' for the sake of the gospel suggests that the unity of the community needs strengthening.

It is critical for the interpretation of the rest of the epistle to note that the first imperative Paul directs to the Philippians community concerns proper Christian lifestyle. While Paul makes the same appeal to other churches (cf. Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:12), here he departs from his usual vocabulary and uses a technical word (*πολιτεύεσθε*, 1:27) that means 'to discharge one's obligation as a citizen' or 'to fulfil one's obligation to the community.' (The only other occurrence of the word in the Greek New Testament is in Acts 23:1 where Paul's defence of himself and his mission to the Gentiles before the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem is that he is fulfilling his duty to God. The same implication is been carried through the letter to the Philippians by Paul's use of a nominal form of the same word in 3:20 to contrast the mind-set of Christians who are citizens of heaven with those whose mind-set is on earthly things).

The Philippians were proud of their status as Roman citizens in their city as a Roman colony and they clearly understood Paul's call to fulfil societal obligations. Paul, however, is not calling them simply to be good citizens but to fulfil their obligations to the Christian community. This would result in a unity of spirit, mind, and purpose. Paul does not immediately explain what that obligation entails, but there is built into the letter already an

expectation that it is somehow related to Paul's dire circumstances, a hint given support by his reference to suffering related both to himself and to the Philippians (1:29-30).

This call to proper citizenship in the gospel is reinforced by the first verses of the second chapter, where the love, compassion, and sense of community (κοινωνία, 2:1) that come from Christ are used as a basis for a renewed appeal for unity (the same mind-set, the same love, united in spirit, of one purpose). The problem in the Philippians' community is finally revealed selfishness and arrogance (v. 3). Internal dissension is threatening the love, unity, and fellowship of the community (2:14; 3:18-19; 4:2). While the cause is not revealed, the solution is understood by Paul to be a proper ordering of one's life. Priorities must be made according to a set of values that places the welfare and interests of others above concern for self (2: 3-4), a humility arising from the very nature of being Christian. This would have two implications: the Philippians would fulfil their obligations to the community of faith as citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and the community itself would be built around a set of values and concerns far different from the rest of the world (3: 17-20).

I maintain that it is through the kenotic action of the Holy Spirit that one is able to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, creating us as the first fruits of the new creation already starting to break into our existence (Rom 8:23; Berkhof 1986:531-532; Küng 1991:150-152; Möller 1997:168-176). The doctrine contributes too many different directions, including toward a theology of nature. What is surely needed in the light of today's knowledge is a reconsideration of the Church's doctrines of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. It is important especially that Pentecostalism reflects on these experiences in a meaningful manner. Spirit breathes life into the universe and always is creatively at work in the whole process of the world's development (Moltmann 1991:83; 1985:94-98). The Spirit loves life in all of its richness and diversity and makes space within the Trinitarian relations for the emergence of a universe, the entities of which are constituted by relationships (1991:83; Brunner 1949:67). The Spirit is the bearer of grace and author of the incarnation. She is mid-wife to the birth of the new even as creation groans and struggles to be born. The Spirit comes with healing in her wings to a world crying out for renewal. The Spirit comes to a world fragmented by violence with the promise of health and wholeness. To this, the Holy Spirit bears witness: not only was he involved with the Son incarnate, but is also both other than and interior to them. Moreover, is simultaneously sent forth by Christ (Versteeg 1978:20ff.).

## **8.5 Reflexion and Christology**

Since our present examination of Christology constitutes the nub of our broader considerations on 'Theory of faith and sense-making', it is legitimate to ask, What possible contribution could our sense making or reflexive thinking attribute to our understanding on Christology, and specifically to a proposed 'paradigm shift in Christology'? (Dickenson 2004:5; Kaufman 2006:25-26). Macquarrie (1990:Parts One and Two) again and again avers

that, whatever happens to the notion of Jesus' divinity, we must never let go of the conviction of Jesus' full humanity; yet Macquarrie never undertakes a substantive defence of that claim. Many Christians (e.g. Eastern Orthodox) would presumably hold just the opposite, viz. that whatever might happen to the notion of Jesus' humanity, we must never let go of the conviction of Jesus' full divinity. Eutyches and the ancient Monophysites—ultimately condemned—were only among the extreme holders of such an Christological position. Differently put, as it happens, science contributes here both negatively and positively: negatively, by demythologising ancient concepts, specifically ancient Christological concepts; positively, by filling out our knowledge of what it means to be a human being.

Negatively, our increasing knowledge of science pushes us to demythologise not only the various ancient 'world-pictures' (*Weltbilder*) found in the Bible, but also certain depictions and conceptions of man current in the ancient world and in the Bible, such as pre-existing one's own 'incarnation' whether as Son (Hebrews) or Word (John 1:1-18) or angelic being (Arius); being born of a virgin (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38); walking on the earth as a god or demi-god (John); laying down one's life only to take it up again *motu proprio* 36 hours later (John 10:18); being apotheosized (Oedipus at Colonus; various kings and emperors), ascending into heaven (Acts 1:9-11), ect. (Ten Kate 2006:6). To my mind, however demythologising is not solely limited to ancient or classical texts. We have to submit our own presuppositions and be willing scrutinising them. When human freedom and maturity become the dominant midpoint and criterion of thought, traditional religious ideas and convictions, long held beliefs must appear mythological.

My understanding of mythology and demythologisation is informed by comparative religious studies. Myth is understood as the form of comprehension proper to an out-of-date epoch of human history: in Comte's terminology, it is the 'Childhood', the primitive era of humankind (Quinton 1997:347). The divine and mundane are intermingled and form the cosmos. Mythology is therefore the mode of thought and imagination, which understands the divine in worldly form, and the worldly in divine form. God is the gap-filler, the *Deus ex Machina*, who replaces natural causes with miraculous and supernatural interventions (Kasper 1977:44). The basic worldview of various cultures are thus informed – the divine is so to speak the numinous dimension of depth in the world and can be experienced anywhere and directly in everything (1977:44; Ellwood 1983:111). Demythologisation as programme tries to accord with human beings' changed understanding of reality. The intention behind it is not, as suggested by the word seems at first to imply, a process of elimination; it is an attempt at interpretation (Kasper 1977:44). An interest in human existence and the understanding thereof is the thrust behind such programme (Küng 1991:532). An attempt to interpret the structural patterns inherent in traditional (and even contemporary) expressions of faith appropriate to the modern mind is been launched (Ellwood 1983:113).

Levi-Strauss (1972:169-194) made three basic points about myth in his essay *The Structural Study of Myth*.

- Myth is a kind of language – that has a message and is trying to make a statement.
- A myth is composed of all of its variants – to know what the message is, one looks at every way the myth is expressed. To know the full message of Christ in human experience, for example, one would not only look at the life of the historical Christ, but also at all the ways he has been represented and talked about down the ages through two thousand years of history and reflexion.
- The movement of myth is from awareness of opposites to mediation. Polarities like male and female, human beings and nature, youth and age, or locality and world are reconciled. In the hero type of myth the hero, achieve the task of mediation in a more formal manner.

It should be noted here that such demythologising of certain ‘supernatural’ acts predicated of, in our instance, Jesus, in no way casts doubt on his full humanity, viz. his existence as a real, earthly Jewish carpenter and rabbi who lived and worked in Palestine in the first 30-odd years of the common era, and about whom we know e.g. as much as we do about Socrates and considerably more than we do about Alexander the Great. An excursus of the best-known exponent of demythologising, Rudolph Bultmann’s (1884-1976), highlights our point. Bultmann (1967:22) understood as mythological the mode of thought in which the unworldly, the divine, appears as worldly, and human, and the otherworldly appears as this worldly. Mythology is almost the counter-concept of a modern scientific worldview, which he reckons is operating in a closed context of cause-and-effect, whereas for mythic thought the world is open to the intervention of other-worldly powers (1967:15-48). Bultmann had a concern to disclose the understanding of existence, of being, which is concealed in myth, and especially the truth or kerugma of the biblical writings embedded in time-conditioned impedimenta.

His proposal is as follows (Bultmann 1953:102-123; Dickenson 2006:25-26):

- As a document of its place and time, the New Testament presupposes and embodies a mythical world-view including a three-storey cosmology (heaven, earth, hell); the supernatural constantly encroaching on the natural world, and specifically: Jesus being born of a virgin; angels and demons active in the world; God and the Holy Spirit repeatedly interfering in history; not only God and the Holy Spirit but Jesus and his disciples often performing miracles; Jesus bodily being raised from the dead, passing through closed doors, appearing and disappearing before the disciples, ascending into heaven, etc. Myth however shows human beings as not in control of themselves. Demythologizing of the time-conditioned impedimenta leads us to uncover the kerugma of Jesus Christ, which as background context brings about a dynamic, existential and a new understanding of existence.
- Modern human beings, who not only has learned something of modern science, but daily enjoys and takes for granted its most advanced technological fruits, simply cannot any

longer believe all the supernatural machinery so taken for granted by the New Testament actors and writers. Further, the preacher's request that he believe all these supernatural machinations, as an integral part of the Christian faith, so offends modern man's understanding that he can simply no longer hear the real message of the gospel: a gospel which, despite what the preacher says, has no necessary or inner connection with all the super naturalistic thought-forms in which the New Testament writers clothed it.

- Consequently, in order that modern man may hear the real message of the gospel, complete with the genuine 'scandal' which that gospel 'scandal', which that gospel entails for all natural men everywhere, it is necessary to rid that message of the unnecessary intellectual 'scandal' provoked by, provoked by the New Testament's outmoded super naturalistic thought-forms. But this can be done only by 'demythologising' the New Testament's essential message, viz. by divesting it of its mythological thought-forms, and by translating that essential message into thought-forms which are comprehensible and accessible to modern man. Faith remains the sole possible way of access to God, who is perceptible only through his revelation in the word of proclamation. In this regard, Bultmann concurred with Barth (Küng 1991:522).

Many, of course, upon first hearing of Bultmann's 'demythologizing' program, found it much more 'scandalous' than anything in the New Testament (Kasper 1977:45). For Bultmann had rejected not only the virgin birth, angels, demons, and the three-storey universe (notions largely already laid to rest by modern science), but e.g. any such notion as that 'the sins of the fathers are visited on the children' (one of the few things we can learn from history), any notion of God acting at all in history, of the Holy Spirit, or of Jesus being resurrected even as a 'spiritual body' (I Cor. 15:44). Contrary to popular generalising of the ideas held by Bultmann, he made important contributions to the debate of re-thinking and re-negotiating Christology. One of the Church Fathers' mistakes was that they did not recognize the mythopoetic nature of much of the Bible but took many of its statements literally as metaphysical propositions. More correctly, it may be said that the Church Fathers allegorised and/or 'metaphysicalised' biblical passages as it suited their theological needs and purposes. An impressive dogmatic-metaphysical edifice was erected by applying Greek philosophy thereto, but which has repeatedly under attack as been as theologically unsafe. Dickenson (2006: 22) view the inherited high, Alexandrian two-nature Christology, as a mythologico-metaphysical Christology. Today one can only hope that we have a better appreciation of the widely varying genres and intents of various biblical texts and authors.

We are aided in our reflexion on faith, texts and theories (and Christology's) in its demythologising function by comparative folklore and specifically by what Wolfhart Pannenberg calls the 'analogy' between such 'Christian' stories and other stories which it would never occur to us to take literally. Analogy plays a second role in his conception of historical method. In the study of historical documents, including the Scriptures, exact analogy to a form of tradition that has no referent (myths, legends, and the like) is good

reason for concluding the reported 'event' is not historical (Pannenberg 1971:51-53). This important point in the context of Pannenberg's discussion of historical analogy warrants his own words:

"It is another matter when positive analogies to forms of tradition (such as myths and even legends) relating to unreal objects, phenomena referring to states of consciousness (like visions) may be found in the historical sources. In such cases, historical understanding guided by analogy can lead to a negative judgment about the reality of the occurrences reported in the tradition. Such a judgment will be rendered not because of the unusualness of something reported about, but rather because it exhibits a positive analogy to some form of consciousness which has no objective referent (Realgehalt)" (Pannenberg 1971:53 – tr. JN).

It must be kept in mind that demythologization has a time and place. It is undeniable that in generally current ideas of Christianity, Jesus Christ is often thought of more or less as a god descending to earth whose humanity is a kind of clothing behind which God himself speaks and acts. Extreme examples of such notion see God dressed as Father Christmas, or slipping into human nature like someone putting on dungarees in order repair the world after a breakdown. The biblical and church doctrine that Jesus was a true and complete human being with a human intellect and human freedom does not seem to prevail in the average Christian head (Dickenson 2006:6, 22; Küng 1991:631). How often were the products of Christian art, especially Renaissance and Baroque, uncritically misused by theologians and preachers to describe a world that by its very nature is unimaginable, invisible? Moreover, how often have people made an image of him not fitting any image while taking this image for real? Expressing our question more precisely: May we conceive God as a person and can we do it in the context of modern awareness without lapsing into an uncritical-traditional mythologizing or even a hyper-radical demythologizing? (Kaufman 2004:8; Padgett 2006:10).

Demythologization is acceptable in its positive aspect as existential or anthropological interpretation. Revelation uses human language, which only reveals something when it reaches the reader: when it is understood. Understanding of religious language or expressions is to be found, in keeping with our methodology; not only in religion but also in the truth statements of religious language may include issues and criteria outside the 'language game' of religion. We approach these 'external' criteria and evidence not as 'neutral' observers, but with the full toolbox of sense making tools learned, discovered and inherited (Kaufmann 2004:20; Padgett 2006:10; Van Niekerk 2006:48-49). Furthermore, in Jesus Christ human existence as a whole becomes the 'grammar' of God's self-expression (Kasper 1977:46). Christological statements become statements about being human.

Conversantly, anthropological study ought to give us an initial understanding of what has happened in Christ. The question bugging us however is how far and whether theological



discourse and discussion are really possible and meaningful when such an approach is ventured. Perhaps a hermeneutical orientated theory of faith is in itself mythological or daring in imaginary sense (Kasper 1977:46; MacDonald 1990:16; Kaufman 2004:14). We now know immeasurably much more about the sheer physical structure and functions (not to mention the psychic structure and functions) of human beings than we did centuries or even decades ago (Levy 2006:3). That is, at least ever since Darwin, we have multiplied by many times our knowledge of the structure and function of the human genome, brains and synapses, organs and secretions, relations to the physical environment in general and to the rest of the animal kingdom in particular, etc. (Langton 1996:344-354; Gribben 2003:529-571). The more a theorist of faith knows of this world, through the natural sciences, psychology, sociology, philosophy, art, literature, history and perhaps most of all through own experiences, so much more will one be able to fulfil the Theo-logical task. With this has come, from history and the social sciences, increasing understanding of the social, political, economic and religious context with which Jesus was been actively engaged. What all this means is that we now know incomparably much more than before what it means not only that Jesus was a man but that he was that kind of man—or even that particular man—in a specific Spatio-temporal context (Talbert 1967:153).

## **8.6 Christological aspects of kenosis and incarnation**

John affirms in plain words that Jesus is God. The set purpose of the aged disciple was to teach the Divinity of Jesus in the Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse that he has left us; he was aroused to action against the first heretics that bruised the Church.

"They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us" (1 John 2:19).

They did not confess Jesus Christ with that confession which they had obligation to make (1 John 4:3). John's Gospel gives us the clearest confession of the Divinity of Jesus. We may translate from the original text: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was in relation to God and the Word was God" (John 1:1). The words *ὁ Θεός* mean, in Johannine Greek, the Father. The expression *πρός τὸν Θεόν* reminds one forcibly of Aristotle's *τό πρὸς τί εἶναι* (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10742b.htm>). This Aristotelian way of expressing relation found its like in the Platonic, Neo-Platonic, and Alexandrian philosophy; and it was the influence of this Alexandrian philosophy in Ephesus and elsewhere that John set himself to combat. It was, then, quite natural that John adopted some of the phraseology of his enemies, and by the expression *ὁ Θεός ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν* gave forth the mystery of the relation of Father with Son: 'the Word stood in relation to the Father', i.e., even in the beginning.

Kenosis is an important theme in this reflexion on identity and the mystery of God's involvement in our lives. The word kenosis comes from the Greek verb, κενω, used in Philippians 2:7 to describe the act of Jesus Christ. In the incarnation, in clothing himself within, and with creatureliness, Jesus Christ 'emptied' himself. It does not imply that Jesus was not still God fully and completely, or that he became powerless. Yet, Jesus emptied himself of the glory of divinity in becoming human. That is kenosis, the Word becoming flesh, the gift of God's presence in Jesus Christ and the Eucharist (Ward 1999:233). The biblical authors (Num 6:25; 1 Cor 13:12), Moltmann (1996:6-7), and Ford 1995:199-200) view the gift of God's presence as the turning of God's face toward us. The face of God represents God's alert attentiveness, and his special presence. The face is everywhere the place of special revelation of the inner movements of feeling: anger and joy, laughing and crying, are shown on our faces. In Jewish thought, the 'hidden face of God' is regarded as symbolic of the judgement of God, as turned away in divine condemnation and eternal death. This happened with Jesus on the cross when he cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:33). After his resurrection he shows his face to the women and the eleven, informing them on the affect his resurrection will have in the world of which they will be eyewitnesses (Mark 16:9-18).

Wherever Christ is designated *άνθρωπος* in Paul's letters (Rom 5:12ff; 1 Cor 15: 20-49; Phil 2: 7b-8), a contrast with Adam is intended (Talbert 1967: 149-150). The Gnostics taught that matter was of its very nature evil, somewhat as the present-day Christian Scientists teach that it is an 'error of mortal mind'; hence Christ as God could not have had a material body, and His body was only apparent. These heretics, called *doketae*, included Basilides, Marcion, the Manichæans, and others (<http://www.advent.org/cathen/08374c.htm>). Valentinus and others admitted that Jesus had a body, but a something heavenly and ethereal; hence, Jesus was not born of Mary, but His airy body passed through her virgin body. The Apollinarists admitted that Jesus had an ordinary body, but denied Him a human soul; the Divine nature took the place of the rational mind. Against all these various forms of the heresy that denies Christ is true Man stand countless and clearest testimonies of the written and unwritten Word of God. The title that is characteristic of Jesus in the New Testament is Son of Man; it occurs some eighty times in the Gospels; it was his own accustomed title for himself. The phrase is Aramaic, and would seem to be an idiomatic way of saying 'man'.

The infinite took on the finite, as God took on flesh (Ware 1996:70; Hellerman 2003:424). This concept of kenosis is a relatively controversial one, especially expanded beyond Christology and utilised with regard to creation, providence, sanctification and eschatology. It has been a (rightly) criticized idea in theology for many reasons, as it is often used to emphasize the humanity of Christ, and the corresponding hiddenness or emptying of God at the expense of the Lordship and divinity of Christ and the corresponding transcendence and sovereignty of God. Kenosis is the concept of the 'self-emptying' of one's own will and

becoming entirely receptive to God and his perfect will. It is used both as an explanation of the incarnation and an indication of the nature of God's activity and condescension alongside human neighbours and the natural cosmic world.

An apparent dilemma arises when Christian theology posits a God outside of time and space, who enters into time and space to become human (Ware 1996:72-75). There is a lack of consensus on how exactly to interpret the passage of Philippians 2:5-7, and still less agreement on the role it should play in the life of the community of faith. (Bratcher 2006, Martin 1997; Moule 1970; Talbert 1967; Wright 1998). However, few would deny the centrality of this particular passage in the Book of Philippians or its broader importance for a deeper understanding of the person and work of Christ (Bratcher 2006:1). To my mind, Paul does not infer the pre-existence of Jesus, rather highlights the perichoretic relation of God. The field dependency is that of relationship. A continuum of existence is also noticeable, heaven and earth, God and humanity, lordship and servant (Bekker 2006:9-13; Fee 1992:43-45). The doctrine of Kenosis attempts to explain the solidarity of God with humanity. The process of incarnation overcomes a dualistic scheme of natural and supernatural, tearing the veil between the holy of holiest and the mundane. Since the incarnate Jesus is according to Chalcedon simultaneously, fully human and fully divine, kenosis holds that God experienced the full range of being human in his incarnation, and that when Jesus ascended to heaven following the resurrection; he fully reassumed all of his original attributes and divinity. Specifically it refers to attributes of God that are thought to be incompatible with becoming fully human as for example, God's omnipotence, omniscience as well as his aseity, eternity, infinity, impassibility and immutability. Theologians who support this doctrine often appeal to a reading of Philippians 2:5-8. Critics of kenosis theology argue that the context of Philippians 2:5-8 is referring to Jesus voluntarily taking the form of a servant to conceal his divine glory (Talbert 1967). Obvious difficulties of any interpretation which sees pre-existence referring to in this hymn include (1) Incarnation is regarded as kenosis rather than epiphany as in e.g. John 1:1-18; (2) that there would be in early Christianity a reference to a pre-existent reflection about a decision of Christ; (3) one is virtually committed to an interpretation of Christ's humanity; (4) with difficulty can the conclusion be avoided that the exaltation of the Lord is a higher state than being in the form of God (Talbert 1967: 141). However if one read the hymn as to referring to the human existence of Jesus rather than to his pre-existence, confirming the creatureliness of human beings, the radical difference yet an overlapping between <God...being human...and nature>, one can avoid some of this problems.

Yet, I believe that kenosis can provide an exciting paradigmatic field for looking at these other areas of theology, although I concede that, this must be done very carefully. This care is worth the effort, though, because the idea of kenosis can help illuminate the paradoxes that stand at the core of our faith, taking a cue from the humanity and divinity of Christ and extending this understanding to freedom and election in salvation, presence and hiddenness

in creation, and other areas as well. The incarnation of God is the pivotal point of creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation as the grand acts of the Kingdom, the Commonwealth of God. It is not the birth of a helpless baby that denotes the incarnation, instead the crucifixion and resurrection of a man, the appointing of him as Christ by the Spirit. The Christology, which stands at the foundation of this construction, seeks to be fully in line with the ecumenical creeds, and with passages such as John 1, Acts 2, in addition to Philippians 2 (which is in no way held to be the only, or even normative, text on Jesus Christ).

## **8.7 Aspects of the economy of kenosis**

A faith theoretical approach to the notion of kenosis forces to the foreground the question of how God acts in the world. The Scriptures are replete with examples of the 'mighty acts of God.' The Old Testament recounts how God parted the Red Sea, fed the Israelites in the desert, and raised Lazarus to life, among other myriad examples of divine action. While divine action presupposes a transcendent God who 'acts,' the nature of such action is subject to scrutiny today as evidence of the new science points to an evolving universe marked by uncertainty, change, chaos and self-organisation (Polkinghorne 1993:108). The apparent ability of nature to organise itself into new patterns of order challenges the Newtonian understanding of divine action as efficient causality. Does God 'act' to change things or move them around? Does God intervene in creation to keep it moving in a particular direction? On the other hand, as Nicholas Saunders asks, 'has belief in special divine action been irrevocably lost to science?' (Saunders 2000: 518).

I am of opinion that even despite its troubled history as a theological movement, kenosis as concept has the potential, when carefully and rightly used in accordance within tradition of the churches, to proclaim the glory of God and begin to illumine the profound depths of the Christian experience in its full broadness and depth. Kenosis helps us to see the amazing love and holiness of God, as well as the divinity and humanity of Christ, affirming our identity. Kenosis implies, suggests and indicates to me an action that is essentially multidimensional in the Trinitarian sense of the word. In proposing kenosis, I certainly do not claim to have solved in any way some of these deep and beautiful mysteries of faith, but instead have sought to uplift and uphold them by fully acknowledging them throughout the theological endeavour. Cyril has examined the divine kenosis at length (Lossky 1998: 100-102). God, Cyril argued, could not divest his nature by incarnating himself, or else he would no longer be God and one could no longer talk about the Incarnation. Therefore, Lossky reasons the subject of kenosis is not divine nature, but the person of the Son. He writes:

“And the person fulfils himself in the gift of himself: he distinguishes himself from, not to 'avail himself' of the His natural condition, but to renounce himself totally. That is why the Son 'did not avail Himself of His equality with God,' but 'on the contrary,

divests Himself,' which is no sudden decision, nor an act, but the manifestation of his very being, of personhood, which is no longer a will of his own, but His very hypostatic reality as the expression of the Trinitarian will, a will of which the Father is the source, the Son, the obedient realization, and the Spirit, the glorious fulfilment. There is therefore a profound continuity between the personal being of the Son as renunciation and His earthly kenosis" (1998: 102-104).

It seems Abe (1991:11) concurs with this notion. He argues convincingly in reformulating the doctrine of Christ's kenosis as follows:

"The Son of God is not the Son of God (for he is essentially and fundamentally self-emptying): precisely because he *is not* the Son (for he originally and always works as Christ, the Messiah, in his salvation function of self-emptying)".

The point emphasised is, when we speak of *homoousia*, which indicates an identity of the full divinity and full humanity of Jesus Christ in one person, it does not simply signify 'consubstantiality', but rather 'one function' or 'non-dual function' of self-emptying or self-negation. Such a deeply dynamic non-dual function of self-emptying, the consubstantiality of the divinity and the humanity in Christ brings a refreshing perspective. Meyendorff suggested a similar train of understanding in when he writes:

"The human nature of Christ is not personalized into a human hypostasis, which means that the concept of hypostasis is not an expression of natural existence, either in God or in man, but it designates *personal* existence. Post-Chalcedonian Christology postulates that Christ was fully man and also that He was a human *individual*, but it rejects the Nestorian view that he was a human hypostasis, or person. A fully human individual life was en-hypostasized in the hypostasis of the Logos, without losing one of its human characteristics...The fact that the notion of hypostasis is irreducible to the concepts of 'particular notion' or to the notion of 'individuality', is crucially important not only in Christology but also in Trinitarian theology Hypostasis is the personal, 'acting' *source* of natural life; but it is not 'nature' or life itself. In the hypostasis, the two natures of Christ accomplish a union without confusion. They retain their natural characteristics; but, because they share a common hypostatic life, there is a 'communion of idioms' or *perichoresis*, which for example enables some of Christ's human actions – words or gestures – to carry consequences which only God could have provoked. The clay made out of His spittle, for example, restores sight to the blind man" (1979:154).

If understood correctly, we can therefore safely deduce that the Logos made humanity his own in its totality, thus the second person of the Trinity was indeed the subject, or agent, of the human experiences or acts of Jesus. This opens up new avenues of thought, which has

meaningful application of the senses to the triad of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* - enhancing our being and becoming.

The case in point is that the presence of God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit is realised at the depth of our present existence as a kenotic God (Delio 2003:332). At the heart of Christian understanding of good transformation is Jesus Christ: his life, death, and resurrection, his presence in community, and the orientation towards meeting him face to face. The crux of the matter is that in this person transformation has happened already. It has endless aspects but it is also very specific – it has this face.

“This has been the face of a baby and a child; teaching angry, passionate; eating, drinking, tired, crying; transfigured and shining like the sun, agonized in Gethsemane, kissed by Judas; running with blood, silent crying out in abandonment; a dead face; a face strangely unrecognized yet recognized in stories of resurrection appearances; breathing the Spirit, giving blessing; and then related to in faith, shining in hearts, desired by all; ‘Come, Lord Jesus!’ Jesus’ ministry was face to face; he gathered disciples and shaped them into a meal-centred; and the news of him spread by word of mouth. Without this face and the continuing face-to-face community and communication there would be no Christianity” (Ford 1995:200).

