Chapter 3

Philosophical Theologies in South Africa: Genealogies and Traditions Pre- and Post-1994[1]

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When one begins to explore the available scholarship, one finds insufficient reflection on the category of "philosophical theology" or even "philosophy of religion" as such among South African publications. Apart from a handful of significant figures, thematic engagement with the history and reception of philosophical theology has not been hugely forthcoming. The attempt that follows is simply a small step towards developing something of a reception history within the South African context. My focus will be on the pre-1994 period to set the context for the overall development, but thereafter I go on to put forward a typology of philosophical theologies and some representatives in the post-1994 context.[2]

Philosophy and Theology: Pre-1994 Trajectories

A legitimate query has been raised as to whether there is a sufficiently unique reception of philosophical traditions within South Africa to warrant talk of a *South African* tradition of philosophy.[3] If this observation holds any water, then one question

1 A different version of this chapter also appeared as a section of "Philosophical Theology in South Africa?" *Journal of Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, no.3 (2022): 1-60.

2 In the text that follows, I will be focusing on traditions in which philosophy and theology are made thematic *explicitly* rather than delving into the *implicit* philosophical theologies amongst South African authors – which would be a rather unmanageable task.

3 Coetzee and Roux have stated that there is "no developed regional philosophy in South Africa," insofar as the South African philosophical tradition "has its roots in largely European

that arises is whether philosophical theology in South Africa has enough particularised traction to warrant special treatment. An overview of the philosophical scene in South Africa suggests that the reception history of philosophical traditions has not produced anything equivalent to that evoked by "Anglophone," "Continental" or even "African" philosophy. In broad terms, this judgement seems to have some validity; there is little of a uniquely regional philosophical practice to warrant something like a *South African* philosophical tradition.[4] Almost any intellectual tendency one examines, whether philosophical or theological, is not unique to this regionality. The postcolonial *mélange* of inherited and invented traditions makes any simplistic characterisation of this or that trajectory as being especially "South African" a tendentious exercise. Furthermore, it is also worth pausing to ask what criteria could apply to any philosophical trajectory being classified as regional. What presuppositions are at work in the production of such categories? Pertinent questions have been raised as to whether such philosophical categorisations (e.g., "Western Philosophy") are in fact ideologically innocent at all, and do not betray the limits of a colonial imagination.[5] In other words, how could we judge any intellectual trend as being especially "South African?" To raise this invokes the bedevilment of definitions. Pieter Duvenage's statement that it is "premature to refer to South African philosophical tradition and more prudent to study the history of the institutionalisation of a philosophical

traditions"; see P. H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux, "Preface," in P. H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux (eds.), *Philosophy from Africa: A Text with Readings* (Oxford University Press, 1998), xi.

4 Saul Dubow, however, has argued that there has been distinctive tradition of "South Africanism," linked to figures such as Louis Botha and Jan Smuts, who developed more centrist ideologies of conciliation, moderation, and reconciliation, after the intense histories of interactions between imperialists and colonialists, as well as between the Boers and the British. This tradition did not hold on to power, but it did persist within intellectual and scientific institutions well after the ascent of Nationalist Party and has influence until the present day; see Saul Dubow, *A Commonwealth of Knowledge Science, Sensibility, and White South Africa 1820–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

5 Lucy Allais, "Problematising Western Philosophy as One Part of Africanising the Curriculum." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 35.4 (2016): 537–545.

discourse in South Africa" is probably an accurate summary of where things currently stand.[6]

In the history of South Africa, by and large, one hears less of "philosophical theology" and more of "Christian philosophy," here mainly in its Catholic or Calvinistic guises.[7] "Philosophical theology," as suggested earlier, is largely a production of British and North American discourse, stemming from Lockean traditions of "rational theology" that have minimal reception within the country. As regards style and methodology, philosophical theology tends to draw upon British common-sense philosophy and linguistic analysis (characteristic of Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, and Ludwig Wittgenstein); this movement rose to prominence in the wake of the decline of British Idealism. For various reasons, which I will mention shortly, this tradition did not take root in the faculties of theology or philosophy that hosted the major institutions of theological education. One could say that politics had a big part to play here, especially after the bellicose interactions between the Afrikaner and British in the twentieth century. However, if we turn to something like "Christian philosophy," as distinguished from "philosophical theology," then there is a greater reception to be recounted, even as its influence should not be overstated. I will return to the question of

6 Pieter Duvenage, "Phenomenology in South Africa: An Indirect Encounter with Richard Kearney," in Yolande Steenkamp and Daniël Veldsman (eds.), *Debating Otherness with Richard Kearney: Perspectives from South Africa* (Durbanville: AOSIS, 2018), 68n48.