## **8.8 Continuous awareness of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment**

In all spheres of life we are continuously challenged by facing new situations, being confronted by new waves of knowledge and techniques, and drawn into processes of overwhelming change to which we have to adapt. Alvin Toffler, in his introduction to his bestseller, *Future Shock*, speaks about the

“...roaring current of change, a current so powerful today it overturns our institutions, shifts our values and shrivel our roots” (1970:11).

This current sweeps us toward the future, and sets before us the challenge of using opportunities, testing creativity and employ powers of innovation, creativity, and imagination. Apart from making times of excitement and expectation, change also fosters turbulence and instability, bringing with it chaotic conditions and violent behaviour that makes the future less predictable. It is therefore often resisted and feared. Counter measures to these experiences of insecurity and apprehension are to engineer new social structures of societies hand in hand with new structures of confidence, which have to be (re)established continually. Which, as part of the process, may in turn be challenged and changed – processes of emergence seem to be the order of the day (1970:11).

Awareness of the passage of time through continuous awareness of the process of the Commonwealth of God meandering through God's acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment makes it unavoidable that we do not remain locked in an ever during absolute, non-changing, and irreversible mode of time. The reality of change and passing time, which leads to a feeling of transience, is countered by the experience of a reality other than the historical. This experience has been described in religion, in philosophy, in sociology and in science – in different modes, contexts and forms right through the ages. From a perspective of anthropology and history of religion, Eliade wrote:

“The awareness of a real and meaningful world is intimately related to the discovery of the sacred ...the sacred is an element in the structure of consciousness, not a stage in the history of the consciousness...Thus philosophical reflection was confronted from the very beginning with a world of meaning which was...religious” (1969:Preface).

Prigogine remarks on the development of science:

“In classical science the emphasis was on time-independent laws...It is natural that this quest for an eternal truth behind changing phenomenon aroused enthusiasm...the assumption of classical science...cantered around the basic conviction that at some level the world is simple and is governed by time-reversible fundamental laws...that only eternal laws were seen to express scientific rationality” (Prigogine & Stengers 1984:1-7).

If the question of the relation between the reality of change and time is to be answered, reflection on the importance of both is needed. As the above illustrated, these two levels of reality were regarded as separated entities in Platonic and classical science. The changing physical world typified the 'real' transcendent world that was viewed as the absolute and universal, the only world worth of ultimate meaning. Writers in the Judaeo-Christian Scripture wrestled with the same question. Their dealings with the problem were expressed in their reflection on history and time covering the threesome of God, humankind and the natural cosmic world. However, it is not limited to time bygone as Prigogine & Stengers state:

“Science ...attempts to understand (nature) and to dig deeper into questions that have been ask generation after, generation. One of these question runs like a leitmotiv, almost as an obsession... through the history of science and philosophy. This is the question of the relation between being and becoming, between permanence and change” (1984: 291).

In science of religion it can be called the problem of the sacred and profane (Eliade 1969: 133). However, to paraphrase Van Niekerk (2006:373-374) a bit at this point, the problem of the tearing of the veil between the 'holier than the holy' and the 'holy' space of the temple in

the ambience of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus which made an end to all attempts of creating and establishing schemes of dualist nature such as sacred and profane, transcendence and immanence and immutable and mutable. In this sense the problems are turned to the question of tying something human or of the natural cosmic world exclusively to God. The underlying set of presuppositions of the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment seem to open and disclose meaningful and wholesome clues and cues about the place, the role and historical context of the time of the tearing of the veil between the holier than holy and the holy of the temple.

## 8.9 <God... humanity... natural cosmic world>

When we differentiate between God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmos, a 'formal' unity of closeness is noted. Such a simultaneous integral unity and differential difference can be noted between God, the whole of humanity and the whole of the natural cosmic world - earthly material, plants and animals. Of importance to our discussion are the creatureliness, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilling direction in which God, human beings and the natural world are bound up in time - without being panteistically unified in time.

In terms of our study the mystery of the simultaneous connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world is expressed in the depth and the width of the *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* of God, human beings and the natural environmental world according to the boundaries set for each (Brunner 1949:20; Stoker 1970:19-21). Although a plant remains a plant, and cannot become or evolve to become an animal, and an animal cannot become a human being, God stays God and cannot become a human being, an animal or a plant all are interconnected yet differentiated. Thus, the whole of the cosmos (earthly material, plants and animals), human beings and God are "formally" *coram Deo*, *coram hominibus* and *coram mundibus*. From this point of view, God is equally before the countenance of human beings and the countenance of the natural world. On the other hand, human beings and the natural cosmic world in being created are set before the countenance of God - *coram Deo*. There is interaction, yet otherness between God, human beings and the physical-organic cosmos. All stand before each other, *coram Deo*, *coram hominibus* and *coram mundibus* in the meandering of the Kingdom (Commonwealth) of God through the boundaries set by God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. God, to say it poignantly, existing in and through his Kingdom which is not only to be designated as the rule of God the King and the Lord from creation as the start to fulfilment as the finish (Ridderbos 1962: 24-55) but is multidimensionally involving and engaging God as prophet, priest, etc from start to finish. God's Kingdom is therefore amongst others also directed by the Spirit in a Messianic, theocratic and pneumatic trajectory (Küng 1991:163-179).

Creation as God's creative act produced another essence distinct from God, deserving of his love and concern, and fundamentally "very good". Because through creation the mystery of



the close connection and radical difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world is set, creation is not simply a phantom or mirage. There is a sense in which its meaning is found and elicited from the mystery of the togetherness and the atotherness of God, being human and the natural cosmic world, for even humankind and the natural world is been loved and valued by God. God as different from them can be viewed from them *coram Deo* as realities *vis-à-vis* himself and in turn can be viewed *coram hominibus* and *coram mundibus*.

Theologians have typically discussed creation in two ways, *creatio ex nihilo* and *creatio continua* as I stated above (Brunner 1949:9-12; Barrett 2000:153-159). Fashionable with today's cosmologists and some theologians is the idea that the universe arose *ex nihilo* – out of nothing. *Ex nihilo* implies in theological sense that the cosmos was been brought into existence from non-being by God who is able to create being (Brunner 1949:9). Hierarchically it places God in the position as creator, the giver of life. *Creatio ex nihilo* means then that, unlike Gnosticism of all ages, there was once a 'Nothing' out of which God created the world, but that God alone brought the world into being. In a classical, commonsense world, that would be an absurdity (barring supernatural intervention); there would be no possibility of nothing ever becomes something. *Creatio continua* set forth creation as being ongoing, instead of a final act that set everything in motion. It underwrites divine preservation of the world that God is still actively, and creatively at work in a world, God has already created. Thus *creatio ex nihilo* emphasises what was present before present creaturely reality, while *creatio continua* emphasises what occurred after that initial moment and is still occurring.

Quantum physics flies in the face of such a composited notion of *creatio ex nihilo* and *creatio ex continua* by insisting that unpredictable fluctuations in physical systems can indeed take place – that there can be causes without effect (Darling 1993:128). The extent of these random fluctuations is in my understanding under the jurisdiction of the so-called uncertainty principle, formulated by Heisenberg. This put strict limits on how accurately we can pin down the values of certain pairs of quantities, for instance being and becoming. It implies that we can never know precisely both the momentum of an electron and its position at the same moment. The more closely we try to fix one quantity, the more the Heisenberg principle throws the other quantity out of focus (1993:128; Gribben 2002:150-151).

A kenotic incarnational view drawn from God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment viewed against the background of the certainty of the dynamic uncertainty of positions, circles and orbits encompasses the reflexive trajectories of *creatio ex nihilo* and *creatio ex continua* best (Barrett 2000:153 ff; Schaeffer 1990:333-340). God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment in which human beings and the cosmic natural world are intrinsically involved point to how the Spirit in an integral, radical and differential

manner simultaneously creates out of nothing while continuing to create in the renewing sense of the word transcending rigid restoration.

## 8.10 Time and context

I discussed the relation between being and time above arguing that *Dasein* in the Heideggerian sense overlaps with the everyday state of being (vide Chapter 3). In the complexity of the everyday, various social roles are been played and identities assumed, indicating in existential sense, the multifarious complexity of being. In other words, every attempt to bridge the domains of experiences belonging to the spiritual and physical sides of our nature, time occupies a central position. The issue of time is been connected to every perception of history. In this regard, it is significant that the new directions in physics are been described as the era of rediscovering time (Prigogine & Stenger 1984: xxviii).

The notion of time is to my understanding directly related to the mystery of the radical, integration and differential interconnectedness and overlapping of the threesome of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. The premise held widely in contemporary philosophy, science, religious studies, sociology and social anthropology is that all our sense making and conceptual notions is intricately been linked to historical contexts. The historical context is the cultural and socio-economic world in which all experience – of time and transcendence – takes place and is expressed and transmitted through language and symbols; without these symbols, meaning cannot be experienced, neither expressed. As indicated earlier in the discussion when in meaningful experience a world of meaning is constructed and there expressed a conceptual basis for future reflection established:

“Understanding such a world thus become a matter not of abstracting a ‘meaning’ from the cultural-linguistic nexus of thought and action, but rather of grasping the constitutive patterns that knit that particular social reality into a ‘world – a cultural or/and a religious community” (Green 1990:23-24).

In this process, we create a worldview, a symbolic universe or a God-human-and-world view that orders and informs historical processes, locates all events in a cohesive unity that includes past, present and future, thus transcending the natural cosmic world of flux and thereby bestowing meaning on the changing world of time (Green 1990:23; Berger and Luck Mann 1967:103). Important to note, such construction is due to negotiatory application of disciplined and informed imagination of reality. Imagination is been disciplined within a specific framework giving it shape and focus – e.g. a concept of time (Cumpsty 1991:185-188). The challenge is to become actively involved in the process of discovering the meaning of reality by participating in imaginative construction. However, the communication of such a construction also requires imaginative reception within the field of faith and belief experience.

In the building up and formatting of sense making systems, all make use of processes such as borrowing from, adapt to, and contribute to their societal settings in the local sense of the word as well as in the broader context of the world (Van Niekerk 1996:20). Similar processes were been followed by the church fathers. People working within the ambience and range of influence of different strands of theology, philosophy, and God-human-and-world views certain sense making mixtures about how people believe, think, feel, love and imagine came about. The theological, philosophical and ecclesiastic operational mode of many modern theologians after the Second World War was to pinpoint especially ancient Greek philosophy as a punching bag for many ecclesiastical ills while making abundantly use of Greek philosophy as part of their theology, anthropology and cosmology (1996:20). In the 50ties and 60ties after the Second World War expression of guilt by Christian theologians in the face of the Holocaust made it fashionable to defend dynamic linear Hebraic thinking against the ills of static cyclical Greek philosophical thinking in theology. The irony of this that theologians went the dynamic linear time trajectory in terms of a sense making approach that still operated with the theo-logics learned from Plato and Platonic philosophies.

The maximalist principle of reflecting in terms of a theo-logic mode on the 'ultimate principle', 'the absolute being' or the 'all-initiating agent' in human and the natural cosmic world is alive and well in modern and late theology. Speculative-grandiose schemes are still been constructed either as reductionist macro paradigms or continuing with the traditional meditative theology of God and human beings in unison. Calvin was a trendsetter hereto. He criticises the scholastic discussions of faith in late medieval schools through the newly constructed intermediary between God and human beings, namely Christ:

“...they call God simply the object of faith, and by fleeting speculations, as we have elsewhere stated, lead miserable souls astray rather than direct them to a definite goal. For, since God Dwells in inaccessible light, Christ must become our intermediary” (Institutes III, 2,1).

In modernity, the death of God has been proclaimed quite regularly from reductionist stances in which the denial of God has played a central role. In late modernity, the God is experienced as multidimensional being in alignment with human beings and the natural cosmic world as multidimensional (Van Niekerk 1996:21). The death of God is not an issue. The spirituality of late modern (postmodernity) is quite different from intellectual atheist and agnostic bourgeois schemes that in the majority of cases emerged as high modern constructions. In late modern treatises, transcendence is treated not as the experience of something in the modern sense of the word, in which a God breaks into human beings and the natural cosmic world via some medium such as a Logos or Word, the Bible, revelation, prophet or Jesus as mirror. The latter procedure is fundamental in the construction of the highly problematic modern theological distinction of God as both transcendent and immanent. In short, the modern theological procedure in which God's transcendence

(=outside reality) and immanence (=inside reality) are established follows a three-tier strategy:

- the theologian asserts that people can only know God immanently within reality
- the theologian asserts that the transcendent God outside reality is not knowable
- The same theologian then turns around and discourses at length about God transcendentally hovering outside (Van Niekerk 1996:21).

The contradiction in the procedure is usually camouflaged with some modern version of revelation. Revelation serves to bring into play all the many things said about God hovering outside reality – about whom the theologian has admitted complete ignorance. The modern attempt to overcome the contradiction by establishing a *part* of reality as both the divine and the medium of the divine inside reality have haunted theology through the ages, long before modernity. The debate on the pre-existence of Jesus in the context of Philippians 2:5-11 serves as a good marker of how a theologian's sense making scheme is determining the outcomes and result of his or her negotiation with the text.

The truth of the matter is there can be no final statements on God than there can be any final statements on the nature of human beings and the laws of nature. Cardinal John Henry Newman often observed that all life is change, and to be perfect is to have changed often (quoted in Pilch 1985:79). Not less than our ancestors, we must not foreclose our minds against the clues and cues of God, our neighbours and the natural cosmic world disclosed in our experience, even if they are new and therefore inconsistent with long-held beliefs, thoughts and emotions.

Kierkegaard provides one of the most powerful arguments of the status of current experience by denying that the so-called meditative “apostolic” status of direct knowledge of God (and we add knowledge of human beings and nature) is more direct than the contemporary status of our knowledge of God (Küng 1991:71-72). He rightly insists that our task is no different from that of the first generation of Christians, except (and here he would disagree) we have the advantage of facing the right historical direction on certain issues. Kierkegaard too, like Pascal, wanted not a general, theoretical *introduction* to Christianity, but the individual's existential *practice* in Christianity (De Jong 1987:309; Küng 1977:127-128).

A person should not simply devoutly accept a historical, philosophical or dogmatic truth, but should live as a Christian, not only having and possessing Christian truth but also doing it by embodying it. This personal-existential overall commitment of ones total Christian experience can be phrased as radical human experience. The apostolic church now embraces twenty-one centuries, not merely the first. We are heirs of every century. For this reason, one cannot equate traditionalism with orthodoxy. In faith theoretical terms, the Holy Spirit does enlarge, deepen and change our understanding of truth over the course of time. God did not stop talking when the canon closed. We set the date of God's withdrawal from history at the

closing of the canon not God. The church's altered perceptions of issues of race and gender provide graphic illustrations of how the intertwining of the trajectories of Spirit → Word and the Word → Spirit continues to meander and work through history expanding, deepening and changing truth in radical, integral and differential ways.

## 8.11 Provisional approximation of kenosis and incarnation

This brings me to the point of approximating a few answers to a few questions. How is one to deal with categories that might express both the existential act and the faithful, loving, compassionate being of God's presence as very close and very different? Could it be that we have to translate the approximation of <God...human beings...natural cosmic world> by way of a mystery? It might be that we are facing the predicament of translation with the one term, the one word: Immanuel, the name of God, the living dynamic God who marks his patronymic communal space with his presence. In other words, the sharing and commonality of community imposes certain limits upon us. The limits are the sacred text, person and theory wherein sacredness surrenders it to certain limitations and impositions (Abe 1991:14-19). The sacred surrenders itself to the translation, and translation devotes itself to the sacred (Derrida 2002:108).

The language of the Bible is not a kind of language that makes possible an understanding of the nature and coherence of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world perceptible behind the appearances, a coherence without which there could be no ethics and no scale of values. The way we read and approach the Bible is strongly enfolded within the sense making God-human-and-world view with which we are operating. The same words within their contexts may often have different meanings in two sense making God-human-and-world views. Even two sense making languages from different time periods express different meanings, e.g. the heavens of which the Bible speaks have little to do with the heavens into which airplanes and rockets are sent. Closer to home, the issue we are discussing is that of the three avenues undergirding the traditional threesome of theology, anthropology and metaphysical cosmology-ontology. Bonhoeffer provides us with some pointers on this matter in his exposition of '*Akt und Sein*' (1931; 1956 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). The interconnectedness of God with our existence and our peculiar knowledge of him suggests that God is not there to be discovered, nor ascertainable and knowledgeable in the same sense as the things of the world. The three avenues when viewed in the traditional sense amount to three different epistemological avenues. Bonhoeffer stated:

"A God, who is not there, is not God. God is God 'is' in relation to persons, and his being is being a person" (1956:94).

The term metaphysics was coined as a description of the books that had to be studied after physics. Consequently, 'meta-physics' is what comes 'after physics' (after the science of nature) and yet is not an anthropo-logic (ethics) or a theo-logic (Küng 1991:550). Theology is

according to Aristotle the most important part of metaphysics – the intelligible dome - accompanied by physics and arithmetic. According Küng, if we understand metaphysics as a human ‘projection’ (Feuerbach), an ideological ‘superstructure’ (Marx), an ideal ‘afterworld’, or even perceived as ‘true reality’ in the Platonic world of ideas, set apart from present reality, at the expense of our reality, then we are not pursuing metaphysics (1991:550). But, if ‘metaphysics’ indicates to us that the purely empirical cannot be sustained from its own resources and must be surpassed in a meta-empirical way not lying beyond, behind, above or outside this reality, then we are pursuing ‘metaphysics’ or even better, ontology (theory of being).

Herewith, a metaphysical temptation faces us: existence is being divided into two worlds, either by emphasising with Barth the primacy of God’s saving act of grace which is virtually independent of us, or by emphasising with among others Bultmann that the primacy of our act of faith is virtually independent of God’s reality (Dumas 1971:112). The characteristics of metaphysics is seemingly to create a division between appearance and reality, living and experience, earth and heaven, this world and the world beyond, the natural and the supernatural. The word ‘metaphysical’ implies of itself a dualism, for the presupposition *meta* carries great weight – even though initially as we have seen was only a way of classifying the place Aristotle’s ‘first philosophy’ in his writings following those on the ‘physics’ and nature (Dumas 1971:113). So metaphysical transcendence becomes reflection on the beyond, the deeper within or the otherworldly; all understood as some other as the here and now. Thus, seen in this way, metaphysical theology turns away from understanding God in his kenosis, and sets itself against the condescension and love of God toward an everyday world the metaphysics deems ‘evil, misleading and corrupt’.

Bonhoeffer saw a similar tendency in the theologians who stress God’s transcendent act, for when the right is denied to control an objectified God in their grasp, they nevertheless reinforce the division between the act of God as ‘totally Other’ and human beings living in the everyday world (1971:114-117). The question begging to be answered is: Can this emphasis on the composite act of kenosis and incarnation be helpful in describing God’s intervention and summoning, wherewith sufficient account is given of Christ’s and the Spirit’s presence in the reality of the world? Moreover, is the ecclesiology of such theologians not too much based on the *limits* of God’s grace and the faith of human beings, without giving sufficient attention to the accomplished and ongoing work of God’s grand acts set in a covenantal scheme of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment? In contrast to metaphysics thus understood, a sense making God-human-and-world approach replaces reductionist metaphysics, ontology and epistemology by attempting to describe the openness of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world to the question of *being* in a triadic and threesome way.

For Bonhoeffer the direction is towards an analytical clarification of the fundamentals of being. If one does follow Bonhoeffer's inclination to ontological openness and discernment, negotiating the gaps and distances of an over-emphasis of either God, human beings or the natural cosmic world into a composite mystery of the co-acting, co-working and co-operation of the threesome, one arrives at the stance of approximation: one is then able to speak of God not *above* reality, but at the point of his presence *in* reality, one is able to speak of human beings not *beyond* their existential reality, but at the point of their being there *in* reality and one is able to speak of the natural cosmic world not *behind* reality, but at the point of its presenting itself *in* reality. The concept of a kenotic and incarnated God and Spirit brings us to the understanding of God's transcendence as intrinsically part of human life and the natural world. Such an understanding does not create a Platonic division between earthly appearances and heavenly essences, or the other way around and it establishes the upholding of a claim on God's presence that structures its own praesentia moments and locations in reality. Understood in this way, a sense making God-human-and-world approach revolves around the analysis and the synthesis of the *Dasein*, *Sosein*, and *Aktsein* of the present Spirit and Christ without designing doctrinal clothes and masks to operate within reality.

'Being' in the reductionist sense is always in danger of becoming a catchall category, something in which human beings and the physical-organic cosmos and God participate in varying degrees. Aversion to an ontological kind of theology in Protestantism and Pentecostalism is underscoring the position that the biblical notions of God's intervening in history and his divine demands viewed as the irrupting word or words of God into people's life-worlds and nature to a large degree one-sidedly maintained the difference between God on the one hand and human beings and the natural cosmic world on the other. The question may be asked whether it is possible to speak ontologically of the creative personality of God. (McIntyre 1987:1-5). Moreover, how can we be sure that the ontological difference between Being and being will be maintained, without absorbing Being or emptying being of all content? (Abe 1991:14-19). In concurring with Bonhoeffer (1962:119,184), I reason that to distinguish between an 'authentic' ontology from the 'phenomenological-ontological' approach is of utmost importance. It is specifically in this regard that we emphasise the mystery of the simultaneous closeness and difference between God, human beings and the natural world as strong point of departure for the development of a Pentecostal Theory of Faith.

Hence, an authentic composite 'ontology' presupposes an expression of a threesome of 'Being' already known as the presupposition of understanding in a complex act of negotiatory grasping and comprehension of the interconnection and radical difference of theological being, anthropological being and cosmological being. It is clear that God does not encounter human beings and the physical-organic cosmos only at God's limit, but he somehow enables us to understand or have an inkling of his presence in the midst of reality, so we can claim not only to exist (being, having identity) in God the creator – the continuing era of our

creatureliness, in Christ the saviour – the concomitant era of the cross and the resurrection, in the Spirit as the renewer – the era of the Spirit and in God the fulfiller – the era of the new heaven and the new earth. Bonhoeffer however, approaches fulfilment as eschatology as representing a barrier between the transcendent hope of faith and the ontology of sight. Thereby Bonhoeffer interprets the shift from viewing the present in the light of the past to viewing the present in the light of the future. To him the normative theological problem of the child is not that of the expectancy of an unfettered future but the way in which the future defines the present (Bland 1999:285-290; Erickson 1959:93-94; Giddens 1999). The faith of the child is the ontological act by which recognition of what lies ahead gives meaning to daily existence.

Bonhoeffer in his description of the epistemology of the incarnation provides one with some sense-making cues and phrases differentially worked out as three respective understood notions of ontology, structuralism and reality (Dumas 1971:115). Granted that each of these approaches has its own risks ontology can turn into immanentism, structuralism into formalism and reality into pragmatism. Moreover, even if the incarnation is viewed as a *creatio continua* or *incarnation continua* - ongoing incarnation, it may come to mean no more than that truth become spatial and temporal. Bonhoeffer corrected in each instance the possible confusion of the present Jesus, revealed as Christ (the hidden structure of reality) by God as Spirit, with the empirical creaturely world (a self-contained totality). The method he employs in '*Akt* and *Being*' is not to abolish the transcendental category of act but correcting the category of being from the danger of metaphysical dualism or reductionism. In *Christ the centre* (1966), the category of structuralism is given the content of deputyship, and in his *Letters from prison*, reality is preserved from the triviality of pragmatism by the 'secret discipline', as illustrated by Betghe's epigram:

"Secret discipline without worldliness becomes pure ghetto; worldliness without the secret discipline pure boulevard" (Dumas 1971:116).

By each of these three attempts Bonhoeffer has been trying to protect a very specific and concrete understanding of the incarnation from either dualism or immanentism, so Christ can be known as the present Christ who assures God's presence as reality and reality's presence before God. I am however of the opinion that from my faith theoretical perspective that the presence of God in reality is being effectuated and eventuated by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit appointed Jesus as the Christ, raised him from the dead, and is present within us. The mysterious experience of God's interconnectedness and difference affirms the transcendence of God *vis-à-vis* human beings and the natural cosmic world. The mystery viewed on the one hand may be called a kenotic presence in Christ and on the other hand may be viewed as the incarnational presence through the Spirit.



*Creatio ex nihilo* is the first point at which kenosis is asserted. The second point is *creatio continua* in which incarnation is presented in an ongoing sense. Both involve the continuous activities of God and human beings in a kenotic and incarnational composition. The kenosis lies in this: In order for God, omnipotent and omnipresent, to create that which is other than himself, God must necessarily limit himself in some way to allow for something genuinely other than himself to exist. According to my understanding, a Christian doctrine of creation is rightly concerned with the self-surrender of divine all-inclusiveness, yet self-surrendering and limitation (Torrance 1998:57-58). This does not lead to Nirvana in Buddhist sense, but strangely to affirmation of identity because of the other limiting value of the incarnation. The heuristic key of kenosis and incarnation is been expressed in the theanthropocosmic principle which continuously operate in an increasing sense with the wholesome mystery of the close connection and radical difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world.

# Chapter 9

## Triads and threesomes in humans

### 9.1 A faith theoretical approach and the *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* of humanity

I turn my attention now to radical, integral and differential reflexion of what it is to be human. In a pre-theoretical attitude, we continue to experience the identity of a thing or being through our senses as to be susceptible to change. The book in my hand is no longer new. Its cover is loose and its margins are filled with notes, yet, it is the book I originally purchased. Chemistry and biology give us theoretical understanding of the continual changes occurring in the molecular combinations of matter and in the cells and tissues of a living organism, but our knowledge of the things mentioned is been supplied by our naïve experience, before we acquire theoretical insight into physico-chemical or bio-chemical changes. Pre-theoretical experience while deepened by scientific knowledge is not in danger of being destroyed by it. Instead, when pre-theoretical knowledge is been filtered through a theoretical theorem possible refinement is taking place.

A faith-theoretical approach of humanity's *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* takes into serious account human beings' search of and quest for spirituality. Spirituality anchored in experiential realities strongly contributes to life through the employment of social engineering skills and orientations. As such, spirituality is anchored in a God-life-and-world view (Ford 1995:204). It has to be conducive to life as affirming and cherishing life. Differently put, it has to articulate abundance of life as expressed by faith traditions, of which an inscripturated text namely the Bible in Judaeo-Christian tradition provides us with important cues, phases and phrases for the portrayal of what it means to be human. Picking up on these I maintain that the oppressed, uprooted, hungry and thirsty, the dying, the blind, prisoners and paupers, are not only addressed, but also enforces upon me through there suffering and pain a sense of being co-partners of God in the complex processes of this world (Hope 1995:197-198; Smith 2004:18-19).

By the virtuous action of God as Spirit in the happenings of both the cross and the resurrection of Jesus one is been enabled and empowered, with not only identity and sense of belonging, but also enabled and empowered an active person living out his/her total history as well as portraying his/her own life story (Gestalt). In the context of our discussion, a Christian believer extracts not only clues and cues from all happenings and events but is shown new possibilities and creative views of reality. This is pneumatologically informed, directed and managed, resulting in meaningful responsibility and accountability in life as well as partaking in life (Berkhof 1990:504-505; Nürnberger 1982:232).

The notion of life depends on experiential spirituality, which is pneumatologically anchored. The underlying premise is that we must and are able to articulate relevant, contextual and faith theoretical approaches which open up avenues not only of multiphonic, diverse voices and actions – thus enhancing and celebrating unique personhood and identity – our *Dasein* – but will enable a person's *Sosein*, resulting in their *Aktsein*. Underpinning it all is a cosmological and anthropological point of departure and reasoning. The Spirit is involved in all contingencies of history in the renewal and flourishing of human life in all its diversity, seen as inseparable from involvement with both God and the reality of the history (past, present, and future) (Ford 2003:271). Pentecost as the advent of end times bolsters one to such an extent that historical events can be comprehended. The Spirit actually takes me into another dimension altogether. It is the dimension of the future – that is where the Spirit places me, and also places history and time there, thus freeing me of the confinements – the boundaries – that time and space entail, and which are expressed mainly by death. That is why the Holy Spirit is simultaneously life giving: because he introduces the end times into history. For us, it is neither a repetition, nor the continuation of a past. It is the penetration of the future in time, something however, that creates a new event each time. That event is among others the expression of faith communion in the Eucharist (WCC, Lima 1982: §§ 5-8).

Kenosis describes God the creator and his action of creation, God the reconciler in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God the renewer through the Spirit of Pentecost and God the fulfiller in the process of making every life and every thing in the Spirit fuller en route to the future. First, kenosis is seen in God's willingness to allow for and cause the existence of something truly other than him. Secondly, God's gift of freedom of becoming to creation is evidence of kenosis in creation. Kenosis can also be seen in the veiled action of God. God's act of creation, both *ex nihilo* and *continua*, is an act of kenosis. God truly limits and extends himself, allowing for a creation truly other than him to exist. This is not a denying of the importance of God, but instead discussion of the beauty and magnificence of God's method of creation that invokes within us a sense of wonder, awe and inquisitiveness (Barrett 2000:160). The Spirit is involved in mysterious operational actions in our doings and in the whole of our life history. Somehow, we suspect strongly that the Spirit encapsulate all awareness and experience, permeating all thereby announcing the Commonwealth (=Kingdom, Priesthood, Prophethood, etc) of God. History, the way that we are living it, has negative existential consequences, because it carries death within it. For example, my own history, the way that I am living it, carries within the fact that there was a time that I did not exist, that my father used to exist but no longer exists and that I shall not be alive after a certain number of years. Death is interwoven with historical existence and thus with time.

Consequently, Jesus emerged kenotically from within the created universes through the renewal power of the Spirit en route to the fulfillment thereby entering the mode of incarnation in which he acquired the status of being the Son of God and the Son of man. An

important fact in this regard is constantly on the list of being forgotten. By assuming human flesh, the Son of God and the Son of man also assumed death as a part of history, and was crucified and suffered the pain at the Cross and subsequently death. However, he was finally overcome by death; he was conquered by death. If that was not the case Jesus as God by letting himself die, let him to the state of being awake after a few days from some divine sleep. If becoming awake through himself, is called resurrection then the point that he was dead is missed by miles. The important fact on the forget list of many people is that the resurrection of Christ was accomplished through the Holy Spirit. God through the Spirit as God resurrects Jesus. For many the idea prevailed that Christ's divine nature had somehow overcome death. This in terms of thorough consensual negotiation with the biblical texts is a problematic view because we have clear clues from the texts that God raised Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit has a significant role in Christology, which role, is precisely not to be at the side of the Son of God, and Son of man during that adventure called incarnation because the Spirit mysteriously is involved in the conception of Jesus. The Spirit is with Jesus in the desert, when he goes to fast and the Spirit stands by him in the garden of Gethsemane, where he is to make his decision. It is not by coincidence that the Spirit accompanies Jesus in all of these instances. The major role that the Spirit has is, precisely, to provide the opening for history to move from creation times towards end times and to open up potentialities of the created and to free history from what we experience as limitations of created reality. When the boundaries of the created and death are transcended, the Spirit is simultaneously present within created reality as the life-giving renewing force embracing atoms, molecules, bacteria and viruses.

In this regard, following Van Niekerk, one may assert that when all has been said and done God, human beings and the physical-organic natural world are closely together (at-one-ment) and really differ (at-other-ment) in every pocket and package, context and situation commonly regarded as unholy and holy, slime and manure, waste, sacred and perfect, desecrated, filth, illness and wellness. In this all whether we like it or not, turn up our noses or not, or close our eyes to the real world, the Holy Spirit in amazing multidimensional ways incorporates and embeds every atom and molecule in the physical-chemical world, every cell and organism, bacterium and virus in the biotic world, every emotion and feeling, every thought and belief, every love action, every snippet of imagination and every bit of justice in human experience. As people we do not know how and in what sense the Spirit of God incorporates and embeds thing after thing and being after being in the many universes in the most micro as well as in the most macro of senses (Van Niekerk 2006:375).

The Spirit transcends and the Spirit embraces created reality and history. In a similar sense, the Spirit causes Jesus Christ simultaneously to be released from the clutches of history and to be intrinsically connected to history. Moreover, it is the Spirit assist us to extract the

meaning of history from the experience of being created by God, being reconciled through the cross and the resurrection of Jesus, being under renewing construction through the Spirit self and in the process of becoming fuller and fuller until the final fulfilment at the end of time. The Spirit relativises our attempts to extract the meaning of history one-sidedly from God's action in Jesus Christ. Creatiology, Christology, Pneumatology and Fulfilment-ology (Eschatology) are four areas of reflection pointing to the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. However, the four areas are driven apart when a tendency to see the prism of history unilaterally through one of the grand acts of God. What usually happened in theology is that the over-accentuation of history shows in some theological schemes an over-accentuation of Creatiology over Christology, to the detriment of Christology, or over-accentuation of Christology over Pneumatology and Fulfilment-ology (Eschatology) to the detriment of Pneumatology. In spite of us living in the time and the era of the Spirit, Pneumatology in many instances plays a secondary and decorative role (Hilberath 1997:67-69).

The idea of the few and charismatic inclined, during the early Christian era, i.e. that the Holy Spirit has the purpose in history to be occupied with a few people while the rest is been left to be united with Christ was alive and well in the Western church. Consequently, Pneumatology is been viewed as the preoccupation with saints, whereas Christology is the preoccupation with history, the main field the church is been moving in. The 'more' a person had of the Spirit, the closer he/she was to God and was by definition more holy, fit to rule in ecclesial matters. The church is been viewed in his instance as the community of charismatic members. On the other hand, historical succession of Christ leads to idea of apostolic succession applied to the successors of the historical bishops.

By giving precedence to Christology, Western theology created the following situation as regards the church: the church became the Body of Christ for Roman Catholics. For the Protestants, it became a community that following Christ and his teachings, the Gospel. This created a 'long-distance relationship', one could say. The Head and the Body do not coincide; they do not fully connect, because the Holy Spirit was not been introduced from the very first moment, to create that communion which liberates beings from the limitations of the individual existence. The Holy Spirit creates a community of persons. When we place Pneumatology at the base of Creatiology, Christology and Fulfilment-logy then we do not have Christ first, with a group that follows behind him; instead, we have Christ as a *persona* that embraces and permeates through the Spirit all of us through his cross and resurrection. The Church, therefore, is been formed in this way: it is a community that has its identity through identification with the four grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation (=cross and resurrection of Christ), through renewal and the fulfilment at the end of times. The problematic general view that the Church is so closely tied to Christ that one cannot refer to her being, without a reference to Christ is one-sidedly mystical and is the main cause why the church or the churches are not in touch with their creaturely side.

## 9.2 Anthropological schematization

Effort is required to deduce from historical and thematic studies what the faith trajectories consist of in our *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* as the triad of God, being human and the natural cosmic world. Nevertheless, to be frank, we only gain glimpses of what it ought to be. Although providing one with pointers, clues, cues and phrases, it is similar in method to stay methodologically within the ambience of the semantics of words without reckoning with contexts of usage of words. It is easy then to deduce and induce various cosmological and anthropological pointers, stages and phrases that may appear meaningful and tongue-in-cheek but are in effect useless speculative phrases, which may be aesthetically beautiful without delivering sense making quality to the discourse. Hereto our sense making tools as well as an awareness of what the outlines of our own sense making God-human-and-word approach are play an important role.

There is a frequent urge in science to search for the unity of knowledge by embracing both the reductionist and the holistic and to make a connection between the seemingly disparate approaches. Theoretical physicists search for the 'Theory of everything' like some 'Grand unified Theories' on offer which connect the strong, weak and electromagnetic forces but do not encompass the very different gravitational force (Barrett 2000:123; Hawking 1989:156). The search for a unified theory of everything takes science into the realms of metaphysics and faith studies – that is if the theory takes into account not only the multi-layered, complex realities but also questions the meaning and purpose of the world and its living things. It also enforces a Theory of Faith to engage with science within a postmodern respect for differences of God-human-and-world-views but with a desire to know and teach about the continuum of <God...human beings...natural cosmic world> as much as possible. Differently put, everyone must decide for themselves what they will share with whom, and to who and what they will pay attention regarding decisive issues concerning being and becoming, of existence.

Hence, we need to reflect how God, human beings and the physical- organic environment relate and co-exist. Such evaluation has to do with our daily reflexive activities of life, but also with common tasks, generally referred to as ordinary or mundane tasks. These reflections manifest themselves as personal, social, structural or theoretical problems or challenges. Simon Maimela (1987:41-60) provides us with a case in point. He reasoned in an article 'Man in White Theology', articulating the socio-political embedding of a reductionist philosophy and social practice, as follows:

“And because what theology says in theory and what it does in practice are not the same...It becomes indeed necessary... to delve more deeply into the unargued, hidden, and unconscious anthropological, presuppositions of White theology,

presuppositions that shape, inform and even dictate White behaviour in real life situations...”(1987: 43).

Maimela has a valid point at the time of writing when the ideology of Apartheid was the ruling dogma of the day degrading people on basis of colour and race. He points out that the *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* of people have profound effects, not only on themselves (dehumanizing or empowering them), but also on fellow human beings and we may add, the natural cosmic environment. His counter argument is that, when reading the bible (and reality) through a human-cum-Spirit lens, one has to conclude that in Christ all people (i.e. Christ believers) equal. Buber’s ‘I-It’ distinction confirms similarly, the reciprocity of human beings when engaged in dialogue. An ‘It’ is the objectifying of a person, stripping them of their soul. Hereto Beyers Naudé concurred with his ‘Land van Hoop’ that faith does not distinguish between colour (1995:153-156). Rather, Christian faith attempts to meet fellow human beings as neighbours. It is occurs in spatio-temporal context which calls for embracing negotiation in the consensual sense of the word of socio-experiential realities.

Continuing with our faith reflection brings us to the point where the *Sosein* as the concrete constructed ambience of an ethos is been spelled out in our negotiated understanding and practical phrasing of being-thus-and-thus (conception). It is been phrased as:

“...sedelike waarderinge, norme, insigte tradisies, ideale, gebruike, gedrag van ‘n bepaalde gemeenskap in ‘n bepaalde tyd” (Smit 1985: 32).

Meeks, quoted by Robinson (1990:157), argued that ethos has as concern the underlying, taking for granted patterns of moral behaviour. Cosmology and anthropology is a soundtrack of a specific ethos, but could be differently experienced in practice.

“One can deduce from the above that Christians (so named due to the direction of their faith experiences – my emphasis) themselves are the strongest *argument against Christianity*: Christians who are not Christians. *Christians* themselves are the strongest *argument for Christianity*: Christians who live a Christian life” (Küng 1977:559).

Küng amplifies that if someone commits to Jesus as the standard, if the person of Jesus Christ is determining the *basic model for a view of live and a practice of live*, transformation of the whole person is been arrived at. Jesus permits discipleship in response and in relation to himself, but no imitation, no copies of himself (Küng 1977:551). A singularity of one’s *Dasein*, *Sosein*, and *Aktsein* is been noticed. Jesus is not only an external goal, a vague dimension, a universal rule of conduct, a timeless ideal. He determines and influences our life and conduct, not only externally, but from within. Relationship with Christ means not only in-formation but also formation: not merely a superficial change, but a change of heart and therefore the change of the whole person. It amounts to the fashioning of a new creation

within the always diverse, individually and socially conditioned context of each one's own life in its particularity and singularity, without any attempt to impose uniformity.

We have arrived at the point where the question has to be asked: How is anthropology to be articulated which articulates a pneumatological spirituality while simultaneously arguing for a positive valuation of Christianity in referring to a constructed ethos, a *Sosein*. Alternatively, how are we to negotiate our (human) existence and existence among other fields of experiential existence when we are wearing our faith caps and hats? David Lochhead (1988:79) writes that to be human is to live in community with fellow human beings where the choice between monologue and dialogue is the choice between life and death. Narration is understood as an existential act of being and becoming: one becomes or is the message.

Tension develops many times between theory and practice in the sense making experience of people. One's sense making patterns, systems, networks or views have their consistency and regularities as well as being encapsulated by change in an ongoing computational process of experience and living. Someone's sense making pattern is always in operation with regular and repetitive factors and pointers built into it. However, in each new experience slight shifts amidst the regularities take place as a computational outcome of experience of sense (or even non-sense) is spelled out in a particular situation. A sense making pattern expresses some form of stability and regularity on the one hand, while on the other the highly complex pattern continuously kicks in and applies itself in a new and novel way in every subsequent and consecutive situation, context and episode in which a person is engaged. Its is within the ambience and in the presence of a mysterious linkage of God, being human and the cosmic physical-organic environment of links, correlations, differences, contrasts and variances a person experiences and lives. All sorts of reasons, feelings, human social interests and aspirations, political objectives, values, economic forces, public opinion, religious patterns, ideological views and moral considerations, philosophical and scientific reflexion and research influence one's sense making pattern or view in some way.

When people are confronted in a certain period or society with a widespread the idea of the relativism of values, the experience is not necessarily negative. Answers to questions of relativism, even if ethical relativism is produced by cultural diversity, can still be seen in a positive light. The context of ethical relativism affirms complexities of being not only in the mainly human, but also in the Christian sense. In addition, relativism of values points in many instances to conflict of experience of faith and faith interpretation. This leads to values being directed to different sets of sense making orientations. Contradictory opinions in this regard result into conflict within the shared circumstances and direct human beings towards different value systems.

In the diachronic sense, concrete ethical norms and viewpoints are been formed in complex processes of social and group-related dynamics. As soon as new experiences and



processes emerge, we meet similar but different life challenges, priorities, conventions and codices, which produce the result of a complexity of norms of human behaviour in the contextual and historical context. Processes of this nature do not imply absolute ethical norms (contra so-called normative ethics) but rather imply that human beings have opportunities to make informed, responsible and accountable decisions concerning communities of which they are part (Williams 1987:201-202). On the other hand, in the synchronic sense it implies a continuous process of questioning and answers begging to be known and answered. Questions such as:

- Who am I; or what are the nature, task and goal of being human?
- Where do I locate myself; or what is the nature of the world within where I am orienting myself?
- What is the problem: or what is the basic obstacle hindering me to attain and reach my goal?
- What is the solution? Better put, how does a person overcome obstacles regarding identity? (Walsh & Middleton 1984:35).

The combined trajectories of faith experience within the designated ambience of the triad of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* are corresponding with the triad of God, being human and the natural cosmic world very slightly. However, the dimensional modes of *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* play equally important roles one should not be in the temptation to view them as equal to the triad of God, being human and natural cosmic world. People do experience their life- and natural cosmic world(s) differently though there are many overlaps. It is precisely because of the many overlaps that people are able to converse and dialogue with each other. Implied herewith is that human beings enclose in their subjective existence the essences of culture, relations, societies and consciousness. Knowledge of the good, norms, models, signs and values are been imparted by society to the individual. It does not however imply that an individual is merely a receptor in the processes. Instead, every human being is an active agent co-influencing society and the natural world in different degrees of radical, integrating and differential manner. Some people's influence is less radical, less integrating and less differentiating. For purposes of our reasoning whether some people are more and others less interactive, one could actually state that every form of social interaction starts and ends with our humanness which could be underscored with the strong notion that human beings are 'embodied human subjects' (Jonker 1989:247-252). Being an 'embodied subject' implies that we continuously provide fellow human beings with sense making clues, cues and hues in the form of concepts, beliefs, words, love expressions, feelings of warmth and notional phrases which in turn form an epistemological grid by which we decipher and comprehend the *Dasein*, *Sosein* and *Aktsein* of a person (Olson 2002:1-6). This is derived at not by deduction or inductive methods of general ruling or abstract truths. Instead, identity develops in a concrete manner from the complex interaction between reflexion on, and existential identifying involvement in life (Nürnberg 1986:14ff). Identity is formed in the

process of construction of meaning on the basis of cultural attributes, rational pointers, creative patterns of living and experiencing of God in related sets of meaning (Castells 2004:6)

### **9.3 *Dasein*, *Sosein*, *Aktsein* and Creational, Christ-, Spirit- and Fulfilling-directed experience**

Reflection on our sense making tools and patterns raises another question regarding the relation between science and a Theory of Faith. "Does the universe have to be the way it is?" (Darling 1993:133; Barrett 2000:126). Is this the only way or could it be different? Reductionism or the ongoing triumph of the modern anthropic-cosmological principle over the theanthropocosmic principle draws our attention. According to Van Niekerk (Van Niekerk 2005:418) the basic struggle in modern sciences and philosophy revolves around which of the *theanthropocosmic* and the *anthropic-cosmological* principles are in one sense or another the determinative functional and operational composite principles or basic pointer system(s) of every field, capacity, mode and dimension of human experience and of every science and philosophy. The current situation in the world is that the anthropic-cosmological principle either as a composite principle of anthropic-cosmological or exclusively as an anthropic or a cosmological principle the driving force of the overwhelming majority of scientists and philosophers (Van Niekerk 2005:418).

We can compare the basic hypotheses of the mentioned sense making approaches as follows: The continuum of the anthropic-cosmological principle (...human...nature...) - the current state of affairs in the majority of sciences and philosophies expresses and exudes either an opposition, complementarity, dialectic, irruption of one into the other, or identification by one of the other of the pair of 'nature...human' on a continuum of reflexion and discussion in the scientific and philosophical debates (Van Niekerk 2008:286). The continuum of the theanthropocosmic principle - (...God...human...nature...) seems to operate as an alter ego. The triadic, instead of dyadic, continuum 'God...human...nature' (encapsulated in the theanthropocosmic principle) should play a background and sometimes a foreground role as a dynamic and rolling triad on a continuum in scientific and philosophical aware reflexion and discussion. The current state of affairs is that only a few scientists and philosophers occupy themselves with similar ideas to what Van Niekerk has been formulated operational composite notion as the theanthropocosmic principle (Van Niekerk 2006/7:286)

As an exercise of testing and evaluating specific attitudes with regard to their wholesomeness as well as the sense making levels of the theanthropocosmic principle in use, the well known dispositions expressed by Niebuhr (1951:45-82) regarding the relationship of Christ and culture can be undertaken:

The first disposition is 'Christ against culture'. Christ is the sole authority in the life of the believer. Therefore, Christ is positioned against societal convention and practices and human achievements as though the world is evil. The high duality quality and partial operationality of the theanthropocosmic principle sets this disposition forthrightly directly in opposition to cultural doings and natural processes.

The second disposition is that of accommodation, 'Christ of culture' (1951: 83-15). Herewith Christ is seen as a mono-hero who aids and guides society toward a better future. Advocates of this stance are among others the so-called 'Culture Protestants' (Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Troeltsch, Van Ruler) and the so-called 'Social Gospel'. The basic problem with this disposition is the exchange of church history with cultural history. In this disposition, the duality levels are low but the borders of the close connection of God, human beings, the natural cosmic world is a bit over-accentuated, and the differences are under-accentuated.

Thirdly, we find the 'Christ above culture' approach (1951:116-148). Here, Christ is seen as the fulfilment of cultural aspirations and as a reformer of societal configurations. A discontinuity and continuity between Christ and socio-cultural existence can however be detected. Thomas of Aquinas deployed his arguments along these lines. *The Summum bonum* and happiness was not obtained by human exertion, but by grace, a gift of Christ. Genuineness of the Christian belief is maintained, while at the same time the believer can co-operate without sacrificing any integrity. In this disposition, the duality levels are very high but the borders between the close connection of God and the natural cosmic world is over-accentuated with underplaying the role of human beings. The under-accentuation of the differences between the threesome of God, human beings and the natural world in various forms of this disposition is well known.

A fourth approach sees 'Christ and culture in paradox' (1951:149-189). The duality of both Christ and nature are recognised, yet opposition between Christ and culture are accepted. Tension is observable: believers must obey two authorities that seem to be rectilinear. As a citizen of 'two worlds' a split occurs within the human subject – it leads to (at least) two modalities of existence or being in the world and creates tension and polarity. In this disposition, the duality levels are high but high in the sense of a dialectical tension between the close connection and differences of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world all set in dialectical and dualist schemes that did not give preference to one of the two sides in God, human beings and the natural cosmic world.

Lastly, Niebuhr (1951:190-229) distinguishes 'Christ as the transformer of culture'. I concur with the first and fourth approach that an acceptance of the brokenness of human existence is been accepted. Such brokenness does not appear only in cultures – culture is a human activity – but is also being transmitted by it. However, it does not entice one to have a pejorative view of culture; instead, Christ is seen as the redeemer of culture and society who

is en route with the whole of the cosmos to the realization of the Kingdom of God. This movement or dynamics of the living and engaged Christ is known as the mission of God – the *Missio Dei* (Kramm in Bosch 1991: 319). It is God's turning to the world in respect of taking care of the processes of creation, redemption, renewal and consummation. The meandering movement of the Commonwealth of God takes place in and through all human history and natural processes. Important in this view is the position of the church as but one of the myriad of signs and instruments of the Commonwealth of God. In this disposition, the duality levels are very low and the mystery of the close connection and the radical difference between God, human beings and the natural cosmic world is largely underscored. However, the sole emphasis on reconciliation through Christ with the under accentuation of God's acts of creation, renewal through the Spirit – in this view the transformer is the reconciler Christ – and the fulfilment towards the future results in a strongly one-sided approach.

Reflecting in general upon the five dispositions, one cannot help but notice they are provisional and not all-comprehensive perspectives pertaining to the dynamics existing between culture and the role of Christ in different sense making approaches. A meaningful remark made by Ans van der Bent on the continuum of Christ and culture underwrite our opinion:

"The incarnated Christ is neither above cultures, nor in paradox with cultures, nor simply transforming cultures, as he is ceaselessly a part of the suffering and the well-being of people and manifests his redemptive love. His passion for people is their salvation. His salvation takes place in and through culture" (quoted by Robinson 1990:163).

I deduce therefore that salvation (specifically human beings) is, firstly, not an isolated incident apart from transformation of social and political relations and structures. Rather it is an overlapping day-to-day experience within all related phrases, phases, episodes and stages of sense making. Secondly, salvation is not an isolated event as it is intrinsically part of God's acts of creation, reconciliation (salvation), renewal and fulfilment. It is important to note that since the cross of Jesus is the shibboleth of the church, the resurrection of Christ is the shibboleth of the Kingdom (Commonwealth) of God, a certain tension between the church and churches and Kingdom of God will always be present. Maybe the words of the Lord's Prayer vocalise it best – "let your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven" (Matthew 6). The prayer is fortunately not vocalised as "let my church come...". To pray these words implies to the Christian a pro-active orienting in the world, indicating that we as co-workers of God and the natural cosmic world are called and challenged to faith, thought, love, symbolising, socialising and imaginary practices of life, driven by a vision of the fulfilment of the transformation of ourselves and the world.

## 9.4 Christian being as radical human being

The transformation of the world expected is akin to a new birth of a person or the new birth of many persons and which can only be made sense of by people who actively participate and those who have interest in the birth. It is therefore a transformation which does not come about merely through progressive right thinking for the sake of right action (as with Socrates) or through the education of humankind who is fundamentally good (as with Confucius and Lessing). Nor is it a transformation through enlightenment reached by methods of contemplation and rational thinking. According to Jesus, a fundamental transformation is achieved through the surrendering of one's will to the rule of God. The distinctive feature of a *Christian spiritual ethos* does not exist in preconceived individual presuppositions or laws or the evangelical's sole focus on a person's faith in Christ, but in the embracing of the four grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment which relativises all theories, subjective Jesus schemes and doctrinal purity as access avenues to the Commonwealth of God. What is of importance is the comprehensive and embracing commitment of a composite set of presuppositions which simultaneously express obedience to God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. Hereto the Holy Spirit informs, directs, transforms and sanctifies us in the renewing sense of the word (Küng 1977:543, Möller 1997:139-156).

The traditional viewpoint in which everything has been off loaded onto one's faith as *faith in Christ*, is suffering from the isolationist and reductionist syndrome whereby the whole array of God's grand acts is forced into the mould of reconciliation and salvation. Moreover, a human being in his or her totality is been reduced to his/her field of faith experience. In terms of the traditional Christcentric viewpoint, experience of Christ and his rule has as a specific experience the consequence of Christian experience. It begs the question why Christians are called Christians in the era of the Spirit of God and not called Spiritans after the Holy Spirit. Talk about God can either be too abstract or too to subjectively concrete. In this regard, classic theology found a solution to talk about God, albeit very one-sidedly as God for us, *Deo pro nobis*. The problem with this viewpoint is that the kenotic and incarnational character of all of God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment are not giving their due. The very old idea of not applying the concreteness of the *Deo pro nobis* principle to God's acts of creation, renewal and fulfilment but only to reconciliation and salvation is still haunting the majority of theological schemes especially in the evangelical world today.

Still near the traditional viewpoint, it is said that I am able to experience through the Spirit the isolated grand act of God of reconciliation thereby experiencing Christ as person who transmogrifies my life within a specific socio-cultural milieu. Traditionally thus, God as Son and the Holy Spirit transforms my life, not because of a principle but instead on the basis that I can chance my life on him. Therefore in the words of the modern Catholic Küng who is still operating in the traditional mode :

“Following Christ means not only information, but formation: not merely a superficial change, but a change of heart and therefore the change of the whole man” (1977: 551).

Arguing in line with the radical embracement by the four grand acts of God’s creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment the formation of a new human being implies the establishing of a new creation in the diverse, individual and socially conditioned contexts of every person’s life, taking variety and alignment into account, without enforcing uniformity. Therefore, the person of God through the four grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment in words and deeds, thereby focuses as an invitation (‘you may’), appeal (‘you must’) and challenge (‘you ought’) to serve as a model to bring out the ethos of responsibility and accountability of being human. The responsibility and accountability of a human person are been acted out towards God, oneself, other human beings and the natural cosmic world. That is how ‘new’ person experience him/herself in earthly context.

Evans (1993:224-226) argues in the context of social relevancy that social activism arises from an acknowledgement that a human person is a historical-communal being. This implies a consciousness which functions in a relational-dialogical manner, dealing seriously with people as beings made in the image of God as well as with people’s relations in which certain dimensions of enslavement might hinder people to reach their potential. Theological ethics would play thus a specific role in investigating the new reality of the grand acts of God disclosed in people. Such a reality of the experience of my creatureliness, reconciliation, under renewal construction and on the way to fulfilment is experienced in a pneumatological manner (Nürnberg 1982:232).