7 "Christian philosophy" of course may be used as a circumlocution for "philosophical theology". My point here is that the term "philosophical theology" as such does not appear to have significant traction within the South African context, even though it may operate under different names. Moreover, especially in an Anglo-American context, "philosophical theology" is largely identified with "analytic theology" or "analytic philosophy of religion", a trend which does not have as much institutional reception in South Africa. Within a Catholic context, it may be used interchangeably with "philosophy of religion" or "natural theology". However, part of the earlier genealogy (in Chapter One) has suggested that this has not always been the case and that the separation of "natural theology" into a distinct discipline may have had a long-term effect of separating "theology" and "natural theology", pressing the Thomistic *duplex* of theology into a separation – which seems to have *not* been his intention.

whether there is a tradition of "philosophical theology" in South Africa a little later.

Most famously, "Christian philosophy" in South Africa has been associated with the work of Hermann Dooyeweerd and his philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea.[8] Reformational philosophy (RP), in South Africa, has traditionally been associated with the University of the Orange Free State (now the University of the Free State or UFS) in Bloemfontein and the University for Christian Higher Education (now North-West University or NWU) in Potchefstroom. The tradition in Bloemfontein can be traced to the influence of E. A. Venter, while Potchefstroom is most associated with H. G. Stoker.[9] For his part, Dooyeweerd argued that encyclopaedic sciences are always-already grounded within a "religious" posture towards the totality of meaning. Drawing on the Kuyperian tradition of "modal" or "sphere sovereignty," he argued that, within this cosmological perspective, there has developed a hierarchy of interrelated "modal spheres" or "modal aspects" of immanent being that are irreducible to each other, but nonetheless ordered cohesively by law. No modal sphere can be reduced to another, but rather are all orientated towards the origin, goal, and totality of meaning – which for Dooyeweerd is the religious impulse (*sensus divinitatis*). Problems arise when any encyclopaedic science –physics, mathematics, biology, law, or theology – seeks to absolutise itself and reduce other modalities to its own coordinates. In the case of science, this may lead to reductionism, or in the case of philosophy to a production of mutually exclusive philosophies that all seek to conceptualise the whole under one all-inclusive "Philosophy." The result of this tendency is conflict and antinomy, and thus violates the law of non-contradiction. This constitutes, for Dooyeweerd, a rejection of divine law and a failure to acknowledge the religious orientation of all thought towards the absolute. The

8 Herman Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, Vol. I-V (Michigan: Paideia Press, 1984); *In the Twilight of Western Thought: Studies in the Pretended Autonomy of Philosophical Thought* (Michigan: Paideia Press, 2012).

9 For an outline of Reformed philosophy in South Africa, see B. J. van der Walt, "Ad Fontes: Eerste Boustene vir 'n Geskiedenis van die Reformatoriese Filosofie – ook in Suid- Afrika." *Tydskrif vir Christelike Wetenskap* 43, no.3-4 (2007): 217–234.

distinctiveness of a Christian philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea, according to Dooyeweerd, is that it performs a "transcendental critique of thought" and seeks to show how antinomy arises when modalities are not probably ordered within a sphere sovereignty. Moreover, it seeks to transcend previous Christian philosophies by rigorously ordering its foundational assumptions in line with the principles of Christian faith – here, in distinction from Catholic and Scholastic philosophy, which adopted the pagan thought of Plato and Aristotle.[10]

From a Catholic or Neo-Thomistic perspective on "Christian philosophy," Marthinus Versfeld and Augustine Shutte are of course important to mention, being both one-time professors and lecturers in Philosophy at the University of Cape

10 Strong criticism has been directed at Dooyeweerd's system by some in the country. For one thing, they argue that Dooyeweerd was aware of the potential antinomic implications of his own philosophy, something that he progressively tried to address; but his attempts ultimately left many unsatisfied. They argued that in order for his critique of philosophy to be sufficiently transcendental, it needs to portray the religious orientation as general and universal enough to be communicable. However, if this religious teleology can be said to be universally recognised, then why does one need a specifically *Christian* philosophy for the transcendental critique? And if one adopts a specific Christian – or Neo-Calvinistic – posture here, then we have an antinomy and a violation of modal sovereignty, since one particular modality – Christian theology – becomes a cipher for the religious orientation in general, thus undermining the transcendental nature of the critique. For an example of this critique, see A. L. Conradie, *The Neo-Calvinistic Concept of Philosophy: A Study in the Problem of Philosophical Communication* (Natal: The University Press, 1960); Vincent Brümmer, "Dooyeweerd and the Role of Religion in Philosophy," "Dooyeweerd and the Neutrality of a Transcendental Critique," "The Dilemma of a Christian Philosophy" in *Brümmer on Meaning and the Christian Faith* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), 35–64. Other Calvinist philosophers such as H. G. Stoker and D. F. M. Strauss have attempted to modify the position of Dooyeweerd – Stoker by adopting an explicitly theological starting point in the idea of creation (*Skeppingsidee*), while Strauss has developed a non-reductionist account of interconnected modalities as well as a thesis of the irreducibly philosophical foundations of the special sciences. For this, see H.G. Stoker, "Wysbegeerte van die Skeppingsidee," in *Oorspong en rigting: Band II* (Kaapstad: Tafelberg-uitgewers, 1970), 202–330 and D.F.M. Strauss, *Philosophy: The Discipline of Disciplines* (Grand Rapids: Paideia Press, 2009).

Town (UCT). Their extensive work within the field of philosophy from an explicitly Catholic and Christian perspective was deeply influential on a generation of students who passed through UCT. I will return particularly to the work of Shutte later in this essay, since he continued to publish and produce after the democratic transition in the country. For his part, Versfeld, in an early essay, had bemoaned the status of philosophical education in the country, due to what he saw as its largely Protestant character. By this he meant its anthropological pessimism; its dualism of nature and grace; its avoidance of the doctrine of analogy; an over-emphasis on revelation; an intellectual atomism without synthetic vision; and a general tendency towards nationalism.[11] For the Catholic church, as Versfeld reiterates, there is no contradiction between faith and intellect, for faith is "not something repugnant to the natural intelligence but something which dazzles it by the very fullness of its substance, and which on the contrary lures it on by the very wealth of the intelligibles with which it confronts it."[12] However, only God can be the cause of faith, even as reason may "establish those predispositions which God requires from our side, and it can answer those reasonable questionings which God does not require us brutally to override, because He respects too much the free reasonable image of Himself which He has placed in us."[13] However, if we seek a definition of "Christian philosophy" from a Catholic perspective in the pre-1994 period, then one could refer the work of E. A. Ruch, a librarian and professor of Philosophy at Pius XII University College (later the National University of Lesotho).[14] After recounting the history of the term "Christian philosophy," following the historiography of Blondel and Gilson,[15] Ruch comes to the rather deflationary conclusion

11 Marthinus Versfeld, "The Intellectual Apostolate in South Africa." *Blackfriars* 28.328 (July 1947): 305–310.

12 Martin Versfeld, *The Perennial Order* (London: Society of St. Paul/ Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1954), 241.

13 Ibid., 242–243.

14 E. A. Ruch, "The Problem of Christian Philosophy." *Philosophy Today* 6, no.2 (1962): 133–145. This article is based on a paper originally delivered at the Sixth Congress of the Society for the Advancement of Philosophy in South Africa at Potchefstroom in 1961.

15 Both Blondel and Gilson were both responding to the claim made by Émile Bréhier that one could no more talk about "Christian

that our use of the term will depend on our understanding of both the task of philosophy and the meaning of Christianity. Because the definitions of what counts as "philosophy" are diverse and depend on the "operational" consistency that any particular philosophical system adopts and practices, "Christian philosophy" for him will imply any system that shows "a sufficiently intimate and natural connection between Christianity and philosophy."[16]

So, if it is apparent that "Christian philosophy" in some form is present in South Africa, then what about "philosophical theology?" As I have said previously, if the analytic tradition of philosophical theology is clearly predominant within the Anglo-American debate, then the sample of South African theologians who could be classified as practising "philosophical theology" is rather small, at least by this standard. There are significant exceptions to this general trend, such as the work of Vincent Brümmer,[17] James Moulder,[18] and to a lesser extent D. C. S

philosophy" than one could speak of "Christian physics" or "Christian mathematics"; see Émile Bréhier, "Y-a-t-il une philosophie chrétienne?" *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 38, no.2 (1931): 162.

16 Ruch, "The Problem of Christian Philosophy," 145.

17 Vincent Brümmer is probably the most notable philosophical theologian from South Africa. He is credited – much to his irritation – of creating the so-called "Utrecht School" for the philosophy of religion, described by Gerrit Brand as a blend of conceptual analysis and hermeneutics; for this, see Brümmer, "Meanders in My Thinking: A Brief Intellectual Autobiography," 3–27; on "the Utrecht School," see Gerrit Brand, *Speaking of Fabulous Ghost: In Search of Theological Criteria, with Special Relevance to the debate on Salvation in African Christian Theology* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 13–15.

18 James Moulder, a professor of philosophy at Rhodes and Natal, for his part was also a respected philosophical theologian who sought to bring his philosophical and theological acumen to bear on problems pertinent problems then current. In addition to engaging in philosophical analysis of Christological doctrine, he also engaged in philosophical debates regarding conscientious objection and the idea of worship during the time of forced military service under the nationalist government. He eventually went on to be a special assistant to the Vice-Chancellor at UCT and would have had institutional interaction with the likes of Augustine Shutte, Martin Versfeld, and later with Patrick Giddy. From accounts of the period, he was a sought-after speaker and gifted philosopher, and

("Daantjie") Oosthuizen;[19] but even these have not generated

also played a role in the whole "Africanisation" debate regarding institutions of higher learning.