## **9.5 Realisation of being human: a wholesome approach**

Ethical praxis as such presumes a theory of change. It indicates a consciousness (God-life-world view) that allows for change, regardless how minuscule it is. I argue that a theory of change ought to be anchored in a radical pneuma-directed sense. From a scriptural and experiential point of view, we can state with confidence that God is the revealing and disclosing *Deus Revelatus* through his grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. This revelation of God is not a disclosure as such at a certain point time and in and at a sacred space rather it is a matter of God ‘talking’ continuously. God addresses human beings, and in a societal sense all institutions among them the church. God ‘speaks’ through the in-scripturated word, the Bible and through the kenotic and incarnated word of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. This ‘speech’ of God is an address in, to, and through human beings and the natural cosmic world. Paul expresses this state of affairs with his hymn in which God’s personal address is delivered in terms of kenosis and incarnation of Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:6-8). We have seen in this study that the dimensions of kenosis and incarnation had been expanded in a radical sense to include the way God operates in

different ways through the Spirit in his grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. In concurrence with Masao Abe, I propose the double-sided notion of kenosis and incarnation as:

“...to mean that Christ as the Son of God is *essentially* and *fundamentally* self-emptying of self-regarding – because of this fundamental nature, the Son of God *is* Christ...it is not that the Son of God *became* a person through the process of his self emptying but that fundamentally he *is* true person and true God at one and the same time in his dynamic work and activity of self-emptying” (1991:10).

Our understanding of kenosis and incarnation will indicate that the human subject simultaneously ought to surrender (kenosis) and empower (incarnation) his/her own ego, in order that the responsibility and accountability which a person has in terms of all God’s acts are expressed and acted out. The viewpoint of Abe (1991:11) that

“...the new person be realized as the true and authentic self who confesses “it is no longer I that live, Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in the faith...”

is so one-sidedly removed from God’s grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment that it speaks for itself. A foreign body (Christ liveth in me) is not reconciliatory and is therefore not awaking a human being’s ego-centre created by God to take up his/her responsibility and accountability in this world. Christ the foreign body in this sense is erasing one’s created ego-centre and dishonouring God the creator. Still this view is haunting every second evangelical Christian in the world. The work of the Holy Spirit is that of opening us for the impact and the embrace of the grand acts of God’s creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment in the full depth and width of our daily experience.

The state of affairs that the Spirit resurrected Jesus Christ and that the resurrection power is affirmed on the day of Pentecost, simultaneously is the inauguration of the era of Pentecost, the era of the Spirit and the thus the era of continuing renewal of human beings and the natural cosmic world through the Holy Spirit, opens up the era of the Third Testament (Van Niekerk 2006:379)

The Third Testament is indicative of a boldness that is created by the Spirit in our lives to embrace the Commonwealth of God:

“The Spirit of God as God’s operating agent in Jesus’ suffering and death on the cross, the concomitant tearing of the veil of the temple and the raising of Jesus from the dead has undergone a change from being the Spirit of God to being the Holy Spirit, the life-giving force of everything everywhere and at all times. The tearing of the veil in the series of events of the cross, torn veil and resurrection presents us with the link that designates the real change-over to the day of Pentecost as the definitive inauguration of the canon of the era of the Third Testament and the closing of the canon of the era of the Second Testament. Everything and everyone that used to be

encapsulated in pockets and packages of holy at-one-ment and at-other-ment are co-actors, co-writers and co-doers of the Third Testament with the Holy Spirit in the direction of the consummation and fulfilment of history and the universes. The process of the Commonwealth of God that comes to fulfilment and consummation 'at the end of times' has been inaugurated 'at the beginning of times' in, with and through the creation of everything."(Van Niekerk 2006:379).

In general, change happens after highly involved embracing and engaged evaluation processes. Going through such a process (it is a continuously exercised) purports the weighing of certain principles after an informed and involved decision is been taken. Four principles were identified by Kraft (1974:307-312), principles which aid one in work, evaluation and finally change. It can be portrayed as follows (1974:307):

Framework of reference → Principle of credibility → Specific principle → Principle of discovery.

This provides, on the one hand a common basis for embracing involvement through conversation is set, and on the other hand through being identified with a societal organisation such as a faith community, socio-economic or governmental organisation one set oneself up for engaged evaluation of oneself. In regard the specificity principle revolving around the notions of involved embracing and engaged evaluation processes should focus on the relevance and bearing of a theory that is closest to 'real life' experience and which has the strongest relationship of coherence with reality. In this manner, it is possible to guard against a generalised abstract manner of evaluation. One can assume that on such a basis the basics will be investigated, researched and evaluated in a goal-directed manner. Engaged evaluation focuses according to this principle on being true to a person in terms of the history and contextual plot. The principle of discovery points to the "receptor" in the process that through embracing involvement takes possibilities of self-actualisation into account in the sense of taking seriously the new life been experienced in the Spirit. The Spirit opens up the embracing involvement and simultaneous engagement of the 'new' person in the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. The cherishing and affirmation of life is discovered and constructed as 'team-work' in the mysterious sense of God the Spirit, human beings and the natural cosmic world as the co-actors, co-agents and co-workers in the meanderings of the Commonwealth (=Kingdom, Prophetdom, Priesthood, etc) of God through the universes and history.

If, after evaluation has occurred while keeping the above principles in mind, the new humanity as a created, reconciled, under renewal construction and in a fulfilling mode towards the end of time do not realise their own involved embracing and evaluative engaged processes as the new humanity, a critical dimension comes to the fore. The critical dimension boils down to the quality and range of people's sense making God-human-and-



world approaches in various ways epistemological, hermeneutical, philosophical, theological and scientific theoretical issues (Hesselgrave & Rommen 1989:199-211).

One can explain this as follows: Our reflexion thus far has reiterated the point that ethics is been challenged to describe, guide and direct experiences of people sharing the new reality in which the awareness of being created, reconciled, under renewal construction and in a fulfilling mode towards the end of time is being embraced in a wholesome and committed manner. In this sense, the notion of truth from outside of the reflexive process is not been applied. Truth should thus not be seen as a meta-historical ideal ethically universally applicable but instead should be wrestled with and worked out in the involved embracing and evaluative engaged processes of being created, reconciled, under renewal construction and in a fulfilling mode towards the end of time. While emphasising the four grand acts and its resultant impact on human beings for the umpteenth time, has to conclude with Deist that the character of truth is therefore of a relational relative, perspectivistic and historically determined nature (Deist 1982:8).

In the relativising and demythologising of all absolutes by which we attempt to create, reconcile, renew and fulfil ourselves the guiding norm for involvement and engagement, dialogue and conversation which facilitates individual and social transformation, is the existential knowledge of the mystery of the connection and the difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world – the whole threesome seem as intrinsic partners of the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. Maimela from a Lutheran liberationist viewpoint views the critical principle as that:

“...liberation is a product of a long and complex historical process of the ongoing struggle against evil forces which hinder the realization of a genuinely human and fulfilling life of fellowship with God and other human fellows”.

In summary: a theory of change is been challenged not only to the task of humanisation of human beings but in the same breath to naturalisation of nature and to the Godliness of God. People need to be taught to believe (think, imagine, engage) in their creational abilities in order to change the world to what God intended it to be. More exactly, we are been tasked to change and construct, instead of describing or interpreting the world (Maimela 1987:151; Marx 1988: 158). In the change, construction and transformation of our constructs of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world we are co-workers and co-actors in establishing and erecting pockets and packages of holiness in which the multidimensional closeness and difference of the Godness of the living God, the humanness of actual human beings and the naturalness of real nature is through daily experience of a continuous awareness of God's Commonwealth (= Kingdom, Priesthood and Prophetdom, etc.) fully intertwined with the events and processes of “the creation and creatureliness of the many universes”, “the reconciliation events of the cross, the tearing of the veil of the temple and the resurrection of Jesus”, “the renewal through God's life-giving Spirit of the whole of reality”, and the

“processes of pulling, drawing and fulfilling of everything towards a future directed fulfilment and consummation” ( Van Niekerk 2006:316).

In accepting the mystery of the simultaneity of the togetherness and difference of God, human beings and nature we do not have to be pantheistic, panentheistic or whatever other problematic type of –istic. The embracing commitment we are operating with is to accept that the closest we can get to the multidimensional character of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world is wholeheartedly accept the mystery of the simultaneous closeness and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world.

A challenge we face concerning the acceptance of God’s act of the fulfilment of everything in the future is whether the future will be lost, or realised. It is therefore important to confess that God do not transcend earthly restriction and human failures and that God is part of it without for one moment in the kenotic and incarnational sense losing his Godliness. Precisely that is part of the mystery based on such experience that we ought to be involved as co-makers, co-restorers and co-renewers of this world in the authority, love and the vision of God for human beings and the natural cosmic world. Through reflexion, acting and being consistent one has to confess that God's past and future is not pulled by us to our current situation. However, the Spirit pushes, guides and pulls us towards the future that is not only God’s future but also the future of human beings and the natural cosmic world. If that does not make sense to us we will not be able to take account of the Spirit’s pneuma-directed acts of *being there* in our experience (Dasein), in *being thus and thus* (Sosein) and *being full of the potentially of actualness* (Aktsein) described as qualitative-defined and unified theology, anthropology and cosmology. In this sense the mystery of the closeness and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world is the mysterious motto that unifies and contracts our theology, anthropology and cosmology into a wholesome radical, integral and differential theory of faith that simultaneously serves as a broad operational plan for transformation in the faith and ecclesial sense of the word.

## **9.6 Anthropological trajectories of modernity**

The history of Western anthropology from its earliest beginnings shows a tendency to make the soul paramount over the body (Russell 1982; Ryle 1949:51-57). This tendency of viewing the body a mere instrument is an essential element in the history of freedom in the Western world (Moltmann 1985:244). The liberty of self-control grows in proportion to a person’s detachment from their body. ‘The wise soul’ is superior to ‘the foolish body’. ‘The commanding self’ subjects ‘the submissive body’. The technological production of artificial organs makes parts of the body interchangeable, replaceable and useable for cloning. The whole trend towards a ‘spiritualizing’ of the soul and ‘materialization’ of the body dominates the whole of Western anthropology (McGrath 2002). In Christian theological thought trends are obvious: the theology of the patristic church was pervaded by the Platonic idea of the

liberation of the soul from the body; medieval theology was determined by the Aristotelian-cum-Augustinian view that the body is formed by the soul; and modern anthropology is dominated by the will to give the conscious mind power over the instrument of the material spatial body, in alignment with the expositions of Descartes. Differentiation of substances that made up a human being, namely soul, body and in some cases spirit is another constructivist endeavour (Christian 2003). This led to a dichotomy regarding anthropology where human beings are viewed as having a spirit or soul as higher substance, while the body belongs to a lower realm. These (speculative-grandiose) enterprises can be described as a so-called binary dual canon or a *Stockwerktheorie* (Küng 1991:60). Whatever, the detail of the anthropological scheme a form of dualism spelled out in binary notions were been used *ad nauseam* (Fournier 2006:2). The binary operational scheme pointed debates to the endeavour of determining the so-called 'essence' of what a human being actually is (Olson 2002:1-4).

Looking at the whole era of modernity (1600-2000) the portrayed picture that increasingly emerged is that of a modern binary division between a constituted free all-initiating absolute human subject of meaning and value and the natural cosmic world as a necessary all-initiating 'absolute object' of meaning while the role and existence of God as the primary all initiating agent through the ages has not been denied in the modern era but has been put on ice for all practical purposes the sciences. Van Niekerk summarised the variety of processes through which the binary division between human and nature cam to the fore in modernity:

“With God out of the way in philosophies and sciences, the modern era presented us with hundreds of versions of the struggle between humanity and nature. In modern philosophy and sciences the category 'human subject' was assigned the role of controller and techno-rational agent of human beings and nature. The category 'nature' emerged in modern philosophy and science as the 'absolute objective agent' that co-determined human life or, in many instances, actually created the 'human subjective agent'. I have already referred to the unremitting struggle or temporary truce between humanity and nature as being either in opposition to each other or complementary to each other, the dialectical struggle between the two, with the one irrupting into the other as the more meaningful agent of the two and the identification of the two agents “ (Van Niekerk 2006/7:128).

According to Van Niekerk (2006/7:126f) the binary sense making logic built into the Cartesian *cogito, ergo sum* resurfaced in some or other form as a reductionist construction of the mind like a modern philosophers (and theologians) creed. This binary dual canon, building on the impetus of the duality built in the formula 'I think, therefore I am', *Cogito, ergo sum*, coined by Descartes, developed more variants thereof than planets in the universe. The duality of 'absolute subject' as the human being and the 'absolute object' of nature became (and still is) prevalent in the idea of a worldly agent that functions partly as human, partly as nature.

Programmatically it can be presented as follows: the human agent as absolute subject of meaning, expresses itself in terms of subject of “I have, I believe, I exists, I produce, I love, I fear, I fight, I am male/female, I am white/black, I am conservative/democratic - liberal, therefore I am”. As opposite-in-relation, nature functions as absolute object of reality in all variant forms as products, commodities of products, surplus of products, codes and code-systems, symbols and the universe of symbols, sacrament and dogmas, manipulated and raw nature, therefore it all exists, and human agents exists (Van Niekerk 2006/7:126).

The binary modern paradigm presented in the philosophies, theologies, sciences and theories of modernity seem to be slotted into a firmly hierarchical two-tier structure, the surface on top as expression of the real foundation (Schaeffer 1990). The modern two-tier philosophical and theological scheme also functions as the hyphenated inside-outside of human beings and things. Hyphenated models of ‘reality’ and anthropology have been (and still are) constructed - e.g. the dialectical code system of essence and appearance; the Freudian model of subconscious latency in being manifest; the existentialist model of authenticity in authenticity, the historical-critical model, biblical-theological model. Inherent in the two-tier hierarchy of reality as generally voiced in salvation-historical models of theology, is the differentiation between general and special revelation, between faith and reason and transcendental and immanent.

## **9.7 A Theory of Faith: Body talk**

I suggest not only a re-appraisal of our understanding of what is meant by body and corporeality but of the totality of what a human being is. Body (soma) is not only an important, but also a difficult concept. According to the biblical witness the body is vital to human beings, being without a body after death is unthinkable (1 Cor. 15:3ff; 2 Cor. 5:1ff). The Hebrews viewed the body not as the tomb of the soul as it is for the Greeks (soma-sema) and certainly not as the principle of evil from which the true self has to be set free, like in Gnosticism and Theosophy.

However, instead of focussing solely on the body and corporeality one should rather focus on the margins within which a human being is described from a particular sense making approach. Van Niekerk describes the dualistic and tripartite views ascribed to the Judaeo-Christian Scripture still haunting the majority of ecclesial Christians:

“The central belief of the overwhelming majority of church people of a human being consisting of an immortal soul and mortal body is not found in the bible. Sense making views of a highly problematic nature carry and support the dualistic two-part scheme of ‘immortal soul and mortal body’ or the trichotomistic three-part scheme of ‘spiritual mind, immortal soul and mortal body’. If one reads the bible with a pair of two-part or three-part spectacles one finds a two-part or three-part view of human beings consisting of two or three ‘substances’ or ‘essential beings’ in the texts...

Although terms such as 'mind' or 'soul' or 'spirit' or 'heart' or 'body' are found in many contexts of the Judaeo-Christian bible they are very seldom used as separate essentialist entities, things or parts in which the one is eternal and the other temporal. In many biblical contexts these terms are used to designate and denote the totality of a human being's existence and in other contexts they are used to designate an aspect and facet or what we today would call a field and mode of experience." (2006/7:109).

The body is part of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment processes. In the biblical sense the notion of the body is been employed in some contexts to describe the totality of a human being's existence whole of being human and in other contexts the notion of the body is been used to designate a aspect and facet or what we today would call a field and mode of experience. Thus, working with the notion of the body as the whole person in relationship with God, oneself, one's neighbours and the natural cosmic world the possibility and reality of communication opens up. In this sense the body is the 'place' in which a human being stands at times in a certain relationship, which occurs in the midst of human existence itself and always afresh *in relationship to others*. Which means that this occurs not only in human consciousness (idealist philosophy), nor merely in human existence against the background simply of the universal fellowship of humanity (existentialist philosophy) whether anonymously (Heidegger) or even of a negative relationship to our neighbour (Sartre) (Küng 1991:457; Kasper 1976:150).

Kasper employs a hierarchical image when he writes about the body as the relational place of mastery:

"...it is the place where man is either at the mercy of sin, selfishness, envy, ambition and so on, or where he stands in Christ's service. For the man who acknowledges Jesus Christ, the body is the place where he must put obedience to the test and carry it out...we should serve God with our body (Rom. 12:1ff)...According to the master-slave relationship in which we find ourselves, the body is either superficial or pneumatic" (1976:151).

Though other images like parent-son/daughter, friends and co-workers comes to mind, Kasper directs our attention to an important marker relevant to our topic. A pneumatic body, which Paul talks of in the resurrection chapter, 1 Corinthians 15, is not a body constructed from some artificial miraculous spiritual substances. The *soma pneumatikon* is more a body characterized and directed entirely by the *pneuma*, more specifically the Holy Spirit. The body is therefore the dimension in which it *is* which as a divine dimension is *pneumatically* intentional (1976:151; Küng 1977:470-471). Thus, we can say what the body of a resurrected person is: the totality of the person, finally in the dimension of God, that has entered into the Kingdom of God (Cullman 2006:2). In terms of Jesus Christ, the corporeality of the resurrection means that the whole person of the Lord is finally with God. However,

resurrected corporeality means something else too, namely that the Risen Lord is still in contact with the world and with us and indeed as the one who is now with God. The resurrected One is therefore with us in a very new divine and human way. The resurrected Christ is with us divinely and humanly through the Holy Spirit the one employing the power of the cross and the resurrection in our era, the era of God's grand act of renewal.

A reflexive focus directed at the notion of the body and corporeality does not entail that the body is simply to be equated with materiality and physicality. Corporeality means rather the existential involvement of humans in the world as intrinsically part of the natural world. The natural world is to such extent part of the body that one can call a piece of the natural world its own. Through and in our bodies we stand in relationship to the reality of the natural cosmic world in its entirety. The body is the 'between' joining humans and the world. In this, regard Kasper states:

“This bodily *in-the-world-ness* of man and this *in-man-ness* of the world is so essential and constituent for both, that man would not exist without this being-in-the-world and conversely the world as such would not exist without reference to man” (Kasper 1976:151).

Focussing on the body and corporeality means in a central sense that to be human is to *exist* in the mystery of being closely connected is been differing strongly from the *ex-istence* of God and the *ex-istence* of the natural cosmic world.

## **9.8 Embodiment as the end of all God's work**

Picking up pointers, cues and clues from among others J Moltmann, J McIntyre, RH Ornstein, JAL Taljaard and Byzantine theology, I choose deliberately for an approach in which the focus is strongly been directed at the embodiment and the corporeality of things. Embodiment as the movement and goal of all God's works is a postulate that sets, sustains and keeps human reality in motion within the acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment (Moltmann 1985). If 'embodiment' is the goal of God's work, then the corporeality postulate is not expressive of a human body as a lower order of life, or as means to an end. Differently put, the continuum of human existence in relationship to God and the natural cosmic world, irrespective of whether God presence is noted or expressed in a trace or clue in a given episode of existence is embedded in a dynamic process of embodiment (Fournier 2002:2).

In terms of the biblical traditions the notions of kenosis and incarnation embedded and embodied especially in the two grand acts of God's reconciliation (=cross and the resurrection) and renewal of everything in the ongoing work of the Spirit, provide us with valuable pointers and phrases in undergirding the postulate of embodiment as the goal of God's work. Moltmann states in this regard:

“The earth is the object and the scene of the Creator’s fertile and inventive love. It was bodily, sensuous human beings whom He created to be his image, and his first commandment was ‘Be fruitful and multiply....’ (Gen. 1:28). It is not the spirituality of men and women, and not what distinguishes them from animals, which makes them God’s image on earth. They are his image in their whole and particular bodily existence” (Moltmann 1985:245).

The gospel according to John gives us a clue regarding the postulate of embodiment:

“The Word became flesh....” (John 1).

Paul’s words to the Philippians points in the same direction:

“Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being of an equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:5-7)

Through the kenotic and incarnation aspects of the death and resurrection of Christ and the renewal work of the Spirit, God reveals himself unconditionally in love, justice, trust and compassion. The embodiment of God in Christ, the taking on of flesh, leads sick, broken and tormented people to find in him the healing and wellbeing which is fellowship with God. The way of the embodiment of God as the way of looking at the notions of kenosis and incarnation, is what makes Jesus the Christ centrally in the cross and the resurrection. It is a total and essentially thorough embodiment in the embracing and immediate presence of every human being’s existence.

Embodiment is also the end of the reconciliation (redemption) of the world in the fulfilment and consummation of the ‘new heaven and earth’ of Revelation 21. ‘The new earth’ completes as fulfilment act of God completes God’s acts of creation, reconciliation and renewal. The embodiment in the new earth is the fulfilment of the yearning of the Spirit (Rom 8). Reconciliation (redemption) begins with the gift of the Spirit and ends with the transformation of the body. It begins with a new just righteousness ‘of the heart’ and ends in the new, just, and righteous world.

These works of God in creation, redemption (reconciliation), renewal and future fulfilment and consummation surround and mould the living character of created, reconciled, renewed and fulfilling men and women in everything they do and wherever they do it. Faith theoretically it makes sense to view being human and the natural cosmic world as the ongoing partners of God’s embodiment in history.

The humanness of being human is thus been manifested through integration but differentiated connection with the work of God through the ongoing encirclement of the Spirit. Put differently, the encirclement of the Spirit and the drawing of circles by the Spirit will be the most viable avenue to pursue in our many attempts of making sense of what a human being is in the context of human totality. Therefore, embodiment of God in the kenotic and incarnation sense through the Holy Spirit provides an array of anthropological and cosmological clues to converse about human beings and the natural cosmic world within the encirclement of the Spirit. The full nearly tautological encircling movement is been expressed in a typical Pauline way in 1 Corinthians 2:

“The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God “(1 Cor 2:10-12).

The idea of the image of God in parochial sense is been expressed as “I have true knowledge, holiness and righteousness; I am a true representative of God. I am a disciple of Christ, I live a new life of abundance in Christ, I speak in tongues, I am baptized with the Spirit, and therefore I am image of God, hence subject of meaning”. Opposite-in-relation, image of God in capacious sense, expresses nature as object of reality as fellowship with God, personality of human agents, the ‘I’, self-consciousness, spirituality, rationality, morality and capacity for social affections, will and decision making ability. The distinction between parochial and capacious then is been explained in terms of opposites, leading to categorically closed systems regarding human beings and the natural cosmic world surrounding us.

<b>Parochial Sense</b>	<b>Capacious sense</b>
accidence	substance
quality	being
nature	being
existence	essence
natural	supernatural
actual	ontic
material	formal
general	special
morally	ontic



Tabled like this, the image of God in parochial sense is been seen as changing, temporal and negotiable. The image of God in capacious sense is been seen then as everlasting, unchanging and enduring.

In many instances the contradiction arising is been camouflaged with various modern versions of revelation. The theological procedure of confessing ones ignorance about any real knowledge and information about God-in-God-self while continuing to express a whole range of substantial knowledge and information about God-in-God-self outside reality leads the theologian to assert that God is both transcendent and immanent. In short, according to Van Niekerk the modern theological procedure is as follows:

- The theologian asserts that the transcendent God is not knowable out side reality.
- The theologian asserts that people only know God immanently inside reality.
- The same theologian then turns around, discourses and provides information at length on God outside reality (1996: 21).

The notion of revelation is been employed in the modern era to bring into play the not knowable things of God-in-God-self outside reality - about which theologians in general admit complete ignorance. In line with this umpteenth of theological schemes are been used as building blocks that are hierarchically stapled to provide a God as absolute subject in the Roman Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran or Pentecostal sense. The procedures and strategies in history were been constructed differently. In the mediaeval period, the main emphasis was on rational human nature as the constructor and investigator of the big screen of rationality on which universal, speculative, reasonable and progressive ways of life is been worked out. In the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the emphasis change to the full scope of the Bible as the normative (salvation-historical) big screen of God's actions and dealings with humanity and the universe through which all events, processes and experiences outside the canonized biblical-historical framework are then been theologically and ethically interpreted. In other words, God is been known, in the radical sense of the word, and implicitly the real status of human beings and the natural cosmic world only through the transcendentalised text of the Bible (Carroll 1997:64-71). The modernist reduction to an exclusive locality (biblical history, or rationality in human and nature) as a universal framework of meaning for life and control of nature has its sequel in modern Feminist, Liberation, Pentecostal and Charismatic theologies.

In the case of Pentecostal theology, the dual agents of modernity, humanity and nature are been articulated in a catalogue of opposing distinctions e.g. spirit-filled believers vs. believers, believers vs. unbelievers, faith knowledge vs. knowledge, and experience vs. inexperience of God. The epistemological consonance becomes the revelation mode of God through the Holy Spirit, knowable and receivable by faith according to the experiences of the Bible authors (Clark et al. 1989:99-110). The experiential knowledge of God and life with the

transcendentalised text of the Bible becomes the exclusive locality for the universal framework of meaning and control. Anthropologically speaking, human beings are seen both in the parochial and capacious senses as an image of God. In the parochial sense Jesus Christ restores the original image of God in human beings through salvation, and in the capacious sense the human spirit is been assisted in forming the sphere where the image of God is lived out and established through the Spirit of God. The human spirit then is been seen as the image of God in human being and in a pre-disposed sense is been enabled by the Spirit of God to be a co-knower of who and what God is in his grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. Thus to know God is to know God through God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation (cross and resurrection) which is by the power of the Spirit eventuated and accentuated in the ongoing renewal of everything by the Spirit set in the trajectory to the future-directed fulfilment in the new heaven and the new earth. The new nature of the new human being emerges through an awareness of a dynamic actualising of the grand acts of God.

## **9.9 Gestalt (eventshape) and multiplexity of mind**

The closest notional concept to the German word Gestalt is may that of eventshape. An eventshape or the shape of a very complex event is been formed by the human being interacting with other people and their shared surrounding environment. The following are been regarded as some of the many distinguishable dimensions of a Gestalt or an eventshape (Moltmann 1985:259; Naranjo 1973:343-354):

- nature, in the form of the human being's genetic structure and region where the person has been born and has been living;
- the society and culture in which a person lived, learned and acted;
- the history moulding the person's origins and shaping the future;
- the transcendental dimensions, which are been represented by the spiritual 'religious' dimensions of every field, mode and dimension of human experience. The latter is usually been represented by the notion of religion and accepted value-systems.

Thus, influences of the dimensions and the reaction upon it form the many Gestalten (or eventshapes) that a human person acts out and is simultaneously in the process of forming new Gestalten with other human beings, the natural cosmic environment and God in his presence through the Spirit. By constructing as well as acquiring an eventshape within a specific and particular context and duration of time, a person identifies with someone else's eventshapes and thereby acquires and establishes individuality and sociality, differentiation and unity with him/herself, other human beings, the natural environment and God. An eventshape (or Gestalt) is thus part of a complex networking of the eventshapes of other people, natural environments and God. The interchange, exchange and fusion between people and various eventshapes, which are experienced and designated as eventshapes, contribute to the sum total of identifications of a human being. These identifications of a

singular human being comprise the identity of a human person and thereby the uniqueness of the person becomes identifiable.

An identifiable identity of a human person is historically open to considerable modifications due to a complexity of influences such as age, imagination, occupation, interest and all other factors that is part of human existence. A person's Gestalt develops in outward structures and in corresponding inward structures such as the conscious and subconscious dimensions. In this sense, a human being also forms eventshapes in relationship to him/herself. The forming of an eventshape happens on the borderline where differentiation of various experiences are been set in motion and where the episodic duration and demarcated setting of different fields of experience are weighed against each other in terms of the necessity of immediate action. The implication of the latter is that people do and say many things, and not one is more important than other is, rather all are parts of each other.