19 Daantjie Oosthuizen studied at Stellenbosch, Vrije Universiteit, and Oxford. He finished his career at Rhodes University, was a particularly outspoken critic of apartheid, and exercised influence on the University Christian Movement, mostly through his popular philosophical lectures that he delivered at gatherings, and as a board member of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa. His career was cut short by his death in 1969, and it remains difficult to judge what kind of influence he would have had if he had lived longer. Nonetheless, his linkage to an historically English institution, and his theologically marginal status within the Dutch Reformed Church, inhibited a wider reception of his style of thinking within that ecclesial body. One could add to this complication the fact that even though he was theologically trained at the Theological Seminary at Stellenbosch and the Vrije Universiteit and came under the influence of notable figures such as B. B. Keet and G. Berkouwer, his work did not focus significantly on theological themes, and so it is questionable whether he can even be categorised as a philosophical theologian. Overall, his influence was felt in a more subterranean fashion amongst writers, politicians, philosophers, and anti-apartheid activists, such as Alan Paton, André Brink, Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert, and Peter Storey. However, even though Oosthuizen's theological contribution is decidedly less than someone like Brümmer, his general contribution was certainly not negligible; Degenaar credits Oosthuizen for introducing analytic philosophy into South Africa which as we have seen was largely absent from the philosophical and theological scene before him; cf. Johann Degenaar, "Oosthuizen, Daniel Charl Stephanus," in *Dictionary of South African Biography* (Human Sciences Research Council, n.d.), 429. This might be an overstatement of the matter since someone like Bert Meyer, seemingly independently of Oosthuizen, had come under the influence of Russell's writings during his stint at Wits University; see Pieter Duvenage, *Afrikaanse filosofie: Perspektiewe en dialoë* (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2016), 59–79. In terms of his philosophical approach, his development underwent a rather radical shift after his stint in Amsterdam and Oxford, leading him from a more Kierkegaardian emphasis in his master's dissertation, towards a more rigorous method of Husserlian phenomenology and philosophical analysis later on. On this, see Andrew Nash, "Dialogue Alone: D. C. S. Oosthuizen's Engagement with Three Philosophical Generations." *African Sociological Review* 9.1 (2005): 62–72. For a sample of his work, one may consult *The Ethics of Illegal Action and Other Essays* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press/ Spro–Cas Publications, 1973); some of these essays had their original form as popular lectures given at gatherings of the University Christian Movement. Here, one may detect something of a combination of conceptual analysis of the problems related to a *Christian* account of subversive and illegal action, in which

enough reception to be classified as a tradition of philosophical theology within the region. But if this is the case, should one then say that "philosophical theology" has little or no trajectory within the South African context? By the standards of what counts as such in the North Atlantic, there is not much to speak of. However, if one considers the sheer historicity of philosophical theology, with its plurality of practices and theoretical programmes, then it appears that any attempt to articulate a stable "essence" of philosophical theology or Christian philosophy remains fraught. For the sake of our task, then, mapping the trajectories of philosophical theology within South Africa will need to place such a reception thoroughly within its historicity, discursive figurations, and variegated receptions. If this plurality of traditions is acknowledged, then it seems that we might be able to claim comparable examples within the theological and philosophical scenes in South Africa. For the sake of this text, then, I will adopt a broader taxonomy in which "philosophical theology" characterises any theological attempt to make "philosophy" or philosophical questions "thematic" for its style and method. Again, any dualism between "philosophy" and "theology" is probably not sustainable from a *theological* vantage point, but there do seem to be enough methodological differences to warrant something like an interrelation-within-distinction. Furthermore, the style of "philosophical theology," while deeply connected to the fields of fundamental theology, systematic theology, and dogmatics, is often concerned with questions that are not the traditional domain of any of these related magisteria – even as it touches on themes that presupposes the deliverances of these disciplines.

For genealogical interest though, it is worth asking why a country like South Africa, which was deeply influenced by colonial intellectual traditions, especially at the formative period of political unification and the establishment of universities, ultimately developed very differently from its imperial metropoles, namely Great Britain – as with the analytical tradition, which went on to dominate what we now

the paradoxes involved in claiming both a universal and a religiously particularised standard for such action, are adjoined to a Kierkegaardian "teleological suspension of the ethical."

call "philosophical theology" in the United Kingdom (e.g., Austin Farrer, Basil Mitchell, Richard Swinburne, etc.). While not being the only factor, it can hardly be denied that there are, at the very least, socio-political reasons for such paucity within the history of South African theology, and philosophical practice more generally.

One general point is that colonial intellectual traditions are received differently within the cultural melting–pot of postcolonial regimes.[20] The transposition of intellectual traditions within coloniality complicates any straightforwardly linear continuation between so-called imperial "centres" and colonial "extremities."[21] This trajectory is reflected in the particularity of South Africa's institutional development, especially within the remit of higher education. The first professorial chairs in philosophy at the major centres of learning in South Africa, in the period preceding and around the time of political unification, were occupied by British Idealists, like R. F. A. Hoernlé at the South African College in Cape Town, Thomas Walker at Victoria College in Stellenbosch, and W. A. Macfayden at Transvaal University College in Pretoria. British Idealists, by and large, tended to support the imperialist cause, and sometimes merged Hegelianism, with its assumption of the development of universal *Geist*, with a belief in the British "civilising mission."[22] Though

20 "…colonial intellectual history is characterised by a particular kind of combined and uneven development" whereby "[e]mergent local traditions…define their own ideas, values and aims very much within the ambit of hegemonious imperialist and other 'foreign' discourses even (and perhaps especially) where they deliberately set themselves off against these"; André Du Toit, "The Problem of Intellectual History in (Post) Colonial Societies: The Case of South Africa." *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 18.2 (1991), 8.