Anthropological differentiation speaks then of the equipotent experiences, structures (inward and outward) that functions mutually inter-penetrable in a differentiated networking of multiple eventshapes. Moreover, a person as a networking so to say of a computational being in doing of various eventshapes (Gestalten) reveals processes of centrations and decentrations. Centrations emerge, out of particular concerns and represent those concerns episodically. When a certain concern slacks and dies away, decentration occurs which is the disintegration of the structure of focus and perspective of the field, mode or dimension of experience that supported the previous concern. These centrations are neither static nor absolute, regardless of the fact that human life in many instances on focuses of concerns. Speaking about the concerns of human beings is to converse concretely and differentiated; it is to speak about a person in a specific way in a specific time and place.

Ornstein (1986:153) talks about the 'wheeling' of the mind – to me it indicates a computational multiplex mind or in the sense of Van Niekerk a full human being that is computationally shifting and turning continuously as wholesome human being from one field of experience to another. The 'wheeling' of the mind in the sense of Ornstein or the shifting and turning of a leading emphasis of a field, mode and dimension of experience from one to another in the sense of Van Niekerk is due to the many small patches and parts of the mind executing different tasks and representing different roles of a human being. The 'wheeling' and leading emphasis is been expressed in an open differentiated network in which varying conditions are been dealt with from wheeling from emergencies to quiescence, from happiness to concern. The happenings, events and doings of centration and decentration of human beings living inclusively may be directed at God been clasped momentarily within one's experience while God within the same field of experience may not be a concern the next moment.

When talking about centrations, a question arises: Is there a self-evident, fixed structure of subjectivity, according to which the human being who is in possession of a multiplicity of

fields, modes and dimensions of experience is master of his/her house? If we say a human being, is a 'spirit defined soul in a body' (Möller 1991: 260-261), or 'the ruling soul of his/her body' one may wonder whether this helpful in terms of the approach of the thesis tackling the dualist soul/body and tripartite spirit/soul/body schemes in terms of a multi-dimensional human mind. Are people still using these terms only by soft definition or are these terms spirit/soul/body still used in their full blown meaning of the ancient sense making God-human-and-world view they are been derived from.

The anthropological approach followed in this study is that of a radical, integral and differential approach of human beings who are wholesomely integrated and differentiated, centred and decentred around a multiplicity of fields, modes, dimensions and aspects of experience. As been emphasised in chapter 2 the views of E van Niekerk, function as operational applicator and framework in the investigative analysis and synthesis of the study. Van Niekerk describes a human being as simultaneously a uni-, bi- and multi-being (2006/7:95).

1. A human being is firstly a singular and irreplaceable being who is been connected to God, to him/herself, to other human beings and physical-organic nature, but who is simultaneously radically different from God and physical-organic nature.

2. Secondly, a human being is comprised of a bicameral duality of left and right hemispheres. The bicameral left and right hemispheres are expressive of many dualities, tool pairs and dual organs of the human 'bodily' existence such as two ears, two eyes, two arms, two legs, two kidneys, etcetera Some of the dual organs can operate oppositional, others only complementary, others dialectically or one erupting into the other as well as continuous serialising of the one after the other in fields, modes, dimensions and aspects of human experience.

3. Thirdly, each human being is comprised of a multiplicity of fields, capacities, faculties, modes or dimensions of experience The multiplicity or multiplex of fields and capacities of experience, interconnected to the physical-organic environments and God, express themselves through, in and as processes of acts, operations and doings of human beings of which the leading emphasis and focus continuously change episodically and contextually to another leading emphasis and focus. Each one of the following fields, modes, dimensions and aspects of experience may be emphasised as the leading emphasis which draws others along for an episode and for a demarcated setting of experience (Van Niekerk 2006/7:95-96).

Van Niekerk points out that each of these fields as constructed discoveries had a turn in the modern era to be the constant limitless and timeless reductionist initiating agency and meaning-giver of all the other fields of experience (2006/7:90-91). The following fields, modes, domains, dimensions or facets of human experience as constructed discoveries or discovered constructs of the modern era are been suggested by Van Niekerk as to a large

degree been accepted in the broad modern debate as fields, modes and dimensions of experience: 1. Thinking/reasoning: thoughts & reasons 2. Loving: love expressions & acts 3. Feeling: emotions & feelings 4. Speaking/verbalising: words, terms & symbols 5. Apportioning justice: laws, rules & ordinances 6. Economising: supply & demand; needs & capacities 7. Imagining/fantasising imaginative creations, fantasies & artful expressions 8. Educating/training: skills & capacities 9. Socialising codes, modes & styles 10. Bio-organic evolving: cells, organisms & growths 11. Moving: movements, dynamics & kinetics 12. Physico-mass processing: mass- gravitational processual energies 13. Chemicalising: chemical processes & energies 14. Entitising: things & entities 15. Spatio-coordinating: spatial constructs & coordinates 16. Informing: information & data 17. Empowering/managing: powers & strengths 18. Believing/faith: beliefs & certainties 19. Producing: performance & products 20. Etcetera (2006/7:96).

Each of these fields of experience in Van Niekerk's view, is encapsulated and intersected by the ancient distinctions of 'mind and matter', 'spirit and physical nature' or 'spirit/soul and body' (2006/7:97). In traditional dualist and modernist dual views, half of the fields, modes, dimensions and facets of human experience belong to the 'matter and physical nature or body part' and half to the 'mind or spiritual and soul part' of a human being.

In the view presented here, 'mind and matter' or 'soul/spirit and body' cut through every field of experience of a human being. In this regard Van Niekerk (2006/7:69) asserts that faith, belief and trust - the so-called spiritual and soul facets of traditional views do not have a higher and more important embracing position than thinking, feelings, producing, loving, speaking, physico-chemical energy, entitising entities or coordinating spatial experience. Faith and belief experience is not more religious or divine than other fields of human experience and is not a religious supernatural dimension beyond any comparison to the natural. The classic Christian view of faith as an all-embracing permeating dimension inserted into a human being by God's salvific grace, thus turning someone from the state of being an unbeliever without the capacity of believing to a believer with that capacity, is highly problematic and is one of the strongest creators of dualist sense-making approaches in the Christian world.

In fact there is no special religious dimension because God is directly involved in every field of experience as the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit. Saying it metaphorically in terms of the engine of a motor car, every field of experience has its own sparkplug, the nucleus or core of the field of experience where the Spirit of God is continually sparking and fusing, connecting God, being human and the physical-organic environment in a pattern of experience (Van Niekerk 2006/7:69). The idea of a religious dimension amongst various human dimensions of experience in our lives creates the impression that God hovers outside non-religious 'ordinary' human dimensions, and is allowed to enter our lives only through a so-called religious and supernatural faith dimension (Van Niekerk 2006/7:69). In the traditional sense,

religious faith plays a basic role among the multiplicity of fields and modes of experience of our created existence, but does not form intrinsically and initially part of human experience. One of the basic premises of the thesis is that one can only speak of faith as faith-experience in a similar way as thought experience, experience of emotions and experiential apportioning of justness.

Continuing in the traditional dualist soul/body or tripartite spirit/soul/body vein concretised in any of the major Protestant approaches is leading to the dogma of faith as the evident basic structure of existence that provides meaning and understanding to people. Faith understood as religious faith in God through Jesus Christ forms the basis of the Protestant Evangelical and Charismatic reductionist approach and faith in the evangelical protestant sense of the word replaces the component of spirit/soul in the ancient dualist or tripartite scheme. In this sense the newly imposed by grace entity of faith is the guiding principle for the self-evident structure of subjectivity of faith and belief. Hence, all other centrations need to be filtered through the guiding principle of faith. In one word, the latter amounts to making faith and belief an idol. This is going against the grain of the full present study.

Contrary, to an assumed newly imposed structure of faith through grace as the majority of Protestants assert it seems to me not very meaningful or correct to talk or assume a fixed self-evident structure of subjectivity of faith and belief that is been called the essence of a human being. Rather, it suffices to state that a continuous shift of centrations and decentrations as the continuous moving of a leading emphasis from one field of experience to another with the whole colourful field of experiential phrases, phases, pointers, dots, cues and clues that form the field as a network of meaning.

For the episodic duration of an encounter, research paper, holiday, political conflict, training session or eating adventure one or more clusters of fields of experience function on a meta-level to other fields. Moreover, in maintaining that the structures of subjectivity of human beings are firstly and foremostly structures of subjectivity, and secondly structures of message-able, manageable and ever-shifting quality, one has to maintain that the mystery of God and the natural cosmic world being connected and being different to the structures of human subjectivity are embedded and embodied part of what one may call the totality of reality. Implied is the clue of participation, participation in the histories of God, the natural world and humans, and participation in and with other humans in society, participation in the natural world's structures and with oneself.

Life is communion, life is relationship, and life is exchange – and it involves the identifying with God, other human beings and the natural cosmic world. Thus, the sum of addition of all ones identifying experiences approximates what is been commonly called one's identity. In this regard, I want to refer to the work of Varela on organisms as been understood as a mesh of virtual selves or identities (Varela 1995:211). One does not have a singular identity as 'the...'. One has a bricolage of various identities. One has a cellular identity, an immune

identity, a cognitive identity, imaginary identity and even a so-called composite identity, I have various identities that manifest in various modes of inter-, intra-, meta-, cyber- identities. These are my various, differential selves.

I hinted above participation comprises an unceasing variety of shifts of consciousness. Charles Tart (1976:45-54) defined consciousness as a (open) system composed of various subsystems or elements, such as emotion, memory, time sense perception, and motor activity. These subsystems are continually adjusting and readjusting in relations to each other. A state of consciousness is the particular structure or configuration of the total system that results from the particular level or mode of activity of the constituents in the present setting. A state of consciousness thus is been created by such diverse factors as culture, personal life history, current circumstances, perceptions, physiological conditions such as fatigue or illness and last but not least imaginative constructs of past, present and future.

Conjoining the reference to imaginative constructs with the function of memory on identity confronts us with the following questions: What is the function of mimesis in relation to memory? On the other hand, can we talk about a theanthropocosmic memory? While life is continually engaged in non-linear processes of remembering and forgetting, characterized by repetition, rearrangement, revision and rejection are there regularities in the random processes we encounter every day, Do new insights settle in our cultural memory as transformations of older ones? Are those who make or watch a work of art, write or read a book, direct or see a film, experience and reflect on faith experiences in the array of dual instances consistently engaged in contracting and expanding circles of participatory engagement?

## **9.10 Spirit, eventshapes (Gestalt) and circles**

Encircled in the participatory sense by the embodiment of God's kenotic and incarnational presence in the history of human beings and the natural cosmic world, the mysterious linking of circles and eventshapes by the Spirit 'pushes' and 'pulls' our everyday experience from an awareness of God's creation to an awareness of the fulfilment of everything in the new heaven and new earth. The Holy Spirit affects our current understanding of the full array of God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. Building on this, Berkhof states:

"The moving force... is everywhere indicated as the (holy) Spirit. That is the third name, which after and next to the names of God and Jesus or Christ expresses the manner in which God involves himself with man" (1990:326-329).

The togetherness and difference of the whole array of grand acts of God in which human beings and the natural cosmic world are intrinsically engaged and involved day after day,

minute after minute and locality after locality lead Moltmann (1985:262) and Basil (Meyendorff 1979:169; Burgess 1984:11) to talk about an anthropological and cosmic understanding of the Spirit. This world is God's and the fullness thereof. It is been created by God, redeemed by Christ, renewed by the Spirit, pulled to its limits towards the future by God the fulfiller of everything.

For many the notion of perichoresis goes hand in hand with the grand acts of God that are been lifted from its concrete anchors to the realm of speculative Trinitarian reflection. In line with the Calvinist and Zwinglian views, the classic idea of perichoresis is been overlaid with the notion of the alloiosis as used by Zwingli and Calvin in their reflections on Christ. In their views perichoresis (i.e. the mystery of social life: in the divine Trinity is been mirrored as the community of I, Thou and unity in the Spirit) is been used and captured in and through the notion of alloiosis (Cross 1995:105-108). Through the latter notion, perichoresis is not been viewed as mutual permeation of the trinitarian partners but as the expression of a correspondence or likeness between them (Locher 1988:13 ff). Although the notion of alloiosis is a vast improvement on the mutual permeation of the Trinitarian partners one has to proceed further than Zwingli and Calvin by stating that to speak of a trinity is not to speak of three persons but of the one God that executes mysteriously himself (sic) in multidimensional operational modes. The notion of the doctrine of the trinity is and stays a plain doctrine and a plain notion, which does not take on a life of its own as God's prescribed operational mode.

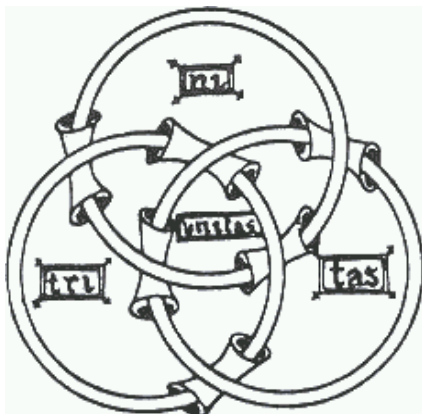
The most sympathetic reading of the doctrine of the Trinity is to view and link it in a concrete sense with God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation and renewal (Médaille 2000:8-12). In the traditional view of the trinity God's act of fulfilment and consummation of everything in the new heaven and the new earth is been ascribed to an operational mode of God that follows outside the range of the doctrine of the trinity. To the fourth century formulators of the doctrine of the trinity because of a very different sense making God-life-and-world view any movement in a direction of a fourth operational mode might amount to blasphemy. The doctrine of the trinity is a result of the sweeping first Millennium sense making logic and is been born out of the need of the existential ecclesial and political context of the fourth century (Van Niekerk 2008:124). The Spirit's particular role as been the driver and the champion of making the 'first contact' with people and the natural cosmic world is been derailed in favour of the primary revelational contact by the Son of God (Jesus the Christ), the Son of the Father, God. In this classic Trinitarian scheme, the personal being of the Spirit remains hidden, though actively involved in every step of the divine activities of creation, reconciliation (redemption), renewal and fulfilment. Moreover, his function is not to reveal himself, but to reveal the Son as God incarnate 'through whom all things are made' and, is been known in his humanity (and divinity) as Jesus Christ. The personal existence of the Spirit became an enigma and the praesentive existence of the Spirit points moreover to a divine 'kenotic' existence whose fulfilment consists in manifesting the kingship of the *Logos* in



creation and human existence (Meyendorff 1979:169). The starting point of western Trinitarian doctrine since Tertullian, Augustine and, later, Peter Lombard, was not the different persons of the Trinity and their activity in the history of salvation, but the one tri-une essence of God (Kasper 1976: 257; De Jong 1987: 43, 64-65).

Trying to depict this triune nature without leaving oneself open to attacks of polytheism was problematic. In this ambience, geometrical symbols became popular. An appropriate representational model for this conception is the circle: The Father begets the Son; the Spirit is the mutual love common to the Father and the Son (filioque). In the Spirit, the circle of the interior Trinitarian life is been closed. The equilateral triangle, consisting of three equal parts, equally joined, was also been used as an early symbol of the Trinity. Often, as a symbol is been inscribed such as the circular way, it is been used to stand for God for many centuries. For the Greeks, the circle symbolised perfection and its never-ending form too encapsulates the idea of eternity.

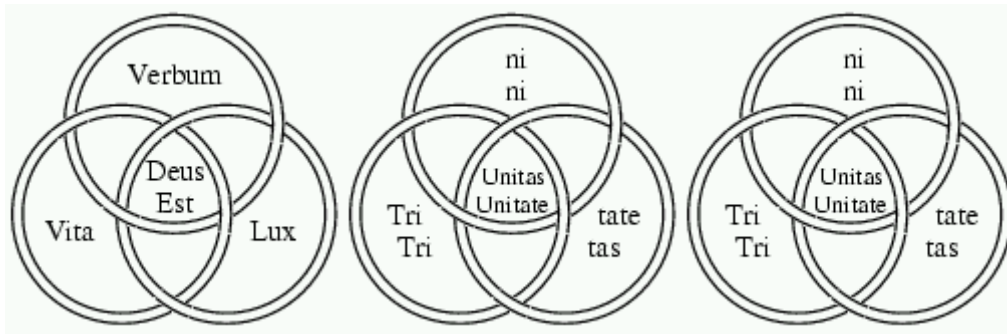
**Figure 2**



Today, the Borromean rings are commonly been used as a symbol of the Trinity. The earliest source for this that we are aware of is a thirteenth-century manuscript in the Municipal Library at Chartres. It contains four diagrams, of which one is been shown above. In the centre, inside all the circles, is the word `unitas'; the three syllables of `tri-ni-tas' placed in the outer sectors. Unfortunately, the manuscript is been destroyed by fire in 1944. The copy shown is been reproduced in a manual of Christian iconography (Didron and Didron 1886) along with descriptions of the other three. The labels on these other figures are been shown below. They are:

- 'God is Life' surrounded by 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit'
- 'God is' surrounded by ' Light, Word and Life'
- The phrases 'Trinitas Unitate' (three in one) and 'Unitas Trinitate' (one in three) are been distributed over the diagram.

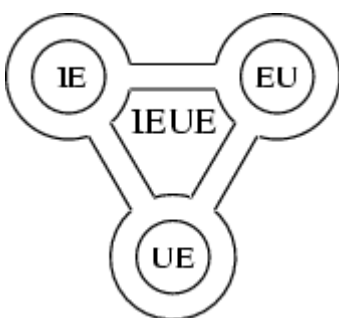
**Figure 3**



The association of rings or circles with the Trinity is been traced back to Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430). In his work *De Trinitate* [ix, 5, 7], he described how three gold rings could be three rings but of one substance.

A diagram in the *Dialogi Contra Iudaeos* (Dialogues against the Jews) by Petrus Alfonsi (1062-1110) has three circles connected in a triangle (Tolan 1993). Alfonsi is an interesting character. Brought up as a Jew in the Muslim part of Spain, he converted to Christianity and emigrated to Aragon, England and France. He was educated in Arabic and Hebrew and was interested in science, particularly astronomy. Originally called Moses, he took the name Peter at his baptism in 1106. Soon after, he wrote the dialogues, which take the form of a discussion between Moses and Peter, to show that his adopted religion was compatible with reason and natural philosophy (Tolan 1993).

**Figure 4**

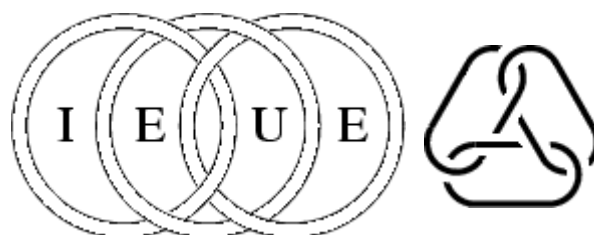


In the sixth dialogue, he discussed the Trinity. The sacred name for God was been written with consonants alone in the Hebrew alphabet: Yod, He, Vav, He. Since it was been forbidden to pronounce the name, it is unknown what vowels are omitted. Common expansions are Yahweh and Jehova. Alfonsi, writing the tetragrammaton as I EVE, split it to

produce the names of the three persons: IE, EV and VE. These are been written into his diagram above.

Joachim of Fiore (1132-1202) took the splitting of the sacred name from Alfonsi, and arranged the labels on a design of three interlaced circles. The component rings are actually topologically equivalent to each other, although this is not apparent in Joachim's figure. It is more obvious when the link is been redrawn as a symmetric diagram:

**Figure 5**



**Sketch of Joachim's diagram**

**Symmetric form of the same link**

Reeves & Hirsch-Reich suggest in *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore* (1972) that this image of God as three interlaced rings inspired Dante Alighieri (1265-1321). One medieval interpretation of the rainbow held that it was composed of three fundamental colours: red, green and blue. Apparently, Dante saw the red, green and blue of Joachim's three circles as iridescent, each reflected in the others, together making one rainbow appearing as three. Dante needed to be careful here, as Joachim had been condemned by the fourth Lateran Council (1215) for giving the circles different colours and hence making them unequal.

At the climax of his *Divina Commedia* he reveals a vision of God (Dante: *Paradiso*, §33, 115-120):

<p><i>Ne la profonda e chiara sussistenza de l'alto lume parvermi tre giri i tre colori e d'una contenenza; e l'un da l'altro come iri da iri parea riflesso, e'l terzo pareo foco che quinci e quindi igualmente si spiri.</i></p>	<p>Within the profound and shining subsistence of the lofty light appeared to me three circles of three colours and one magnitude; and one seemed reflected by the other, as rainbow by rainbow and the third seemed fire breathed forth equally from the one and the other.</p>
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The mystery of the Christian Trinity is linguistically been expressed in the Athanasian Creed: we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance (The Spirit then, innermost and hidden in God). All operations *ad extra* are in this view common to all three divine persons. This conception, however, led to the significance of the Trinity been shifted from the history of salvation into metaphysics. As Joseph Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XII) puts it:

“As a result, both teaching about the church and teaching about the Holy Spirit were no longer interpreted from the angle of Pneumatology or charisma, but seen exclusively – in an all too resolutely earthly way – from the standpoint of the incarnation, and finally expounded entirely on the basis of the power-categories of worldly thinking. In this fashion the teaching about the Holy Spirit also became homeless; on so far as it did not drag out a miserable existence in the realm of mere edification, it was absorbed into the general speculation about the Trinity and thus for all practical purposes had no function in Christian consciousness” (1969: 256-257).

In the Eastern Church, they departed from the Father, viewed as *ὁ Θεός*. Both the Son and the Spirit departed from him, even if the procession of the Spirit is been conditioned by that of the Son. The Spirit is the overflow of the love manifest in the Son; so he is the revelation of the very being of the Son, just as the Son reveals the very being of the Father (Kasper 1976: 258). The Spirit is here is God outermost and uttermost (De Jong 1987:84).

We come up against an insurmountable limit of speech, thought and insight when the mystery of God’s incarnation of Jesus Christ, is investigated from an ontological and psychological vantage point. Both the views of the Western and Eastern Church have inbuilt areas of a highly problematic nature. The Eastern view tends to make the Spirit independent of the Son resulting in mysticism though not hostile to the world and anti-institutional is often indifferent to the church as an institution and the world (Kasper 1976:258). The danger of a problematic heavenly transfiguration is noticeable in the liturgy that is been regarded not as the representation and celebration of the saving work of Christ, but as a heavenly liturgy. Ultimately, the trinity is been viewed as supernatural in a similar sense as the Western view of the ontological trinity outside God’s grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment.

The Western systematic insistence on the notion of *filioque* leads in many instances to one-sided Christ-centrism. In such a Christcentric view, the Church is been viewed one-sidedly from the point of view of the incarnation as *Christus prolongatus*, as Christ’s continuing life in and through the Church as the body of Christ. The notion of the church as the body of Christ in this view has lost its metaphorical character while assuming the role of a theo-ontological super-entity, taking root in the world while usurping the meandering role of the Commonwealth of God through the array of God’s grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment. Van Niekerk has described the ideology in which the role of the Commonwealth of God is been taken over by the church as church-centredness:

“The church-centred ideology of people’s experience of human life and eternity is driven and directed by a divine construct of the Church – with a capital “C” – spread like a divine metaphysical blanket all over the world, which is covered by a patchwork

of the many churches of the world as the small letter “c” derivatives of the gigantic Church. Church-centredness embodies in its extreme form a divine socialist caring and carrying ideology of salvation, sense and meaning in this life, the afterlife and for all eternity through the Church and the churches. In this extreme form the Church and the churches are being idolised and revered as the only centres, instruments and signs of the Commonwealth (= Kingdom, Priesthood, Prophetdom, etc.) of God” (2006:315).

The abstract metaphysical mode of thought in the Latin reflection of the doctrine of the trinity strongly correlated with a metaphysical doctrine of the church has led to failure of recognising the role and freedom of the Spirit in fields of human experience outside faith and belief, and in institutions and spatio-temporal relations outside the church. Not to speak of the withdrawal of the Spirit as life-giving energy from the natural cosmic world. The re-appreciation of the person of the Spirit by the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements ought to be viewed against such a background.

# Chapter 10

## Dynamism of identity and non-identity

### 10.1 Dynamics of technologies and interaction of identity and non-identity

God is in, through and with us as human beings and the natural surrounding cosmic world co-negotiating, co-directing and co-wandering with the Godness of Godself, the humanness of human beings and the naturalness of nature. In terms of the thrust of the thesis, our main assumption is that the Spirit of God, God as Spirit or the Holy Spirit is involved in changes of collective and individual categories of identity as the champion and driver of God's grand act of the renewal of everything in the world. In a mysterious way, the Spirit of God is an embodiment of the mystery of the connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world at the core of social transformation through factors such as causal linkages between identity changes, institutional changes, changes in modes of practice, shifting and turning from one field of experience to another. Where renewal is been observed from cell mutation to healing and from depression to the opening of the colourful petals of a flower and the experience of wellbeing in social interactions between God, people and the natural cosmic world the Spirit of God as the driver and champion of renewal is at work.

Developing and adapting ideas from Pierre Bourdieu's work, I argue that the coexistence of a plurality of identities and elements within each collective category of identity elicits a typology of responses at the level of multiple identities of socio-political and socio-biological change and renewal in a pneuma-centric and pneuma-directed sense. This allows an explanation of patterns of identity renewal and change in terms of wider social processes, while remaining open to the sense and complexity of the individual's experience and the moments of intentionality that arise when individuals face choices with regard to the direction of change.

### 10.2 Societal dynamism: transformation and sociocultural epochs

Social dynamics is popularly been understood as the possibility of change in social structures or the process of such change, while dynamism is the explanation given to every event as resulting from the activity of a mysterious power or energy (Deist 1990:77, 238, 239). For the purposes of this chapter, societal dynamism is been understood as follows. Societal dynamism is utilising various technologies and strategies of experiencing and perceiving the possibility and actuality of change of the realities of God, the human self, the whole array of human neighbours and the natural cosmic world (= animals, plants, things, etc.).

In what follows a trichotomy of fundamental sociocultural transformations making sense as world-historical changes are been spelled out in broad analytic categories (Meyrowitz 1997;

Olsen 1991:256-280). These include: (1) the Neolithic Revolution that transformed hunter-gatherer groups into agrarian, traditional, or pre-modern sociocultural systems; (2) the transformation to industrial modernity in post-feudal Europe, the worldwide diffusion of which was virtually complete by the middle of the 20th century; and (3) the transformation currently in process. We are more interested in the last part of this trichotomy, even though its contours, salient features, and the very terms to describe it are less clear e.g., postmodernism, high or late modernity, post-industrial societies, late capitalism, information society. McLuhan (1962) taking his cue from communication theory, divides history in four epochs: the oral tribal culture, the manuscript culture, the Gutenberg galaxy and the electronic age. For the break between the periods in each case, the occurrence of a new medium is responsible, handwriting terminates the oral phase, printing and electricity revolutionises culture and society. Irrespective of the phases of social transformation discerned in broad terms there are in all these instances overlapping, irruption of one culture into another and differential understanding of culture at play.

### **10.2.1 Pre-modern Traditional societies**

Spanning most of human history (from roughly 8,000 B.C.E. to post-Feudal Europe), village and kinship communities dominated pre-modern sociocultural systems, in which production was overwhelmingly for consumption rather than for the exchange of commodities. In local communities of this sort tightly bound space and time to particular places was the order of the day. In relatively self-contained communities, knowledge and beliefs were been transmitted by oral traditions and strongly rooted in personal and local experience (Innis 1950; Ong 1977). Such communities were highly aware of been surrounded by very different 'others' in other villages and places.

People understood that powerful natural and supernatural external forces ruled human life and nature but spheres of social life like religion were still relatively fused and unitary, as were other institutional spheres like the family, work, medicine, or politics. The masses of ordinary villagers only dimly recognised religion or much else as distinct from a seamless web of personal and social life. Religio-magical ceremonies, ritual, and practice were personally been conducted between, and strongly identified with others who have known these intimately. Indeed, there is little evidence that abstract things called religion, religious faith, or different religions existed as words or ideas in these communities (Smith 1991:74, 81). Historical research suggests that people in traditional societies rarely understood themselves as participating in something that scholars of later centuries would label as religion, and particularly not as Christianity, Hinduism, or Buddhism (Smith 1991:39-49).

Much of the history of later traditional societies is been written about their integrative systems of empire, where legitimacy was conferred by oral vows of loyalty, and about their differentiated panoply of dynastic rulers, soldiers, scribes, priests, merchants, and sorcerers.

In retrospect, however, these look more like a significant but thin upper strata living in relatively small urban nodes within a virtual sea of peasants in dispersed villages, 90% by most estimates (Weeks 1994). This controlling layer maintained itself by coercively expropriating the wealth of rural village communities, but otherwise left the inhabitants of these villages free to control their daily lives and to participate directly in their immediate political, sociocultural, and religious spheres.

### **10.2.2 Early modernity**

Modern sociocultural systems originated in post Feudal Europe in the commercial and industrial revolutions, when centres of economic production gradually shifted from the countryside to burgeoning cities. Separate pre-modern communities began to form broader integrated market systems, as competitive production for commodity exchange gradually replaced production for consumption. Industrial capitalism, driven by trade and colonialism, began its slow worldwide diffusion. Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century social theory described emergent modernity in terms of the progressive growth in scale and differentiation of social institutions and the compartmentalisation and specialisation of the social roles of persons (Parsons 1963; Smelser 1966) – hereby observing the touchstones of neo-secularization theory. Emphases of recent analyses of modernity are: (1) the progressive separation of time and space, with particular places becoming much less important; and (2) the disembedding of social relationships, whereby they are been lifted out of local contexts and re-articulated across indefinite tracts of time and space. Two pervasive mechanisms drove these processes: (1) abstract symbolic tokens or standardised media of exchange that operate in a variety of contexts, like money or votes; and (2) reliance on expert systems of knowledge and the services of experts and specialists of all sorts. Expert systems reflected the central ethos of the European Enlightenment, that scientific knowledge and rationality would tame the natural world and overcome the dogmas of tradition (Giddens 1991:14-21, 28).

Organisations became the emblematic social forms of modernising systems, particularly the nation state, as face-to-face feudal relations gave way to nationalism, changing the boundaries of ‘us’ and ‘others’ (Goudzwaard 1984:39-49). Political leadership became more distant, inaccessible, and delegated. Machiavelli’s book, *The Prince*, functioned as the first public relations manual for such inaccessible political leaders. Over several hundred years, organisations proliferated and became more distinct, and, as Foucault observed, the boundaries (or ‘membranes’) around prisons, hospitals, military barracks, factories, and schools thickened (1970:xxiv;370-373). People were increasingly been separated from households into groups with homogenous purposes and identities. Print communication, later augmented by electronic media like radio and television, fostered far broader solidarity than could the oral media of traditional societies. Printed texts increasingly shaped intellectual worldviews and national myths, as printed constitutions and laws literally helped constitute nations, laws, and national myths (Meyrowitz 1997:63-65).



Like learning and work, worship and religious devotion became increasingly separate and distinct. Religion in larger organizations was been distinguished from the shared worship with those one could see, hear, and touch, as in orders that are more traditional. People increasingly understood religion as activities, organisations, and beliefs as distinct from other institutional spheres, and by the 14th or 15th century it was possible for many Europeans to speak of my religion, religion in general, and other religions (Smith 1991:19-31; Meyrowitz 1997:64). As with other institutions in modern systems, organizations or organized religion, as constituted by churches, denominations, and sects, provided the context in which to understand religious belief and practice. Modern religious organisations could unify people across broader spans of time and space utilizing printed holy texts of religious literature and doctrine, or expert systems of special religious knowledge created by theologians, clergy, and bishops. Religious belonging increasingly became a matter of accepting formalised religious doctrines, creeds, and confessional statements (e.g. the Apostle's Creed, the Augsburg Confession, or the Baltimore Catechism). These creeds defined religious identity, related to national, ethnic, or social class characteristics, and provided a basis for distinguishing one's religion from that of others. Our point is that much of the current controversy concerning religion is about changes in the on-going fates of the predominant social forms of religion that emerged in modern societies as late in human history as the 1500's.

### **10.2.3 High Modernity**

Early modernity carried the seeds of its own transformation. In our view, such large-scale transformations are typically gradual and continuous with the past, rather than discontinuous, sudden, apocalyptic, or revolutionary. For that reason, we prefer Giddens' (1991) terms "high" or "late" modernity to the more widely used 'postmodernity,' but no commitment to these terms and would prefer to simply speak of the third large-scale sociocultural transformation that is now on-going, were it not so awkward to do so (Toffler 1989:1-10). To note the obvious, globalisation has been integrating the world's economic and political systems into vast, abstract relations that have dramatically altered the economies, politics, and the cultures of the world's relatively separate nations since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Electronic communication media continues to augment print, thereby facilitating globalization by making all nations and regions informational permeable (e.g. TVs, satellite communication, personal computers, and web pages) (Meyrowitz 1997:65). Giddens (1991) contends that globalisation is inherent in the fundamental social processes of modernism. The emergence of global-scale economies and institutional connections, however rational to those enterprises themselves, vastly increase the separation of time and space and the disembedding of social relations, often rendering social life incomprehensible to ordinary persons (Goudzwaard 1984: 49-60).

Even though a variety of expert systems dominate the production of knowledge and policy in modern societies, the dream of the Enlightenment, to replace irrational dogmas and superstitions of traditional societies with rational certainty, has failed abysmally. Because expert knowledge, including that of theologians, becomes more specified but about less and less, comprehending and living life becomes more and more difficult. Both larger systems and personal life become infused with uncertainty. Traditional life was more objectively hazardous and risky than life in the modern world but, ironically, expert knowledge and abstract systems have increased the awareness of uncertainties and risks. In late-modernity reflexivity is fundamental to both individuals' selves and institutions, including religion. Matters are continually open to change and doubt, and have probabilistic outcomes. Ulrich Beck (1992) therefore characterised modern societies as 'risk societies' in which individual action and organisational policy are driven not by a sense of certainty or fate but by calculating the odds. What are some basic social change processes of the transformation to late modernity?

### **10.3 Trajectories and dynamics of the social world**

There is no single or perpetual answer. No human perspective can be absolute and be the total meaning-giving source that provides a comprehensive sense making approach. Physics was the first science to perceive the polycentric nature of reality in which simple structures of a center and periphery, of front and back, are replaced by multiple models marked by inclusion and paradox, all of which are limited. Quantum spirituality is lived out within an everywhere center and nowhere circumference. The modern world was built amongst other on dialectics – the complex and opposite of the 16<sup>th</sup> century John Calvin, the thesis and antithesis of 19<sup>th</sup> century Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel. The modern world moved dialectically, by conflict, contradiction, and controversy. The postmodern world being born is not a bipolar worldview of either/or. Instead it is but a double helix; Möbius-strip – named after August F. Möbius is a two-dimensional object (e.g. a paper strip) that, when twisted one-half turn and its ends held together. A exemplary trajectory from early modern to late modern experience is found in the early modern trendsetting of the *coincidentia oppositorum* (coinciding opposites) of the fifteenth-century Nicholas of Cusa's mystical phrasing and the late modern mystical phrasing of the *conjunctio oppositorem* (complementary opposites) of Carl Jung's thinking. People are representing their reflection in continuums whether they are aware of the state of affairs or not. In the dynamics of moving on continuums the whole modern history of reflection in different theoretical disciplines can be worked out. Our focus of attention of the history of a faith theoretical perspective with its conjunctive sets of experience of faith within and outside communities of faith share in the macramé of complementary, not conflicting or contradictory energies which moving in continuum-like trajectories from systematic to narrative, from conceptual to perceptual, from mechanistic to organic, from monolithic to biolytic reflexive, from being to becoming, from existential to transpersonal, from mathematical to image, from nothing-but to as-if contexts and time

spheres. From, product to process, linear to field, establishment to movement, from hierarchy to network, private to public, from reductionism to holism. From, structure-oriented thinking to process-oriented thinking, denominational to ecclesial, means to ends, theory to fiction. National to multinational, from eclectic to ecologic, common sense to intuition, emotion to volition, action to character, divine power to divine presence, from what we know to how we know, from “how much we have” (quantity) to “what we have” (quality), from win/lose to win/win, from authoritarian/bureaucratic to cooperative/charismatic, from literalism to multidimensionality, from system to story, from religious to spiritual, from epic to lyric, from ‘Here I stand’ to ‘This way we walk’ (Shriver 1990:51).

The sociologist’s ‘society’, applied to modernity (1500- 2000 CE.), is a nation-state, which is more a covert equation than an explicated theorised one. The nation-state differs as socio-political entity in a fundamental way from earlier types of traditional order e.g. Feudal, Agricultural, etc. These nation-states as part of a wider nation-state system (which has become global in character) have specific forms of territoriality and surveillance capabilities, and monopolize effective control over the means of violence. In literature about international relations references are made to nation-states as ‘actors’, as ‘agents’ rather than ‘structures’. This indicate that modern states are reflexively monitored systems which, even if they do not ‘act’ *strictu sensu*, follow coordinated plans and policies on a geopolitical scale (Giddens 1999:15). The vehicle to effectuate this is (the) organisation in a plethora of appearances, which indicates the regularized control of social relations across time-space distances.

“Government insists more and more that its civil servants themselves have the kind of education that will qualify them as experts....Government itself becomes a hierarchy of bureaucratic managers, and the major justification advanced for the intervention of government in society is the contention that government has resources of competence (across time-space distance) which most citizens do not possess (McIntyre 1987: 85; vide Fuller 1991: 277-287).

It is been agreed with both Giddens (1999) and Toffler (1981) that modern institutions and societies are in various key aspects discontinuous with the gamut of pre-modern cultures and lifestyles. One needs only to think of issues debated such as, the reworking of the role of major institutions (e.g. division of labour, marriage, education, power and freedom of migration between institutions). Alternatively, the position of human beings in the natural cosmic world are been set as positions in opposition to each other such as are human beings personally responsible or divinely directed, should they show initiative or simply do their duty or is the position of human beings in the natural cosmic world solely depended on leadership or is grassroots participation of necessary. One of the most obvious characteristics of the modern era in contrast to any other preceding era is the multiple forms of dynamism manifested in the change from the early to the late modern era. Not only is the pace faster but also in scope and profoundness it affects pre-existing social practices and beliefs. Not

only did modernisation not yield single, determinate meanings; its multiple meanings became intrinsically paradoxical because of the umpteenth forms of reductionist schemes offered as exclusive solutions to the myriad of problems and challenges emerging from decade to decade. The postmodern or late modern world comes to life in and through the paradoxes of modernity.

## 10.4 Dynamic character of modern social life

Giddens (1999:16–23) identifies three sets of elements which explain the peculiar dynamic character of modern social life.

The first is the separation of time and space. There is no society in individual persons do not have a sense of past, present and future. Every culture has a form of standardised spatial markers that designate a special awareness of place. The fundamental perception of all humanity is the distinction between night and day, of the phases of the moon and the passage of the planets through the realm of the fixed stars. Time in this context is organic, cyclic and sacred (Eliade 1959: 20-115). The important thing for societies with this basic and natural perception is the re-enactment of the phases of the cycle. The repetition of such an archetypal action repeated actually that original moment; in this way past and present link totally so that time ceases to have meaning in the sense of a historical continuum (1959: 65; Campbell 1976). In pre-modern settings, time and space were been connected through the situatedness of place. Pre-modern cultures developed gradually formal calendars and 'crude' maps for the calculation of time and the ordering of space. This 'distancing' across time and space were prerequisites, which the emergence of more extensive social systems presupposed. The 'when' were been connected not only to the 'where' of social conduct, but also to the substance of that conduct itself. The development of mechanical timing facilitated and presumed in turn deeply structured changes in the tissue of everyday life – space and time were been pulled away from one another. Giddens talks of the 'emptying' or separation of time and space (Giddens 1999: 16-17).

The separation of time and space indicates the disentangling of separated dimensions of 'empty' *time* and 'empty' *space*, making the articulation of disembedded social relations across time and space possible. These changes were not only local, but also inevitably universalizing. A world that has a universal dating system and globalising standardised time zones, as ours have today, is experientially and socially different from pre-modern eras. The global map, with no privileging of place (a universal projection) became the correlate symbol to the clock. It is not only a mode of portraying 'what has always been there', but is also constitutive of basic transformations in society – especially nation-states.

The emptying out of time and space provides hence the basis for their recombination in ways that coordinate social activities without necessary reference to the particulars of place. Organisations and the organisation of modernity presume the coordination of the actions of

many human beings who are physically absent from one another. The 'when' of these actions seemingly connected to the 'where' not only imposes but also runs the full course of externalisation, objectifying and internalisation (Giddens 1999:16-17)? This is not necessarily connected to local time-space experiences or the immediacy of occurrence. It may seem disembodied of a social agent or even a person's faith.

The second dynamic element revolves around the disembodied (1999:18) of social institutions and individual experiences in the triad of <God...being human...natural cosmic world> as having separate interaction, intervals and simultaneous processes derived from particularities and localities in continuous processes of disembedding. Giddens prefers the metaphor 'disembedding' to the concept of 'differentiation'. Differentiation, he reasons, carries the imagery of the progressive separation of functions, such that modes of activity organised in a diffuse fashion in pre-modern societies become more specialized and precise with the advent of modernity. In contrast, disembedding refers to the 'lifting out' of social relations from local contexts and their re-combination across indefinite tracts of time-space. This disembedding utilises two types of mechanisms, 'symbolic tokens and 'expert systems'. Symbolic tokens have standard value and are interchangeable across a plurality of contexts. A prime example is money. Although different monetary exchange in one form or the other has developed, money economy becomes more sophisticated and abstract with the emergence and maturation of society (Goudzwaard 1984:57-59). We could concur that money brackets time (as means of credit) and space (standardised value allows transactions between individuals who never meet face-to-face).

Expert systems, the third dynamic element, have a similar bracketing mode of operation. Modes of specialised and technical knowledge penetrates all aspects of social life – in respect of the food we eat, the medicines we take, the buildings we inhabit, the form of transport we use, entertainment we enjoy and as multiplicity of other phenomena (McIntyre 1987). These expert systems are not limited to scientific-cum-technological expertise. It extends to social relations themselves and to the intimacies of the self. The counsellor, doctor, manager and therapist are been seen as central to the expert systems of society just as the engineer, scientist and so-called experts (1987:88-108). According to Giddens, the notion of trust underlies these expert systems; the expert systems depend on such notion:

“Trust presumes a leap to commitment, a quality of 'faith' which is irreducible. It is specifically been related to absence in time and space, as well as ignorance. We have no need to trust someone who is constantly in view and whose activities are been directly monitored. For example, jobs that are monotonous or unpleasant, and poorly paid, in which the motivation to perform the work conscientiously are usually 'low trust' positions. 'High trust' posts are those carried out largely outside the presence of management or supervisory staff.... Trust, of varying sorts and levels, underlies a host of day-to-day decisions that all of us take in the course of orienting

our activities. We *can* make the decision to trust, a phenomenon that is common because of the third underlying element of modernity...its intrinsic reflexivity. However, the faith which trust implies also tends to resist such calculative decision-making. Attitudes of trust, in relation to specific situations, persons or systems, and on a more generalized level, are directly connected to the psychological *security* of individuals and groups” (Giddens 1999:19).

The disembedding mechanisms and transformation of time and space propel social life away from previously held beliefs and practices. A thorough reflexivity is been introduced. Such reflexivity undermines the certainty of knowledge, and maintains that all acquired knowledge is open to revision. Furthermore, it refers to the susceptibility of most aspects of social activities, and material relations with the surrounding natural cosmic world. A continuous re-computation of experiences and orienting occurs thus on two levels: one level is the ongoing daily sub-conscious sense-making processes; the second level is a conscious, deliberate reflexion of complexities of orienting amidst a myriad of experiences.

## 10.5 Processes of reflexion

Our experiences in and of societies seem to be largely an experience of routines, symbols and rituals. The terms ‘routine’ and ‘routinisation’ are from the sociological philosopher Max Weber (1864–1920). In German the original terms are ‘*Alltag*’ and ‘*Veralltaeglichung*’ – literally the ‘everyday’ and the process by which something is ‘made to be’ everyday (Campbell 1985:171-176). I submit herewith that (social) engineering occurs on a day-to-day basis. Social structures (= the fixed order of a society, the stable network of classes, stratifications, jobs, inter-group communication, etc.) enable thus people to undertake most of the activities of everyday life with some efficiency due to an underlying assumption that, in general, others share our definition of routine social situations (Pannenberg 1999:319-318). In this context, our varied experiences are been recorded, ordered, and screened at various levels of consciousness. Huxley (1954 (1973):167-170) suggested that the function of the brain and nervous systems and sense organs is in the main *eliminative* and not productive. The function is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by the large mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, and in functioning thus, leaving only the small and special selection that is likely to be practically useful. To use an image: the mind is like a sculptor working on a block of stone. In a sense, the statue stood there from eternity. Nevertheless, there were a thousand different ones beside it, and the sculptor alone is to thank for having extricated this one from the rest.

According to our disposition then, each one of us is potentially a *mind at large*. In order to formulate and express or to use our imagery human beings invented and endlessly elaborated those symbol systems and implicit philosophies we call languages. Every individual is at once the beneficiary and the victim of the linguistic sense-making world

he/she is born into (1973:168). The beneficiary inasmuch as language gives access to the accumulated record of other peoples' experiences, the victim in so far as it confirms him/her in the belief that reduced awareness is the only awareness and it bedevils his/her sense of reality, becoming all too apt to take his/her concepts for data, for actual data. Such data in the language of religion is called 'this world', is the universe of reduced awareness, expressed, and as it were, and petrified by language. The various 'other worlds' with which human beings erratically make contact are so many elements in the totality of the awareness belonging to the *mind at large*.

Reciprocity exists, therefore experience is been symbolised in order to be completed as experience. Yet the particular symbol used, although of great meaning within the context of a culture and an individual life, is ultimately less important than the way a symbol successfully establishes ones existence and enables others to move into its orbit, as did the symbol of Jesus for a person living two thousand years later. Whitehead spoke of symbols in this way:

"The human mind is functioning symbolically when some components of its experience elicit consciousness, beliefs, emotions, and usages, expecting other components of its experience" (1959:7-8).

Symbols, in other words, are like bridges. They enable us to link, to relate, to cross between one experience and another. They show how one experience have meaning for another and can even form the ordering nucleus of others. A symbol can be polyvalent – different but related meanings of the symbol is been expressed in different contexts. A symbol is been defined as that which properly reminds one of something, such as God, a loved one, on own insecurity or imaginative representation from the natural world while evoking feelings and behaviour appropriate to the symbol. A symbol is therefore more than a sign. It does not only give information; it calls forth a response and, like the image of a deity, may even virtually become that which it symbolises. Religious symbols are often polyvalent.

However, reflexion is not been reduced to mere psychological processes or linguistic games. It is more varied and complex than is possible to bring under words. Reflexive activities whether theoretical or of the everyday sort take place within field that demarcates these activities. The notion that reflexive activities are always limitless and endless in the abstract sense of the word is been taken over by the notion of field dependence. A field comprises the differentiation of social activities been acted out within relatively autonomous structured spaces, and have a definable but contingent history of development. The implication of the basic idea of field reflexive activities is that these factors affect cognitive habits, institutional structures and subjective meaning, involving personal as well as collective identities (Todd 2004:4). Bourdieu (1980) reasons that fields are constructed according to underlying organising layers of *nomos* ('laws') operating as fundamental principles of 'vision and division', e.g. the division between mind and body for example, or male and female, or organising 'laws' of experience that govern practices and experiences within a field. The

nomos underlying a field is often irreducible to those underlying another, as in the noted disparity between the nomos of the aesthetic field that values cultural capital and in some sense discourages economic capital, and that of the economic field that values economic capital.

An important implication of the different fields is the implied homeostasis (Nisbitt 2003:38). As long, as the appropriate forces operate to maintain different social structures, different social structures and different social practices the accompanying sense making training will result in people focusing on different things in the environment. Focusing on different things will produce different understandings about the nature of the world. Different God-human-and-world views will in turn reinforce differential attention and social practices, prompting differences in how people's senses are employed and thus resulting in different sense making processes and views. The critical factors influencing habits of mind and spirit are social in nature but can be generated and sustained by other forces. Nisbitt (2003: 34-39) differentiates these forces and processes as:

- *Ecology* → *Economy and Social Structure*; e.g. agricultural peoples need to sustain social calm and to live together in reasonable harmonious calm. In contrast, commercially inclined and orientated peoples are more inclined toward independent action and thought.
- *Social Structure and Social Practice* → *Attention and Folk Metaphysics*; if one perceives oneself as embedded within a larger context of which one is an interdependent part; it is likely that other objects or events are been perceived in the same way. The sense that the self is linked in a network of relationships and social obligations makes it almost logical to view the world in general as continuous and composed of substances rather than discrete and consisting of distinct objects. On the other hand, when less need is been disclosed to maintain close proximity to others, it is almost more natural to focus on the attributes of objects with a view to categorisation. In this regard, scientific metaphysics of societies are to a large extent reflection of folk metaphysics.
- *Folk Metaphysics* → *Tacit Epistemology and Cognitive Processes*; folk metaphysics can be expected to influence tacit epistemology, or beliefs about how to get new knowledge. If the world is been viewed as a place where relations among objects and events are crucial in determining outcomes, then importance is lend to see relations among objects and to see the relation between the parts and the whole. Processes of attention, perception and reasoning will develop that focus on detecting the important events and discerning the complex relationship between them. If, on the other hand, the world is been seen, as a place where the behaviour of objects is governed by rules and categories, then it should seem crucial to be able to isolate the object from its context, to infer what categories is a member of, and to infer how rules apply to those categories.



My concern in terms of the parameters of the thesis is that of identity and change and the relation between identity and change from a perspective of pneuma-directed kenotic (and incarnational) pneumatological pointers. Apart from being aware and unaware of one's social positions within a field, I propose in addition to Nisbitt that faith theoretical reflexive discourses and processes should be worked out as *tacit epistemology* and *cognitive processes* in the sense of the processes of *Word* → *Spirit* as God's ongoing act of reconciliation and *Spirit* → *Word* as God's ongoing act of renewal. These two processes designate the middle pair of grand acts of God in operation in the context of the Commonwealth of God inaugurated in the creation of everything in the beginning and brought to closure in the fulfilment of everything at the end of time. The inauguration of the Commonwealth of God in the creation of everything, the proceeding reconciliatory concentration and amplification, extension and dissemination of the Commonwealth of God in Jesus' death on the cross, the tearing of the veil between the holier than holy and the holy space of the temple and the resurrection of Jesus signifies, amplifies and heralds the start of the renewed unbound shifting and disseminating of the located presence of Yahweh from the holier than holy to the whole of created reality and history (Van Niekerk 2006:374).

The process *Word* → *Spirit*, *birth* → *death*, is to my understanding simultaneously intertwined with the *Spirit* → *Word*, *death* → *resurrection*, or *death* → *(re)birth* process as dynamic access avenues to experiences of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world in the composite sense of the word in every field, mode and dimension of experience in life whether it is in the field of faith as happening in this study or any other field of experience in which the mystery of the connection and difference of God, being human and the natural cosmic world demarcates the field of experience. Whether the movement is from theoretical to everyday reflexive activities and conversely from the latter to the theoretical perspective of faith it takes place within the ambit of a pneumacentric and pneumadirected Theory of Faith. The positioning of <God...human beings...natural cosmic world> on a reflexive continuum within a field of faith experience with its theoretical aware reflexive experience of faith, demonstrates that there is no escape from the mystery of God, being human and nature being simultaneously intrinsically connected and radically different in their realness and being there-ness in people's daily experience.

## **10.6 Society, culture and identity**

Diversity implies peculiarity. Common to polity is the denominator of to-gether-ness and at-other-ness which creates the general and the unique dimensions in the construction of new realities. These realities at an institutional level are designated as spheres of society and the level of experience as fields, modes and dimensions of human experience. In terms of our everyday sense making experiences societal organisations and spheres of public life appears seemingly as universal and absolute entities – people come and go, yet the spheres

seem unchanged, stable and continuous in function. Continuity of the social world is been kept up since human beings in spatio-temporal settings have overlapping and shared understandings of their realities.

The old maxim according to which there are things that money cannot buy is not only normatively but also factually true. What should and should not be up for sale is something men and women always have to decide and have decided in many ways. Throughout history, the market has been one of the most important mechanisms for the distribution of social good; but it has never been, it nowhere is today, a complete distributive system. Ironically, it appears at times as if faith has a sole and complete distribution system with the implication that an element of the Deistic approach has a valid point in that the God that has created the universe is only present as watchmaker who set up 'shop in town' in his own created universe. These 'shops' or distributive systems, became to be known as fiducial bureaucratic institutions called 'churches', 'mosques', 'synagogues' and 'temples'.

Similarly, there has never been either a single decision point from which all distributions are controlled or a single set of agents making decisions. No state power or, in our instance, religious power, has ever been so pervasive as to regulate all the patterns of sharing, dividing, and exchanging out of which a society takes shape. Things slip away from the grasp; new patterns are worked out in familial networks, black-markets, and bureaucratic alliances, clandestine political and religious organisations. Finally, there has never been a single criterion, or a single set of interconnected criteria, for all distributions. Qualification, birth and blood, friendship, status, need, free exchange, political loyalty, religious adherence: each has had its place, along with others, unceasingly co-existing, invoked by competing groups, confused by others.

On the continuum of <society...culture...identity> we are faced with the particularisation of history, culture, and differentiated membership of different communities of belonging within a society. Even if committed to impartiality, the question most likely to arise in the mind of members of a political or religious community is not: What would individuals choose under universalising conditions of such-and-such a sort? Rather, what would individuals like us choose, who are been situated, as we are, who share a culture and are determined to continue sharing it? The question that is likely been answered is what choices have we already made in the course of our common life? What sense making experience do we (really) share?

Identity is a human construction made in more than one way. This allows for cultural diversity and political choice. It is not only a matter of implementing some singular principle or set of principles in different historical settings. I want to argue: that the principles of identity are themselves pluralistic in form; that identity (and faith) as different social goods ought to be distributed (shared) for different reasons, in accordance with different procedures, by

different agents; and all these differences derive from different sense making experiences of the social goods themselves – the inevitable product of historical and cultural particularity.

We are always interested in ourselves, but, in this case, in a special and limited version of ourselves, as people who have been involved in the acts of give and take. What is our nature? What are our rights? What do we need, want, deserve? Answers to these questions have been turned into distributive principles, which are supposed to control the movement of goods.

Extracting and picking up clues and cues from the theory of symbolic interaction, I want to propose a thesis of the processes of society, culture and identity as dynamic constructs: People conceive and create goods, which they in turn distribute among themselves.