21 Of course, to frame things in such a manner already assumes a Eurocentric and colonial frame of reference.

22 For this history, see Pieter Duvenage, "Is there a South African Philosophical Tradition?" in Daniel Smith et al. (eds.), *Thought and Practice in African Philosophy* (Konrad–Adenauer–Stiftung, 2002), 107–119; Duvenage, *Afrikaanse filosofie*, 1–17; Andrew Nash, *Colonialism and Philosophy: R. F. A Hoernlé in South Africa* (Unpublished M.A. diss., University of Stellenbosch, 1985), 26–72; David Boucher, "'Sane' and 'Insane' Imperialism: British Idealism, New Liberalism and Liberal Imperialism." *History of European Ideas* 44, no. 8 (2018): 1189–1204

the details are certainly more complicated, the reaction to British philosophy amongst Afrikaner philosophers, especially in the wake of a burgeoning nationalism, republicanism, and *volkskapitalisme* (after the Anglo-Boer war and Great Depression) can be viewed as a localised resistance to imperialising aspirations.[23] Such is exemplified, for example, by the pragmatist philosopher Tobie Muller, who refused the Rhodes Scholarship (and also the chair in philosophy at Stellenbosch) to become a minister in Philippolis; as an activist, he also played a significant role in the then-growing Afrikaans language movement.[24] Unlike the British reaction to idealism, which gave way to Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein, Afrikaner philosophy tended towards the Continental traditions of those Dutch and German institutions where students were generally sent to study. These institutions, such as those at Utrecht and the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, were known for theological conservativism and their preferences for Kuyperian traditions of Calvinist philosophy and politics. There are exceptions to these trends, of course, but not enough to make a significant impact on the tendencies of the intellectual environment, when viewed holistically.[25] The Continental tradition was also seen in the so-called "Homeland" universities of Fort Hare, Transkei, and Zululand, and as well as the University of Durban-Westville and the University of the Western Cape (UWC). By and large, these institutions reflected streams prevalent at Stellenbosch University (SU) and the University of Pretoria (UP), even as these tended to produce philosophers and thinkers who were deeply critical of the apartheid regime. Here Adam Small – the enormously influential writer, dramatist and

23 On some of material conditions that lead to Afrikaner nationalism, particularly in the north, see Dan O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism 1934–1948* (Johannesburg: The Ravan Press, 1983).

24 Duvenage, *Afrikaanse filosofi*e, 18–23; Andrew Nash, *The Dialectical Tradition in South Africa* (London: Routledge, 2009), 71–74.

25 Exceptions to this general rule, Oosthuizen and Brümmer went through rather significant philosophical developments after their respective stints at the University of Oxford – both under the influence of Gilbert Ryle; see Vincent Brümmer, "Meanders in My Thinking: A Brief Intellectual Autobiography," in *Brümmer on Meaning and the Christian* Faith, 10. Oosthuizen had contact with Basil Mitchell while in Oxford; cf. Johann Degenaar, "Oosthuizen, Daniel Charl Stephanus," 427–429.

poet – and G. A. Rauche should be mentioned as exemplars of this trajectory.[26]

This is not to say that analytical traditions were totally absent from the country, but they tended to be linked to historically English-language institutions, such as the universities of Cape Town, South Africa (UNISA), Witwatersrand, and Rhodes.[27] However, the major theological centres of study, such as Stellenbosch and Pretoria, tended to reflect more Continental traditions of thought. Since the theological seminaries of the Dutch Reformed Church were located there, the impact of such traditions on the training of ministers and theologians throughout the country was impressive, and has tended to predominate since then. This is due to the fact that the Dutch Reformed Church, historically-speaking, was – for all intents and purposes – the official church (even during British occupation from the nineteenth century onwards), and so the theological debates that won out within the Theological Seminary

26 Adam Small, *An Enquiry into Nicolai Hartmann's Appreciation of Nietzsche's Axiology* (M. diss, University of Cape Town, 1962); G.A. Rauche, *The Philosophy of Actuality.* Monograph No. 1 (Ciskei: The Fort Hare University Press, 1963); *Contemporary Philosophical Alternatives and the Crisis of Truth: A Critical study of Positivism, Existentialism and Marxism* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1970); *The Abdication of Philosophy = The Abdication Of Man (A Critical Study of the Interdependence of Philosophy as Critical Theory and Man as a Free Individual)* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1974); *Selected Philosophical Papers*, edited by T.J.G Louw (Ciskei: The Fort Hare University Press, 1992).