Here 'distribute' means give, allocate, exchange, and so on, and the focus is on the individuals who stand at either end of these actions: not on the 'producers' and 'consumers', but on the distributive agents and recipient of goods. Conception and creation precede and control the distribution. In general, we tend to link production, distribution and goods to the socio-economic sphere of life. Rather, goods with their meanings – because of their meanings – are the crucial medium of social relations; they come into people's minds before they come into their hands; distributions have been patterned with shared conceptions of what the goods are and what they are for (Habermas 1975:113). Conception and creation direct our attention to the naming of goods, the giving of meaning, and the collective making.

## **10.7 Collective identity and sense making views**

Culture is embedded in society, but society as such is not culture. A human social formation acquires its distinctiveness and character only through culture (Pannenberg 1999:318). Every part of a culture is a symbol of the whole. On the other hand, the concept of culture always takes shape within socially organised reality (Nisbett 2003:38). In other words, the cultural world (consisting of different fields) shared by individuals, classes and societies, somewhat like the natural cosmic world, is experienced as a given prior to individual behaviour, even though individuals are constantly contributing to change its appearance (Hiebert 1988:30-87). Culture is a product of living, breathing, sensuous human beings within demarcated time-space markers.

Relevant to our understanding is the concept of *habitus*. Pierre Bourdieu re-elaborated the concept of habitus from Marcel Mauss – although it is also present in the works of Aristotle, Norbert Elias, Max Weber, and Edmund Husserl. He used it, in a more or less systematic way, in an attempt to resolve a prominent antinomy of the human sciences: objectivism and subjectivism. Habitus – subjective dispositions (lasting, acquired schemes of perception, thought and action) – is formed from earliest childhood, as the child situates itself in structured, gendered and differentially path-ed social space, and internalises its objective live-chances in its own subjective expectations and interests (Bourdieu 1977:78-79,86). The

individual agent develops these dispositions in response to the objective conditions (fields) they encounter. Such processes produce a set of cumulative, superimposed meanings, dispositions and modes of perception embodied in the individual. Some of them are been laid down in infancy, but they are social products even if they appear to individuals as 'primordial' givens (1990:56). Social practice is at the core of Bourdieu's analysis; it is where individuals (and groups) at once encounter and internalize distinction, and where, even in new situations, the habitués reproduces socially structured distinction and ensures historical community as if spontaneously.

The dichotomies which characterise identity (the division between the subjective and the objective) are negotiated in the sense collective identities are embodied in the individual habitats and expressed not simply in collective action but also in the subtler signs of individual distinction, down to the choice of jewellery, make-up and clothing (1977:80-82). This reproduces collective distinction at the micro-level, ensuring that spontaneous attraction and friendship, marriage and family relations tend to fall into collective categories. All such categories bring with them a felt intimacy. All give the potential for immediate contact with others whom we recognise as 'like ourselves', and a related sense of belonging with those who share our categories and who recognise and respond positively to our immediate intuitive distinctive distinctions. Nevertheless, in practice, the embodied categories carry this emotional charge, analytically the formation of shared experiences and the 'warm' sense of group belonging and solidarity may be explained coolly, in terms of core social variables distinctions.

In these respects does Bourdieu's theory provide one with an invaluable starting point for analysis of identity. Habits (habitués) provide a substratum from which identity is been formed in a process of arrangement and rearrangement of some of these elements of embodied meaning and value, with some held close to the centre of self, others left on the margins. Identity-narratives are the reports of – sometimes the performance of – the arrangement and rearrangement of these blocks of meaning. Identity formation is thus a continuous process, which involves a considerable degree of intentionality. It takes place by the incorporation of new elements of embodied, meaning and value, or the rearrangement of old (Todd 2004:10). New elements are been created, not *ex nihilo* but by the choice to foreground particular practices and relations to others. Such choices are not costless: after years of work and sacrifice, one might find that a sense of belonging in one's adopted society still eludes one; similarly, old meanings are been marginalised but never totally fading. By the same sort process, this time combining social practices in new ways, or by applying the concept of rearrangement, new combinations of meanings can come into being. Again, choice is typically constrained, on the one hand by socially entrenched symbolic codes and multiple social pressures not to break them, and on the other hand by personal history which may have laid down some dispositions so early in infancy that they are changeable, if at all, only by depth analysis (2004:10). We can identify three mechanisms of change in collective

identities: We can identify three mechanisms of change in collective categories of identities between the social order and the individual habitués; dissonances within the individual habitués; and the moment of intentionality of collective identity categories.

A more subtle and differentiated analysis of collective identity categories is been observed. The discussion showed that meaning of collective identity categories complex, composed of a plurality of elements coexisting in tension. Second, the elements are been intertwined in different permutations and combinations with varying degrees of tension. A divergence of popular and 'official' categorical identification, and variation and flux at the popular level, is a phenomenon of the contemporary age experienced by many people. Reassessing of options in societies experiencing economical restructuring, Europeanization, globalisation and new phases of immigration is part of daily existence (2004:11). Third, there is a 'moment' of intentionality in the making and remaking of identity categories, a choice of which permutations and combinations of elements to accept. This choice is, however, may require a high level of cultural and social resources. This also means institutional and social opportunities, requiring intellectual stamina and cultural resources. Fourth, change in collective identity categories is on going. Individuals and sets of individuals often find their intuitive categorisations out of phase with those of their class or group, and still more so with official, state-centred categorizations. Alternatively, they find the elements of their own categorisations come into internal tension (2004:12).

These processes are been underscored by other thinkers too. Nineham (1976:1–39) argues that people explain happenings in relation to the way the reality is being understood by them, and understanding of reality is dominated by what is in regarded at that time and culture as the ruling dogma of the day. Agreeing with Nineham, one has to add that the notion of the understanding of reality is just another way of saying that human beings cannot escape to correlate their images of the realities of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world in a composite and comprehensive God-human-and-world view. Intertwined with one's God-human-and-world view is one's view of time. With regard to the notion of time while it is unlikely to discover some ultimate truth about the nature of time we suggest that the problem and the differentiation of time be set within an approach in which the notion of multidimensionality of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world designates the reflexive context of different time dimensions.

In reflexive consideration on the multidimensionality of time Van Niekerk's radical, integral and differential approach regarding time to which reference is been made in Chapter 2 comes to mind. The main assumption of multidimensionality is that time is been expressed in a time directed and differential sense in which time is embodied and manifested in terms of the characteristics and attributes of a particular field, mode or dimension of experience. The temporalisation of time within a particular field of experience takes on the particular characteristics and colourful nature of such a field, mode or dimension of experience. Logical

and thinking time expresses the characteristics of thinking - the other way around. - permeates a human being from the head to the fingers while in the thinking mode. In a similar, sense the fields of experience of feeling, believing, chemicalising, loving and bioorganic evolvement direct time and space in their own ways. In conclusion, one may assert that physical time comes to expression in processes of physicality, bio-evolving time comes to the fore in bio-evolving processes and time of faith and belief comes to expression in the experiential pattern 'faith is faith is faith is faith process. A process of faith and belief and the temporalising of the time inherent in the process is acted out in terms of the repetitive pattern of 'I believe God and I believe myself in self-confidence and I believe other human beings and I believe my natural environmental neighbours (=animals, plants, things).

The most we can hope for is that our attempts of making sense of how a particular culture perceives and describes time as well as how that culture's perception of time reflects and influences its 'cosmology', 'anthropology' and 'theology' will contribute to the bigger picture of how time is been experienced in the wider world. This count for views of time encountered in ancient cultures, modernity and post-modernity and wherever humans negotiate and engage time and the expressions of time in daily life.

# Chapter 11

## Approaches to texts, theories, natural processes and human doings

### 11.1 Introduction

#### 11.1.1 Variety of approaches

When we share a sense making approach in a strong sense with other people towards texts, theories, opinions, phrases, phases, paragraphs, sentences, and words the 'pushing' and 'pulling' forces of sense making overlapping are compelling enough to establish major sharing of such an approach in the public and private sense of the word.

These phenomena revolving around the mystery of the connection and the difference of God, being human and the natural cosmic world, appear disturbingly unfamiliar at first but gradually, as their sense making meaning is elicited in the negotiation sense of the word, we come to understand and make sense of the triadic pattern of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. The mysterious triadic pattern are been fitted, mixed and fused in the codes and modes, conventions and customs expressed by the phenomena, finding ourselves noticing things we have never noticed before. In many instances because of the overlap between how these phenomena make sense we may end up feeling relatively at home there. Irregardless of our so-called final conclusion of a particular field or imaginary world in which we are engaged and involved, bizarre or not, we are enticed to view texts, theories, opinions, phrases, phases, paragraphs, sentences and words as constructed container for multiple realities in the world we live.

The multiple realities being part and parcel of our everyday sense-making experience necessitate that we look for some kind of a 'logic' of the composite God-human-and-world view kind to undergird our attempts of construction, reconstruction, and deconstruction of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings. The problem facing us becomes one of the integral connection and difference of the continuum of <theology...epistemology...cosmo-ontology> in the sense that a sense making view should continuously and consistently be guided by the theanthropocosmic principle. Saying that we are confronted with a 'theo-centric' guided problem is too meagre. Similarly, exclusive foci on either epistemology as the problem of human knowledge or cosmo-ontology as the problem of knowledge of being in cosmisation processes do direct us in the pursuit of deeper and deeper meaning. The problem of infinite regress in the exclusivist reductionist sense is caused by either establishing the world of human beings or the natural cosmic world as the all-initiating agents of all processes of reality or constructing through a theory of the

'semantic autonomy of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings' textuality and intertextuality as the only real worlds people encounter every day. The route out of this impasse is to let the sense making or ideological forces of language applies to the simultaneity of verbalising and verbalised, writing and interpreting and the scientific discovering and the constructing of a text, theory, natural process and human doing. For scientists and philosophers operating with a wholesome sense making approach the aim is not to suppress or bypass but to relativise or relate the thinking, writing, believing subject or author with the metalinguistic, metaconceptual and meta-fiducial patterns of social discourse and intercourse and conflict and consensus – thereby not venturing on a quest of finding the critical Archimedes point but to co-establish and co-structure the sense making negotiating bridge between subject or author and the metalinguistic, metaconceptual and metafiducial dimensions.

In our day and age, the question as to how with texts, theories, natural processes and human beings are used, implemented and applied in people's lives and the world around them has lost nothing of its relevancy. In the ancient Greek world we hear "Hermes... is an interpreter and a messenger," Plato has Socrates say in *Cratyles*; "(he) is wily and deceptive in speech and oratorical" (*Cratyles* 408, Bloom 1975). This etymological canard stands for all of the contempt with which philosophical idealism and medieval realism has shown to favour rhetoric and often philology over philosophy (Kelley 1987:150). Nevertheless, interpretation, as Harold Bloom says, must on principle be a 'misreading', translation must be inadequate, and human expression must usually be content with mere opinion. Any attempt to rethink any kind of intellectual history must begin with this sort of Socratic doubt – and hermeneutical caution in mind. One of the central features of 20<sup>th</sup> century theoretical reflexivity and reflection has been the 'linguistic turn', which in effect steers away from stringent rationality and thinking with the aim of the recovery of the rhetorical dimension of experience. Language and rhetoric, verbalising and meaning and symbols and signs have been virtually axiomatic in recent efforts to re-evaluate intellectual history.

Already in the approach of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Vico a sort of deliberate 'turn' away from the reductionist rationality and thought exclusivism back to practical wisdom and social interests associated with Sophist philosophies was noted (Kelley 1987:154). Philosophical hermeneutics, especially in the wake of Heidegger, has radicalised this inclination, by arguing that no form of reason or a world of phenomenology is determining the experiential levels of meaning and significance but linguisticity (*Sprachlichkeit*) constitutes the fundamental condition of thought and existence therefore language is been regarded as the 'house of being'. To express the logocentric, even mythopoeic, character of existence, Heidegger (1982:139-156) quotes the last lines of Stefan George's poem *Das Wort*:

"So lernt ich traurig den verzicht:

Kein ding sei wo das wort gebricht"



(Therefore, I sadly came to see: Without the word, no thing can be.)

### 11.1.2 Gadamer

Gadamer (1976:31) captured his whole approach in the statement: "Being that can be understood is language." In the accepted philosophical procedure by Gadamer of existence preceding essence, neither has meaning outside the human condition of been defined by the medium of language. Here a bit of historical perspective may be in order. Ever since Kant, the aim of philosophers has been to find a truly 'critical' position, from which to judge, and perhaps move the world. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century Enlightenment the notion of consciousness has become an important focal point of philosophy which through Kant's contribution to critical thinking has been viewed as a 'Copernican revolution' in the realms of science and philosophy. Thus, not only the *Ding an sich* but also the *Geist an sich* is put in question and is been viewed in a superficial phenomenal sense as inaccessible to critical examination, even through psychoanalysis.

The message Gadamer (1976:35) wanted to portray is that we never get behind language. The problematic issue of the Enlightenment of making language a handmaiden of thinking and rationality is not been solved by just changing the guard. One of the most crucial issues that emerged in the period in which the overpowering role of thinking and rationality has been place under lingual scrutiny is the notion of intentionality in a literary sense. For more than halve a century critics have been discussing the 'intention fallacy' proposing to fix precisely the original meaning of an author. Resulting from this is the insistence that this is the primary task of the critic to ascertain the 'real' message or meaning of the text or theory (Wimsatt 1954: 37). Classically, this is been expressed in the hermeneutical aim of determining the *mens auctoris*, not the mind but the meaning, and in this sense the *Geist*, of the author or authority. Instead of a retrospective act of mind reading, interpretation became more and more been viewed as a 'map of misreading' (Kelley 1987:154-155). If in a philosophical sense, the text has a semantic autonomy the question arises what we can get from the surface of the text.

Gadamer sets out by assuming the primacy of linguisticity – *Sprachlichkeit* - as the inescapable medium of hermeneutical interpretation and historical understanding. Gadamer was one of the strongest advocates of the linguistic turn in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in which the movement was to step away from pure logicity. Language is the universal medium of understanding. Language is the basic condition for hermeneutical and historical interpretation, understanding and communication in the social domain (Derksen 1983:11-13; 245). Gadamer encapsulates all areas of understanding, including all the sciences, into what he calls the 'communication community' that constitutes for him the 'hermeneutic universe' – an interpersonal universe of understanding (Derksen 1983:246). He employs a double focus, which is another way of saying that the horizons of at least two different cultural contexts are been set within the hermeneutic universe as temporal horizons of 'now' and the 'then. In

order to understand the expression of ideas over an expanse of time and across cultural boundaries, there must be, in Gadamer's term, a 'fusion of horizons' – *Horizonverschmelzung*. This fusion of horizons is a metaphorical meeting of understanding minds – including translation – through the changing but interconnecting medium of language (Gadamer 1991:273ff). In trying to meet the necessary conditions that make meeting of minds and translation possible Gadamer, following Heidegger, has tried to rehabilitate the concept of 'prejudice'. Prejudice in the sense of a shared or 'fore-structure of knowledge' forms the basis of an intellectual and linguistic continuum or tradition (1991:235; Heidegger 1962:191). Language must accommodate a meaningful dialogue with the past. Only a naïve and pre-critical intentionality will deplore such dialogue as a series of unfortunate misreading. Existentially, there can be no 'intersubjectivity' beyond language in some sense. What is left is interpretation: the practical and localised effort to gain that measure of understanding circumscribed by the 'hermeneutical circle'.

### 11.1.3 Derrida

Derrida has shifted emphasis from linguisticity to scriptuality (from *Sprachlichkeit* to *Schriftlichkeit*), making writing or inscription the last battleground of the human sciences (Derrida 1976:6). For Gadamer's 'nothing behind the back of language' Derrida substitutes his 'nothing outside the text' (Derrida 1976:158). Derrida builds on the level and works on a level, which he calls 'grammatology'. In a sense, this is a deathblow to the process of writing of the thinking subject. Therefore, the Cartesian *Cogito*, which is been deprived of memory, is supplanted by the Derridean *Scriptum*, which is disentangled from its author. Cut of both from reality and from itself, consciousness is been condemned not only to the 'prison-house of language' but even to the domain of the written, especially of the printed text – which has to be deconstructed (Derrida 1976:).

Deconstruction is an attempt to open a text to several meanings and interpretations. Its method is usually been based on binary oppositions within a text – e.g. the male and female, inside and outside (Derrida 1976:30f). Deconstruction then argues that such oppositions are culturally and historical defined, even reliant upon one another, and seeks to demonstrate that they are not as clear cut or stable as it would at first seem. On the basis that the two opposed concepts are fluid, the ambiguity is been used to show that the text's meaning is fluid as well. This fluidity stands against a legacy of traditional metaphysics founded on oppositions, that seeks to establish a stability of meaning through conceptual absolutes where one term, for example 'good' is elevated to a status that designates its opposite, in this case 'evil' representing perversion, lack or inferiority. These 'violent hierarchies' as Derrida termed them, are taken as structurally unstable within the texts themselves, where the meaning strictly depends on its contradiction or antinomy. Deconstruction 'takes place' through 'memory work': in this way, the task of the 'deconstructor' is to show where this oppositional or dialectical stability is so ultimately subverted by the text's internal logic (Derrida 1976:70). Meticulous readings as commentaries of one reading of the text become

philosophy anew. The result of the 'renewal' is often that striking interpretations of texts emerge. No 'meaning' is stable: the 'metaphysics of presence' is that which keep the sense of unity within a text where presence is been granted the privilege of truth (Derrida 1976:49). Philosophically, to put the best construction on it, 'deconstruction' is been seen as the last 'decentring of humanity': what Copernicus did in terms of astronomy, Darwin of biology, and Freud of psychology, Derrida claims to do, paradoxically, in terms of language. Paraphrasing Marx, we might conclude that human beings make language but not in the way that is intended in the text or in speaking. Therefore, it may be too, with 'ideas' in the sense of the formation of ideology.

The horizons of intellectual history and exchange of ideas are open in several directions. Attention has shifted not only from thought to 'discourse' but also, in a number of ways, from the conscious to the unconscious, from creation to imitation, from intention to meaning, from authorship to readership, from the history of ideas to the 'social history of ideas', from science to the occult, from tradition to 'canon formation', and from sociology of knowledge to the anthropology of knowledge. To help my reflexive attempts on technologies and strategies of dealing with texts, theories, natural processes and human beings, some selective remarks about constructivists and realists will suffice.

## 11.2 Constructivism and realism

Dealing with the technologies and strategies of texts, theories, natural processes and human beings lead us to detect interesting nuances in our endeavour to operate continuously with the theanthropocosmic principle as an expression of the mystery of the connection and difference the threesome of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. As discussed above, any attempt to make use of such a radical, integrating and differential principle need to take cognisance of the following aspects:

- Subjectivity and objectivity: We maintain God is creator of everything. Not only is He involved with all of creation, but guides it to consummation (fulfilment) through the processes of reconciliation and renewal. We can justly speak of emergence of all, not in the sense of a *causa finalis*, but emergence in the sense that the Spirit of God guides all in their interconnectedness and development of their respective qualities (Taljaard 1974:38-43).
- Temporality is been differentiated as time and as temporality within time as processes of multidimensionality which include time as an arrow and overlapping circles of temporality. Emergence from the lower to the higher, simplex to complex implies temporality of existence. Similar to creation all societal institutions show temporality. The absolutising of an institution in society is not an option, only God is eternal and absolute. We can therefore measure the existence of institutions and the various forms in which they appear in the stream of time with regard to the unaware claim of being a contingent absolute in history and society (Derksen 1983:11). As long as God's

Commonwealth meanders through God's acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment, we are bound to the question of time and temporality, history and the contingencies built into God's grand acts.

- Universality and individuality is been interpreted in various ways throughout history. It was been indicated as universalism, individualism and partial universalism, with or without a macro-micro theme regarding society. Plato, for instance, worked with a macro-micro scheme in his social philosophy, while Aquinas thought in the direction of partial universalism with regard to the church, emphasising a monarchian interpretation of reality. If a metaphor such as the Church as the Body of Christ is been interpreted through a monarchian filter, Christ becomes the individual summit of the pyramid of which the basis comprises the individual churches. Defining one segment of reality as an absolute meaning provider to other segments is giving birth to an absolutised reductionist construction.
- The quality of real emergence is been noted in the development of institutions and sense making patterns within different historical epochs and societies. History presupposes the ability of human beings to use their talents and faculties construct the world and shelters in which they live, dream and breathe.
- Value-ladenness is been realised in the sense that the formation of being and becoming is relational to its being realised as constructed historical and contextual reality.
- The connectedness and difference of God, being human and the surrounding natural cosmic world is experienced not in general but as *real constructed* fields, modalities and dimensions of experience which may or may not include the following: Thinking: thoughts & reasons; Loving: love expressions & acts; Feeling: emotions & feelings; Speaking and verbalising: words, terms & symbols; Apportioning justice: laws, rules & ordinances; Economising: supply & demand; needs & capacities; Imagining/fantasising imaginative creations, fantasies & artful expressions; Educating/training: skills & capacities; Socialising codes, modes & styles; Bio-organic evolving: cells, organisms & growths; Moving: movements, dynamics & kinetics; Physico-mass processing: mass- gravitational processual energies; Chemicalising: chemical processes & energies; Entitising: things & entities; Spatio-coordinating: spatial constructs & coordinates; Informing: information & data; Empowering/managing: powers & strengths; Believing/faith: beliefs & certainties; Producing: performance & products; Etcetera

### **11.3 Mirroring, Interpretation and negotiation of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings**

In our day and age, the question how texts, theories, natural processes and human doings are been approached, used and implemented in people's lives has lost nothing of its

relevancy. Van Niekerk in work done over the past 25 years points to three broad approaches, avenues or paradigms that emerged in the modern era on how texts, theories, natural processes and human doings (acts) are been tackled or treated:

“During the modern era the battle lines were often drawn between two approaches: on the one hand, an approach in which the main aim is to mirror a text, a theory, processes of nature or human doings in people’s life world, and on the other, an approach in which the main aim is to interpret a text, a theory, processes of nature or human doings for a set purpose in people’s life-world. In this section, I want to introduce you to a third approach, namely the emerging approach of negotiation of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings. This approach is an attempt to go beyond the modern struggle in which the mirroring and interpretation approaches have locked horns. In the approach of consensual negotiation, the valid elements of mirroring and interpretation are drawn into a differential and integrative approach giving recognition to the most noticeable features of the mirroring and interpretation paradigms” (Van Niekerk 2006/7:274).

### **11.3.1 The mirroring approach as mirroring→ remirroring → appropriation of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings**

The first approach which Van Niekerk (2006/7:274) detects in the modern era is descriptive of all sorts of mirrorisationism, whether it amounts to crude mirroring approaches, as in fundamentalism, or enlightened mirroring approaches concerning texts of the Bible, holy books or other literature, theories of different sciences, natural processes or human doings. The text (or Th, Np, Hudo) must be re-imaged, re-mirrored, mimicked or emulated when applied in some context of life and the world. In a fundamentalist mirroring mindset, scientific theories, processes of nature and human doings and actions receive the same fundamentalist treatment of imitation and mirroring in people’s lives and the surrounding world as in the case of written texts (2006/7:274). The fundamentalist and enlightened mindsets of mirroring, imitation or mimicry of texts, theories, events and human doings in one’s life world cut right through many types of sense making systems, religions and GLW views

The mirroring approach of ‘mirroring→ remirroring→ mirroring-appropriation’ of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings is one of the main sense making approaches capturing the traditional notions of purity and perfectionism extremely well. What is of interest here for the many mirrorisation, imaging, mimicry or mimetic approaches in modernity is the reductionist procedure in which every text, theory, natural process and human doing is timelessly (eternal) and limitlessly ‘processed’ in a reflective and re-mirroring cycle through sensory experience (Van Niekerk 2006/7:277). The problem arises when the reflective and mirroring cycle is been forced onto every field of experience and applied to the surface of texts, theories, natural processes, and human doings. The so-called ethical question of how

a text, theories, natural processes and human beings should operate or function somewhere and somehow in life is been solved through the process of obedient appropriation of the reflected meaning on the surface of the mirror:

“‘Mirror, mirror on the wall. Who is the fairest of us all?’ In the words of the snow queen from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, we hear the insecurity of this approach. It is an approach that is passive and lacks responsibility. For in following this approach we can say that we were only following orders when bad things happen and abdicate all responsibility for the outcome when applying it to the text, theory, natural process or human doing. We follow the rules, needing to be told what to do, but do we understand the meaning that gives the words texture. It is a superficial approach for in following what we are told without engagement we also lack the necessary sense making of our own position, our own experience”(Van Niekerk 2006/7:280).

Adherents to this methodology in general view themselves as realists in the sense of that they mirror the purity and true-ness of unbiased texts, theories, natural processes, and understanding of human beings. Van Niekerk describes the widespread experience that

“...in modern mass culture and consumerism, narcissistic kinds of experience experiences are stimulated and structured through widespread illusions in society that things can get better if one mirrors oneself according to these idealised dreams and fantasies. These illusions are portrayed in advertisements and acted out by role models in the media. The mirroring of these different ideals signifies subtle forms of fundamentalism in modern societies. This could be a form of Narcissism, which revolves around the visual metaphor of Narcissus in Greek mythology, who looks gapingly into a pool at his own image while falling in love with his image. This becomes important because the mirroring – re-mirroring – appropriation procedure appears in many areas of modern life” (2006/7:274).

Hence all of us, in modern social conditions, live as though surrounded by mirrors; in these we search for the appearance of an unblemished, socially valued self (2004:85-86). Descriptions of events and behavioural patterns are seen as direct references of the referent (Fromkin & Rodman 1988:219-220). Nothing is said of what the text, theory, natural processes and human beings itself communicates and truth is regarded as eternal, objective and valid principles contained within the (printed) Bible, resulting in naïve Biblicism which appeals to isolated texts.

### **11.3.2 The interpretation approach as understanding → explanation → application of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings**

The second modern approach can be termed interpretationism and is commonly viewed as the real opponent of crude and enlightened mirroring approaches. Interpretation of the text of

the Bible, holy books, texts of science and literature, scientific theories, processes of nature, human doings and actions, in the broadest sense of the word, is the essence of this approach (Van Niekerk 2006/7:275).

Van Niekerk describes the procedure of the interpretation approach as follows:

“Many kinds of interpretation approaches operate in the modern era with the strategic succession of understanding → explanation → application of a text (or Th, Np, Hudo). What is of importance here for the many interpretation and hermeneutic approaches is the reductionist procedure in which every product and action of human beings and natural processes are constantly forced through the field of experience of rationality and thinking. The reductionist tendency is to be found in the temporality of the critical, historical, rational, interpretative position between the time ‘now’ and the time ‘then’, and in the spatiality of the critical, rational, interpretative position between the space ‘here’ and the space ‘there’. The so-called ethical question of how a text (or Th, Np, Hudo) ought to operate or function somewhere in life is solved through an *application* of the understood and explicated text (or Th, Np, Hudo)”(2006/7:278).

The main point of this approach is to interpret or to state what a text, a theory, processes of nature or human doings are actually saying or actually means for a set purpose in people’s life-world. Van Niekerk points to the fact that increasingly problems are been experienced with the interpretation approach:

“During and since the heydays of the interpretation approach in the European Enlightenment of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the emergence — especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century — of hundreds of mirroring-type approaches in their crude fundamentalist and enlightened forms kindled in many interpretationists the sense that something was very wrong with the basics of the interpretation approach — and, for that matter, with the basics of hermeneutics as a theory of interpretation. If people in many global settings are resorting to plain fundamentalist mirroring of texts, theories, natural processes or human doings in their lives, then something must be wrong ‘sometime and somewhere in the house of interpretation’ (2006/7:275)

Every thought and language pattern and every well-knit technical sub-language incorporate certain points of view and patterned resistance to widely divergent points of view. These resistances not only isolate artificially particular sciences from each other, they also restrain the discovery of a <radical...integral...differential> negotiation approach towards texts, theories, natural processes and human doings in the individual and communal sense. Though it has been pointed out that language does play a role not only in our theorising enterprises, but also in shaping the contours of societies many interpretationists have steadfastly emphasise that any field, mode and dimension of experience including thinking, believing, imagining, feeling, apportioning and language might be used as the reductionist main emphasis in an approach of a text, theory, natural process or human doing.