27 But even here there are very notable exceptions: Errol E. Harris, a highly respected metaphysician and scholar of Spinoza and Hegel, was born in Kimberly and studied at Rhodes and Wits, but eventually left the country to take up professorships in Great Britain and the United States. His work has touched on philosophical theology, mainly from within the study of the Western philosophical tradition. Texts relevant to this theme include the following: Errol E. Harris, *Revelation through Reason: Religion in the Light of Science and Philosophy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958); *Atheism and Theism* (New Orleans: Tulane University Press, 1977); *The Problem of Evil* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Publications, 1977); *Cosmos and Anthropos: A Philosophical Interpretation of the Anthropic Cosmological Principle* (New Jersey and London: Humanities Press International, 1991); *Cosmos and Theos: Ethical and Theological Implications of the Anthropic Cosmological Principle* (New Jersey and London: Humanities Press International, 1992).

at Stellenbosch and the Faculty of Theology in Pretoria would have filtered out into the wider theological discourse overall. By contrast, since African and English-speaking churches and their theological faculties, such as those at Rhodes and Fort Hare, did not garner enough social or symbolic capital at the major theological institutions, their contributions did not register to the same degree.[28] This explains, for instance, the lack of African philosophy within university and theological syllabi in the pre-1994 period, and also suggests why it has become more prominent in the period thereafter – as seen in the proliferation of "African philosophy," particularly in UNISA.[29] This is not say that African philosophy and theology did not organically interact outside institutions of higher learning during the period of apartheid, as in the black consciousness movement (linked, of course, to Steve Biko), nor does this mean that there were no exceptions to this general rule.[30] However, the reality is that if one goes looking

28 This follows the language of Bourdieu; Pierre Bourdieu, "The Production of Belief: Contribution to an Economy of Symbolic Goods," in *The Field of Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, ed. Randal Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 74–111. One could also say, adopting the sociological lingo of Randall Collins, that these philosophers and theologians did not have sufficient "networking" capacity within the apartheid milieu to create enough of a s shift within the discourse; see Randall Collins, *The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998), 19–79. However, we should add that any theory of social change is multicausal and contextual; see John A. Hall, "An American Portrait: Critical Reflections on Randall Collins's *The Sociology of Philosophies*." *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 30 No. 2 (June 2000): 202–206.

29 Mabogo More, "Philosophy in South Africa Under and After Apartheid," in Kwasi Wiredu (ed.), *A Companion to African Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 149–160.

30 One should mention here Anton Lembede, the prominent theorist of African nationalism and founder of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), who completed a Masters dissertation on the history of philosophical theology at the University South Africa. However, it remains a debatable question whether the subject matter contained therein would count as "African philosophy"; see Anton Lembede, *The Conception of God as Expounded by or As Emerges from the Writings of the Great Philosophers – From Descartes until the Present Day* (Unpublished M.A. diss., University of South Africa, 1945). Another example is Mongameli Mabona, a Catholic philosopher, theologian, and canon

for texts in which the interactions between African philosophy and theology are made thematic and explicit, one will not find much in the pre-1994 period, or even thereafter. A scan of the most influential philosophical journals during the time broadly confirms this.[31] Moreover, it appears that the most seminal texts in the post-1994 period that bring this to the fore are produced by "white"[32] South Africans, such as Augustine Shutte at UCT,[33] a fact that only seems to reaffirm the racial homogeneity of the philosophical and theological fraternity in the period leading up to 1994.[34]

There is another possible reason why philosophical theology, especially of the analytic variety, did not gather much traction within theological discussion in the apartheid period and immediately thereafter: such discussions could be viewed as inadequate to the pressing concerns of church and society at the time. Amongst those involved in the church's struggle against apartheid, as exhibited in the documents and confessions which characterise this period (e.g. *The Message to the People of South Africa*, *The Kairos Document*, the *Belhar Confession*), abstract reflections on the traditional loci of philosophical theology would have jarred with the mood and urgency of the period. In general, it appears that the concern for a "prophetic" theology in the period of legalised apartheid and "public" theology in the period of socio-political transition and reconstruction does not give equal emphasis to philosophical theology – to metaphysics,

lawyer; Ernst Wolff, *Mongameli Mabona: His Life and Work* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2020).

31 More, "Philosophy in South Africa Under and After Apartheid," 159n1.

32 I use this terminology with the full acknowledgement that such racial classifications (e.g. "white," "black," "coloured," etc.) are complex phenomena and historically dependent on the *long dureé* of apartheid. However, I agree with those, like Willie Jennings, who argue that even though these categories are often pernicious, we cannot simply ignore the historical aftermath of "whiteness" or "blackness" or simplistically escape these histories (via a politics of colour-blindness); see *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

33 More, "Philosophy in South Africa Under and After Apartheid," 158.

34 Cf. More, "Philosophy in South Africa Under and After Apartheid," 150: "Academic philosophy in South Africa has always been the terrain of whites, particularly white males."

logic, phenomenology, semantic analysis, and so on. Figures like Versfeld[35] and Shutte[36] were certainly engaged in philosophical theology during this time, but their influence did not constitute a central force within the theological discussion (their influence was felt elsewhere); moreover, both of them were Catholic thinkers, which already put them at the cultural margins of a majority Protestant ethos, while others, such as Vincent Brümmer, J. Wentzel Van Huyssteen, and E. E. Harris, before and after 1994, spent their careers overseas. Versfeld and Shutte also leant strongly towards more Continental philosophies of religion, and did not engage to the same degree with the analytic tradition. Moreover, this concern regarding the social usefulness of philosophical analysis is reflected not only in theological circles, but also amongst professional philosophers, particularly regarding philosophy's wider applicability to societies, like South Africa, undergoing complex and stratified processes of transformation.[37]

35 For example, see Martin Versfeld, *The Perennial Order* (London: Society of St. Paul/ Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1954); "Talking Metaphysics," in M. Versfeld and R. Meyer, *On Metaphysics* (Pretoria: Unisa, 1966), 7–20. Also see Ernst Wolff et al, *Martin Versfeld: A South African Philosopher In Dark Times* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2021).

36 Cf. Augustine Shutte, "Indwelling, Intersubjectivity and God." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 32, no. 3 (June 1979): 201–216; *Spirituality and Intersubjectivity: A Philosophical Understanding of the Relation between the Spiritual Nature of Persons and Basic Structures of Subjectivity* (PhD diss., Stellenbosch University, 1982); "What Makes Us Persons?" *Modern Theology* 1, no. 1 (1984): 67–79; "A New Argument for the Existence of God." *Modern Theology* 3, no. 2 (1987): 157–177; "The Human Predicament and the Transcendent." *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 68, No. 801 (January 1987): 25–35.

37 This may be exemplified by G.A. Rauche: "[the] question is in what way the abstract character of analytical philosophy has a bearing on South African reality. Its protagonists, who follow the Anglo-Saxon tradition, often subscribe to a Western universalism, both philosophically and politically speaking"; G. A. Rauche, "Philosophy in South Africa (1990)," in *Selected Philosophical Papers*, 458. It is also worth comparing here the reflections of André Du Toit in "Philosophy in a Changing Plural Society." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 1, no. 4 (1982): 154–161. See also Denise Meyerson, "Analytical philosophy and its South African critics." *Social Dynamics* 21, no. 1(1995): 1–32, and the response in André Du Toit, "Clearing the ground: Spurious attacks and genuine issues in the debate about philosophy in a post-colonial society." *Social*

So, with these qualifications in mind: can one develop broad characterisations of how philosophy and philosophical theology was practised at its most influential institutions? The faculties at SU and UP, because of their position within the general ecology of theological training and discussion, were particularly dominant. However, one cannot exclude the theological discussions that were happening in Bloemfontein and Potchefstroom, particularly as regards their strong associations with Reformational and Christian philosophy. During the apartheid period, it was these institutions that exercised the greatest influence on theological and philosophical debates within the country, as well as on what we would now call "philosophical theology." These traditions did not always cohere particularly well, since the broadly hermeneutical tradition, often associated with Stellenbosch, tended to conflict with the scriptural fundamentalism and apartheid theology dominant then, while some Reformational philosophers – with a preference for Neo-Kuyperian or "pseudo-Kuyperian"[38] theories of "sphere sovereignty" or "modal independence" – buttressed Christian nationalism and a racialised policy of separate development in some quarters, as in J. D. Du Toit ("Totius") and H.G. Stoker.[39] In any case, the RP

Dynamics 21, no. 1(1995): 33–70. There is a body of literature, written mostly by external observers, asserting that philosophy departments in South Africa, by and large, tended to reflect the syllabi of American and European universities, with not much consideration of the urgent political questions and *Realpolitik* seemingly required by the context. Analytical philosophers at historically English-language institutions were castigated by the likes of Robert Wolff during the 1980s; see Robert Paul Wolff, "Philosophy in South Africa Today." *The Philosophical Forum* 18.2–3 (1986–1987): 94–104. The role of Afrikaans philosophers as regards intellectual support for apartheid is, of course, well known; Pieter Hugo, "The Politics of Untruth: Afrikaner Academics for Apartheid." *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 25, no.1 (1998): 31–55.

38 For this phrase, see J. C. Pauw, *Anti-Apartheid Theology in the Dutch Reformed Family of Churches: A Depth-Hermeneutical Analysis* (PhD. Diss., Vrije Universiteit, 2009), 131.