In everyday dealings, we encounter many kinds of interpretation approaches with the strategic succession of understanding → explanation → application of texts, theories, natural processes and doings of human beings. The many interpretation and hermeneutical approaches are, in a reductionist way, forced through the field of experience of rationality and thinking. The reductionist tendency is to be found in the temporality of the critical, historical, rational, interpretative position between the time 'now' and the time 'then'. In special sense, it is been found in the critical, rational, interpretive position between the space 'here' and the space 'there'. The so-called ethical question of how texts, theories, natural processes and human beings ought to operate or function in life is been solved through an application of the understood and explicated texts, theories, natural processes and human beings.

### **11.3.3 The consensable negotiation approach as consensable co-positing → consensable percolating → consensable fusing into a co-promise design of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings**

The third approach emerging in the modern era is termed by Van Niekerk consensable negotiation (2006:386). Consensable taking place between the sense making view and experience embodied in a text, theory, natural process and human doing and the sense making view and approach of the one doing the negotiation with the text (= Th, Np, Hudo). An interchange and exchange between the two sense making views and experiences percolates and fuses both sense making views and experiences into a compromise (co-promise) design from where clues, guidelines and yardsticks can consensibly be derived, extracted and taken over by other people in their text and theory formation and their description of natural processes and human doings.

The main notions of a consensable negotiation approach belong to the family of how '*sense, sense making, meaning and significance*' of texts, theories, natural processes and human doings must be negotiated. The consensable negotiation process fulfils itself as 'consensable co-positing → consensable percolating and filtering → consensable fusing into a co-promise design' from where clues, cues and hues can be drawn and folded into the mix of our life world (Van Niekerk 2006:386).

The main framework of a consensual negotiation process with the Scripture operates against the backdrop of two assumptions.

The first assumption comprises a five some awareness as a wholesome person his/her creatureliness, an awareness of his/her sinful tendencies causing damage to God, oneself, other people and nature, a salvific and reconciliatory enactment of oneself through the redeeming power of the cross and liberative empowerment through the power of the resurrection, an awareness of the renovating and renewal power of the Spirit of Pentecost, carrying and guiding the process of the five some awareness in experiences of fragments



and moments of meaning in our present life in an anticipatory sense about the consummation of all things in the new heaven and the new earth (Van Niekerk 2006:388-390).

The second assumption is that a sense making God-life-and-world approach embodied and expressed in and through a book, chapter and verse of the Bible, does not have more of the Spirit of God than my, him or her sense making God-life-and-world approach as people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In our negotiation between two sense making views – that of the Bible in a particular text and ours in our situation today – a Spirit-filled negotiation process from both sides takes place (Van Niekerk 2006:388).

Numerous factors play a role in the very complex history and unending process of negotiation between human beings, cultures, sciences and social institutions such as churches, states, business corporations or sport teams. Without being aware of the fact of negotiation the ongoing process of interchange, exchange and appropriation, rejection, compromise or fusing (mixing) of skills and tools between people and their societies and between the many sciences and philosophies is in any instance negotiation of some sort. No person, culture, language, religion, society, community, science or philosophy changes, develops, grows and increases or decreases its openness towards others without conscious interchange, exchange and appropriation or rejection or compromise or mixing of their skills and tools. The shape and the size of a person's cultural and scientific universe and accumulation of skills and tools, codes and modes, and science and knowledge from other persons depend on the levels of interchange, exchange and appropriation (or rejection, compromise, mixing or fusing) of the processes in which they participate (Van Niekerk 2005:410-412).

One of physicist Niels Bohr's most revolutionary insights is that no phenomenon is a phenomenon until it is a registered and experienced phenomenon. Called the Complementarity Principle, it generalised Werner Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. Both Bohr and Heisenberg's rendition of complementarity and uncertainty are underscoring the negotiatory principles of interchange, exchange and appropriation.

Hence, Hitchcock (1986) observed in *Atoms, Snowflakes and God: The Convergence of Science and Religion* that no elementary quantum phenomenon is a phenomenon until it is a registered phenomenon. Split-beam and double-slit experiments unveiled the paradox of the quantum phenomenon. Current theorists of science no longer insist in putting as much distance as possible between the object and subject, between the known and the knower. Even a sociologist like Clifford Geertz, through the concept of 'reflexivity,' argues along the line that an observer is part of the observation.

Indeed, some theorists assert that David Bohm's theory of the implicate/explicate order is true and that the theory goes beyond the Heisenberg/Bohr complexity in that there is no distance at all between the observer and the observed. Thus, the two are inseparable. The observer is the observed. In a similar way as the 'observer-participancy' experiential

continuum is expressive of the creative building material of the universe the 'observer-participancy' continuum forms the very basic building blocks of the quadrilateral pattern of everyday experience, which in faith experience would be, I believe God and myself and my human neighbours, and my surrounding natural cosmic world. We live in all fields of experience in a 'participating God, human and natural cosmic universe'.

In modern physics, the overlapping between human person and natural processes in the universe is been expressed in what is called the Anthropic-cosmological principle. According to Stephen Hawking (1989:130–131) the Anthropic principle states that we see the universe the way it is, at least in part, because we exist. It is a perspective that is diametrically opposed to the dream of a fully predictive, unified theory in which the laws of nature are complete and the world is the way it is because it could not be otherwise. Between the existence of a human being and the universe is some sort of weak overlapping.

Van Niekerk (2005:418-424) has extended the participatory overlap between a human being and the natural cosmic world in the discourse of physicists to include God in a composite principle of overlapping and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic universe. Theanthropocosmic principle is a composition of 'the' which stands for 'theos' the Greek word for God, 'anthropo-' for human being from the Greek word 'anthropos' and 'cosmic' from the Greek word 'cosmos' for the natural cosmic universe. By making use of the theanthropocosmic principle, Van Niekerk (2006/7:43-44) arrived at the notion of consensible negotiation as a fusion between the mirroring and interpretation paradigms. In consensible negotiation situation, words and sense making tools are been brought to the table and the text. In these engagements something new emerges, a compromise design in two senses, namely a compromise in which the text and ourselves are meeting each other halfway, and as a compromise in the sense of a *co-promise* design from which others and ourselves takes cues, clues, pointers, phrases, sentences and narratives for our own sense making and identity (2006:389-392). New text compositions are in this sense an unfolding process that oscillates, percolates, and mixes widely and deeply (2006/7:87). In practice, we look at, listen to, and re-arrange the grammar written and/or uttered and made sense in one way to the composer of the text and in another way have the ability to make sense or nonsense to us. We bring into the dance our own history and ability to make sense into this negotiatory arena while we pick up traces of God, the natural cosmic world and ourselves.

# Chapter 12

## Spirit, Person and Community

### 12.1 Identity, identities and identifying

Life and the millions of serial and consecutive processes of being and becoming, patterns of experiencing God, oneself, other human beings and the natural cosmic world, signify the ambience of the discourse in which the notion of identity as a dynamic 'verb' - not as a 'noun' - is been discussed. Identity as such nearly slips away when one indulges in the modern essence or core-seeking quest looking for someone or something's identity. The identity of the Spirit, a human person or a community is not been captured through seeking and looking for the essence or the core of the 'noun' Spirit, human person or community. Approximating the identities of the Spirit, a person or a community is to make sense of the sum total of their identifying acts and experiences with God Spirit, oneself, other human beings and the natural cosmic world.

In my endeavours, I discovered clusters, pockets and packages of identifications as the sum total of identifying acts and deeds of the Spirit, a human person and a community, which are still an enigma to me. In the view presented here, I suggest that identities and kenotic (incarnational) entities been viewed as dynamic overlaps of reflexive identifications. In this sense a continuum is to be understood as space-time geometrical coordinative reflexive ambience consisting of a natural cosmisation pointer overlapping with an anthropo-pointer and a theo-pointer as constants and variants – as expression of the dynamic interplay of the theanthropocosmic principle as a heuristic key (Gribben 2002:440-442; 595,598; Nigrini 2002). The followed approach of approximation of identities as a cluster of acts and deeds, processes and patterns of 'identifying with someone or something' or as the hunting and gathering of quantifiers and qualities of a nominated cluster of identifying acts and aspects of someone's or something attempts to avoid the modernist quest of looking for the core and the essence of God as the Spirit, the Judaeo-Christian Scripture, a human being, a text, and a theory.

Continuing in my line of thought, I submit that identity is dynamic as is kenosis. It implies that constant negotiation and renegotiation of the regularities and the shifting positions of acts and aspects of 'identifying with someone or something' is a given - re-orienting and re-identifying on a daily basis is the name of the game of life. Although we live as situated beings in specific contexts, it seems that we are at times mere robotic role players on a stage. For someone to be oneself is quite an art, which requires on many occasions forcing oneself to walk the second mile for oneself. In certain quarters of the Christian world where a low esteem of the human self are at the order of the day people would cringe at any

exhortation to walk a second mile for oneself. One has to ask, how does one express oneself, how does the Spirit express itself and in general does a community express itself to be true and authentic in all the identifying acts that make out one's, the Spirit's and a community's identity. Identity is tied up with being the real me, the Spirit the real Spirit and a community a real community in clustering and adding up of the complexity of identifying acts, events and processes.

A complexity of identifying acts, events and processes of the real me, the Spirit and a community elicits a few reflexive comments:

Firstly, it does hint at chiming. My grandmother's clock does hint: on the hour, it toils hinting in some manner to the episodic moments and spatial fragments of my understanding of time and space. This implies that in the process of recognising some 'moments in time' and 'fragments in space' of my cluster of identifying acts and experiences I try to understand identified moments and fragments within a field, mode and dimension of my experiential being. My being in general does not exist in real terms but may be a blink in the eye of God. Through my eyes, the core identity of my being is not been grasped and comprehended. My identity is approximated through the dynamic expression of my *being thereness (Dasein)*, *being thus and thusness (Sosein)* and my *being embrace by actuality (Aktsein)* through clustering periods and localities of fields, modes and dimensions of experience. The dynamic actuality of a human being as not only a 'human being' but a 'human doing' is not been slipping and passing my mind in my approximation of where I am heading. The main challenge is how to make sense, translate and transform the hunted and gathered notions, terms, words and concepts from ancient and modern reductionist philosophies and scientific views to the holistic and differentiated approach in use in the thesis.

The more we ponder and wonder about a sort of a sense making settlement in which the threesome of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are continuously together in a meaningful sense the more they seem to be drifting apart. How do they fit together and what are they been made of? Are the analogies and metaphors of creation, restoration and renewal helpful? On receiving an order to restore, for example a doll's figure, one goes to all the trouble and, just as one paints the final coat of colour, it breaks, may be for the umpteenth time. The whole process may start all over again or the doll may be thrown in the rubbish bin. We as human beings are simultaneously very similar and not very similar to such figurines – we sometimes seem to be unbreakable, strong and on track and at other times just break down and have to be redefined and restored and brought back from the rubbish bin of history.

On the one hand, a *human being continuously present in the mode of human doing* is embraced by both *God's presence* and the *presence of the natural cosmic world*, and is on the other hand, 'pushed', 'guided' and 'pulled' by the Spirit of God to a growing kenotic awareness of the links and distancing between the overall processes of being and

becoming, the here and the there and the now and the then dimensions. In the face of three presences taken together in a pattern of compositional presences contributing to the same melody, not one of the three presences can be put aside for the slightest moment and the smallest fragment of the composition. Imagining the presence of the being thereness, being thus and thusness and the being actualness of three disparate 'beings together and yet different' defies description whether from the belief, feeling, verbal or thinking sort. The presence of the Spirit of God within the presence of human beings and the presence of the natural cosmic world is the area where the Spirit of God links and connects the circles of presence of the threesome through kenotic identifying acts and events. These pneumatological pointers - which by lack of a more appropriate word – present us with the clues and cues to make our sums of adding and subtracting in the composition of Spirit induced construction of multidimensional identities of God, of us as being human and our surrounding natural world.

This brings me to my second observation. No human being 'pushed', 'guided' and 'pulled' by the Spirit of God to a growing kenotic awareness of God's mysterious involvement in human life and the natural cosmic world has the ability to make sense in cold detachment of God's mysterious involvement (Bonhoeffer 1966:269). What is called for is not making sense of a single sort of existential engagement as expounded by existentialist philosophies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but the simultaneous engagement of 'three existences, beings and presences' in the mystery of the connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. One is compelled through the awareness of God's mysterious kenotic and incarnational involvement to work with the multidimensional image of God who is involved through his divine bodily presence. Moreover, one has to re-configure one's identity and identification, being and becoming, and understanding and sense making of being alive in the strongest possible terms of multidimensionality.

Meaningful configurations of the multidimensionality of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are elusive and difficult, and the openness towards multidimensional configurations is rarely spontaneous. When multidimensional opportunities for action are opening up in many instances depression and stress factors increase and wellbeing and wellness levels take a dip. It is as if people are not aware that they in any case make multidimensional changes in daily life by changing emphasis from one field of experience to another and from one societal role to another within the scope of a 10 minute period. Many people are stuck in the one-side reductionist evangelical pietistic and fideist attitude of constantly stabilising and experiencing the whole of life through religious faith and belief experience or structuring life solely through thinking and rationality as the only stabilising factor worth mentioning. The continuous changing of emphases from one field of experience to another with the accompanying changing of emphases of roles and the unaware management thereof is one of the most underestimated areas in people's lives. In people's lives the continuous changing of emphases of fields of experience and social roles whether

one attempts to keep oneself reductionistically stable within one field of experience or one social role, happens in any case every day, every hour and every minute. In this regard we are in constant need of the Spirit of God as driver and champion of the renewal processes in the world making us aware of our ordinary everyday management task of continuously changing between our multidimensional modes of experience and our roles of social actorship in daily life.

## 12.2 Dynamic roots and relations

The concept of identity, negotiation and making sense of life steered through the threesome sense of a *human being continuously present in the mode of human doings* embraced by *God's presence* and the *presence of the natural cosmic world* becomes a source of meaning and making sense of our life worlds and processes.

By identity, I understand the process of identifying complexities between God, human beings and the natural cosmic world irrupting, overlapping and involving God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. This tautology of a sort is been viewed as a computational network, indicating the multidimensional totality of a human being's experiences as a matrix of identifying acts and events happening in the triadic space of God's presence within the presence of a human being living in and with the presence of the natural cosmic world. Computational experiencing in this context is the moving back and forth between the network of activities of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world in which traces, clues and cues are been picked up and extracted as micro building blocks in constructing identities. Episodic and demarcated border setting is moving in a dynamic sense the analysis and synthesis, differentiation and integration of the negotiation around identity construction and making sense thereof (Derrida 1995:316; Pannenberg 1999:225). For a given individual, or for a collective communal agent, there is generally a plurality of identities. As we have seen in the previous section this can be a source of stress, tension and contradiction in both self-representation and social action. We have seen further that this is due to the various social roles people play in daily life. Being an 'actor' in societal roles is not merely adopting a certain persona for an episode which is been discarded afterwards. The sum of all ones identifying acts with people, God and the natural cosmic world consists of the level of making sense of these identifying acts and the capability of constantly engaging oneself, one's neighbours, God and the natural cosmic world. The sum total of identifying acts as a construction of one's identity expresses the experience of realness of one's feelings, thoughts and beliefs in and through one's senses.

The relative weight of acting upon and influencing of the consciousness and the awareness of the presence of the *being thereness (Dasein)*, *being thus and thusness (Sosein)* and the *being actualness of actuality (Aktsein)* of the three disparate beings, God, human beings and the natural cosmic world, together and yet different, depends on negotiation and

arrangement between individuals and institutions, texts and contexts in which these are set and emerged. This boils down to the fact that in such interaction with the abundance of fields of experience revolving around apportioning of justice, faith and belief, imagination, ethics, and political consciousness, to name but a few, human consciousness is known through God and the surrounding natural world, while simultaneously the natural cosmic world and God are known through consciousness (Küng 1991:145-146). This implies relationships in multidimensional directions. God, human and nature consciousness can be separated notionally but not in real life because the mysterious simultaneity of their at-one-ment and at-other-ment rebels against a tripartite separation. These references or orientation points are examples of how one can verify a position that maps out a set of pointers such as the triadic map of consciousness and awareness of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world constantly been negotiated conjointly and separate. Van Niekerk says in this regard:

“the composite and coincidental consciousness of God, being human and the physical-organic environment is at stake where and when traces, fragments and moments of the God-ness of God, the humanness of human beings and the naturalness of nature (= physical-organic-cosmic environment oscillate, percolate and fuse in the depth and broadness people’s daily experience and life-worlds” (2006: 390).

### **12.3 God as Spirit in the human and natural cosmic world**

In the thesis we have drawn a map of the kenotic (incarnation) aspects of the ‘pushing’, ‘guiding’ and ‘pulling’ by the Spirit of God of us all increasingly acquiring a kenotic awareness of the links and distancing of the overall processes of being and becoming, the here and the there and the now and the then of the mysterious presences of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. In this map, we attempt to steer away from either a sacralising or a permeating tendency of humanity and the natural cosmic world as in classic sacramentalism and current fashionable pantheism. In the face of three ‘praesentive presences’ taken together in a pattern of compositional presences contributing to the same kenotic melody if one of the three mysterious presences is been left out of the equation we revert back to the disharmonious and problematic position signified in the first paragraph of the thesis. God acts and operates as Spirit in era of the Spirit – the era of Pentecost. The main point of the era of Pentecost as the era of God’s renewal of everything means that God affirms the clustered identities of the main role players in the meandering processes of the Commonwealth i.e. God self, human beings and the natural cosmic world. God’s Spirit acting in freedom to love, trust, feel for and talk to his handiwork does not destroy human freedom but is been reaffirmed by continuously and mysteriously revealing to people through making them aware of their responsibility and accountability towards God, themselves, other people and the natural cosmic world.

Different perspectives in which the mystery of the connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are been discussed played a determinative role in the thesis.

The *first* perspective revolves around a composite assumption which is been approached from three alternating vantage points. What can be said about God's incomprehensible nature can be partly said about human beings and the natural cosmic world. What can be said about human beings in their being thereeness, thus and thusness and actualness can be partly said about God and the natural cosmic world. What can be said about the natural cosmic world that its shape is dependent partly on our means of perceiving it can be partly said about God and human beings?

In "Using riddles..." Gregory is at pains to emphasise that the doctrine of something being revealed to us by God is "paradoxical" and "lies beyond words and understanding" (Ware 1995:31). We can hint at it in human language, but we cannot fully make sense of it and explain it. The same is true of human beings and the natural cosmic world of which we cannot make fully sense and which we can only in the last instance hint at. Although our reflexive powers including our reasoning, faith and believing, imagining, feeling, verbalising and loving powers are gifts from God we must make use of them to the full and recognise their limitations.

The presence of human beings in their being thereeness, thus and thusness and actualness are in many ways surrounded and embraced by the presences of the being thereeness, thus and thusness and actualness of God and the natural cosmic world.

The natural cosmic world being partly dependent on human means of perceiving its shape, size and dynamics can be said about God and human beings also in the sense of partly dependent. God, human beings and the natural cosmic world are partly dependent on each other in perceiving and experiencing each other in their connectedness and differences.

The notions of the incomprehensibleness, the presence and the partly influencing of each other is discussed at the background of the mystery of the theanthropocosmic principle expressing the connection and difference of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world. Moreover, these notions are been discussed within a constructed theanthropocosmic sphere while being 'pushed and pulled' by the leading emphasis of faith reflexivity and faith experience. One should be continuously aware that the main pattern of faith in the thesis is that of 'I believe God and myself and my human neighbours and the natural cosmic surrounding world'.

The *second* perspective is directed at the ongoing involvement of human beings and the natural cosmic world in the four-some processual scenario of the Commonwealth (Kingdom, Prophetdom, Priesthood, etc) of God directly expressed in and through God's grand acts of



creation, reconciliation (redemption= cross and resurrection of Jesus), renewal (ongoing renewal of everything) and consummation and fulfilment towards the end (aim and goal) in which human beings and the natural cosmic world are intrinsically and continuously involved. The main point is that we make sense of these grand acts of God because of human beings and the natural world's involvement in these grand acts through an ongoing growing awareness - traditionally called revelation – by the Spirit of God in the everyday life. In our daily experience of our creatureliness our involvement and engagement with sin, evil (=the idolising of parts of creaturely reality) and stress, we have an inkling why reconciliation between God, being human and nature takes place affirmed by the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, why there is an ongoing renewal process between God, being human and nature championed, pushed and pulled by the Holy Spirit and whereto in the future of God's fulfillment, God, being human and nature are directed towards the wholesomeness of the whole of reality in the new heaven and the new earth.

The gospel of John elaborates on the quest and quandary of the quantum of identity and kenosis as it is been explored in and through God's grand acts of creation, reconciliation, renewal and fulfilment:

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

A negotiated rephrasing of our understanding of our integrated, holistic, and radical commitment in terms of the Fourth Gospel delivers the following tetrad of eddies of experiencing God, human beings and the natural cosmic world comprising a single stream:

- The Word as the depth dimension of the *Logos* of creation which the ancients call fire, physicists call energy and faith theorists call ongoing creational *metanoia*;
- became Flesh in the height dimension of *Pathos* which the ancients called land, physicists call matter and faith theorists call reconciliatory *koinonia*;
- dwelt among us as the breadth dimension of *Ethos* which ancients called wind, physicists call space, and faith theorists call renewing *diakonia*;
- and we beheld God's glory as the fourth dimension of *Theos* which ancients called sea, physicists call space-time, and faith theorists call the glorious fulfilment of all in all in God's future *basilea*

All four dimensions of God's creation, reconciliation in Christ, renewal through the Spirit and fulfilment in the future while distinct, are interacting states rather than chronological or sequential stages demonstrating a remarkable interpenetrating and mutually reinforcing integral and differential unity.

The *third* perspective revolves around wholesome experiential patterns of faith placing alternating emphasis on faith experience of God, the human self, other human beings and the physical-organic environment. The four-some pattern of faith experience operates as faith, belief, trust and confidence towards God as well as faith, belief, trust and confidence towards oneself as a human being and faith, belief, trust and confidence towards other human beings including one's faith, belief, trust and confidence towards the surrounding natural cosmic world.

In this sense firstly, faith, belief or trust do not have a higher and more important embracing religious position and is not more religious or divine than thinking, feelings, producing, loving, speaking, physical-chemical and bio-evolving processes. Through the circles, loops and dimensions of experience presented in this thesis a separate divine or religious dimension of faith is highly problematic because God is directly involved in every field of experience as the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit (Van Niekerk 2006/7:69). Secondly, though God, one self, other human beings and physical natural world are been simultaneously closely connected and radically different, they are experienced as a four-some pattern of experience within each field, mode and dimension of experience.

The *fourth* perspective revolves around the involvement of the Spirit, not only in and through a faith theoretical perspective of faith, belief, trust and confidence but also philosophically and scientifically through other perspectives such as thought and rationality, feeling and emotions, loving and caring, imagination and fantasy, verbalising and language, bio-evolvement and organics, physicality and matter and chemicalising and energy. Clues, cues and hues about the Spirit's involvement are been hunted for and gathered from diverse literature settings, from the theological, spiritual to the so-called secular and philosophical and from physics to the everyday non-spiritual and a-spiritual packages. Pockets of terms and words, definitions and designations from Capra and Varela to Eddington with the notion of the arrow of time and from Heisenberg to Hawking with uncertainty dynamics and very small particles are the boundaries of where the Spirit of God is acting out as the life-giving and renewing force of reality. The purpose of hunting and gathering of words, concepts, faith notions and modes of emotions as elements of truth from a diverse bulk of literature is an attempt to clarify, explain and to create at least slight accessing and overlapping of people's God-human-and-nature approaches regarding the Spirit of God.

## **12.4 The dance of to-gether-ness and at-other-ness of God, human beings and the universe**

Arrows of time repeatedly pinpoints to time in the mysterious dancing rhythm of the to-gether-ness and at-other-ness of God, human beings and the physical-organic universes. Not one of the threesome is a spectator in the divine, human and cosmic dance. They are rather actors and participants of the theo×anthropo×cosmic dance process. Participatory

hermeneutics and consensual negotiation bring about a multidimensional sense making understanding of the birth of the universe, the mystery of human life and the overwhelming presence of God. Decisive, daring, subversive alternatives of different arrows however, demonstrate knowledge of isolated systems but not the whole of reality. The major task therefore, is how to link these different arrows together in a meaningful way. I argue that reality is complex and multi-faceted. 'Full' reality includes open and closed systems, reversible and irreversible time, order and chaos, chance and permanence, being and becoming, faith and imagination, justice and grace, love and reason, life and death. At stages of instability expressed in randomness and chaos, minute input may direct the initial stages of becoming and thus complete the trajectory of future development of the complete system of the Commonwealth of God.

The dream of the modern human spirit has been to transcend the restrictions of energy, matter, space and time and to find the all-initiating agent of every event, happening and process of energy, matter, space and time. The topic of the study, *Kenosis and Identity: Pneumatological Pointers* is set against the background of the direct involvement of the Spirit of God in all fields of experience in radical, integral and differential ways (Van Niekerk), through a bricolage of organistic identities and loops (Capra and Varela), through increasing randomness of the arrow of time in open systems (Eddington), through order-like regularities in chaotic systems (Lorenz), through the drawing of circles through the opening up of energy, space and time in the certainty of uncertainty positions, circles and orbits (Heisenberg) and through human beings participating in the very small and the very big processes in the human and the cosmic world (Hawking).

If we maintain that experience and reflection go together, and reflection lives by experience, questions of rhythmic circles come to the fore: Is faith solely a human action or response, or; a sole divine action of God who elicits a response from human beings by bestowing faith on human beings, or, is it solely a physical-organic action seen in the light of the overall natural cosmisation processes emerging as a rolling out of these processes? At the stage in which percentages of probability becomes a factor of real possibility and the unknown future peeps around the corner, something new and unexpected may occur in the rhythmic dance of the mysterious togetherness and atotherness of God, human beings and the natural cosmic processes. In the mysterious togetherness and atotherness, multiple reflexive experiential continuums intersect each other. The continuum of <cause...effect> is been intersected by the continuums of <determinism...freedom> and <creative input...unexpected outcomes> in the rhythmic circles of dancing of the Spirit of God.

In such a complex scheme of related questions the participatory reflexion is been carried out within the constructed reflexive space and time duration of the being there-ness (**Dasein**), being thus and thusness (**Sosein**) and the being actualness (**Aktsein**) of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world against the background of the grand acts of God's creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation as ongoing milestones of the meandering processes of the Commonwealth of God. The dynamic dance of togetherness and

atotherness of God, human beings and the natural cosmic world contracts and expands in multidimensional and multiple circles and forms. These circles and forms portray the backdrop of our reflexive participation in incisive analysis and integral synthesis of open and closed systems, reversible and irreversible time arrows, ordered and chaotic loops, chance and permanence settings, being and becoming processes, faith and imaginative experiences, justice and grace contexts, love and reason situations and life and death questions.

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