39 Saul Dubow, *Apartheid: 1948–1994* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 16–25. One should, however, not overplay the influence of Kuyper, or Calvinism for that matter, in the construction of Afrikaner identity or apartheid; see André Du Toit, "No Chosen People: The Myth of the Calvinist Origins of Afrikaner Nationalism and Racial Ideology," *The American Historical*

and cosmology taught at Potchefstroom and Orange Free State was somewhat different to the philosophy being practised at other Afrikaans-language institutions, even as it furthered its reach through academic journals such as *Koers* and *Philosophia Reformata.* Its actual influence on Afrikaner thinking in general should not be overestimated – as seen in its regional, largely northern predominance – and can be distinguished from the more popular Kuyperianism which came to dominate seminaries in other parts of the country. RP – what Versfeld dubbed "Calvinistic Scholasticism in the Transvaal"[40] – did not gain as much popular acceptance amongst seminarians, and its reception has therefore remained somewhat limited, up to the present day.[41] Moreover, there was continued opposition to RP at UP (e.g., C. K. Oberholzer)

Review, Vol. 88, No. 4 (Oct., 1983): 920–952; Du Toit, "Puritans in Africa? Afrikaner "Calvinism" and Kuyperian Neo–Calvinism in Late Nineteenth–Century South Africa," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Apr., 1985): 209–240; David Bosch, "Afrikaner Civil Religion and the Current South African Crisis," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* (1986): 1–14. On the broad Kuyperian roots of Christian nationalism in South Africa though, see Irving Hexham, *The Irony of Apartheid: The Struggle for National Independence of Afrikaner Calvinism Against British Imperialism* (New York and Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1981); O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme*, 67–77; Charles Bloomberg, *Christian–Nationalism and the Rise of the Afrikaner Broederbond, in South Africa, 1918–48* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1990), 1–30; Richard Elphick, *The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa* (Charlottesville & London: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 238–257. As regards biblical interpretation, see J. A. Loubser, *The Apartheid Bible: A Critical Review of Racial Theology in South Africa* (Pinelands: Maskew Miller Longman, 1987); Johan Kinghorn, "Social Cosmology, Religion and Afrikaner Ethnicity," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 20, no. 3, (September 1994): 393–404; Robert Vosloo, "On Reading Scripture: The Dutch Reformed Church and the Biblical Justification of Apartheid," in *Reforming Memory: Essays on South African Church and Theological History* (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2017), 127–138.

40 Versfeld, "The Intellectual Apostolate in South Africa," 306.

41 Concerning *Koers*, Elphick says: "Esoteric, belligerent, and faintly Dutch in tone, *Koers* did not become a highly influential journal, even among Afrikaner nationalists. The editors complained periodically that their subscriber list was unduly small, given the number and quality of their authors and their ample financial backing"; Elphick, *The Equality of Believers*, 241.

and SU (e.g., Johann Degenaar), which limited its reception in the philosophical faculties there.

Philosophy at UP has also exuded a decidedly Continental flair: one thinks of the Hegelianism of W. Macfayden and J. N. Findlay, the ground-breaking interpreter of Plato, Kant, and Hegel; then there is Oberholzer, a follower of Heidegger,[42] as well as the psychic-monistic trajectory of T. J. Hugo and P. S. Dreyer who focused on historicity.[43] This represents something of the northern tradition within the intellectual topography of the country. Concerning the Western Cape, establishing a fully coherent "tradition" at SU and UWC (as elsewhere) remains tenuous; nonetheless, there are some broad tendencies here. The philosophy department at SU from the mid-twentieth century onwards was influenced by streams of dialectic,[44] existentialist thought in the vein of Kierkegaard and Sartre, as well as hermeneutics – especially after D. C. S. Oosthuizen, Johann Degenaar, Hennie Rossouw, and Bernard Lategan (at the Department of Biblical Studies). Here, figures such as Socrates, Kierkegaard, Bergson, Gadamer, and Ricoeur exhibited influence. All of these Stellenbosch figures were theologically-trained, to varying degrees, due to the strong relationship between the Department of Philosophy and the Theological Seminary, within the Bachelor and Masters of Arts programme, interrelated as it was with the vocational training of the Dutch Reformed Church. UWC reflected similar traditions, since the theological faculty was founded with scholars trained at Stellenbosch – even as

42 Duvenage, *Afrikaanse filosofie*, 24–39.

43 Duvenage, *Afrikaanse filosofie*, 43–58.

44 As Andrew Nash has shown, the dialectical tradition was significant for both the philosophical and theological trends that were developing in Stellenbosch and UWC. From the theological side, the dialectical theology of Karl Barth is certainly a significant development. Nash acknowledges this, suggesting that "dialectic" was introduced to the Theological Seminary via Barth; cf. Nash, *The Dialectical Tradition in South Africa*, 226–227n28. The reception history of Barth in South Africa is too large to indicate in a footnote, but for a sample one may consult Charles Villa-Vicencio (ed.), *On Reading Karl Barth in South Africa* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1988); John De Gruchy, "The reception and relevance of Karl Barth in South Africa Reflections on "doing theology" in South Africa after sixty years in conversation with Barth." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 15, no.1 (2019): 11–28.

they exhibited a more independent and radical stance vis-à-vis apartheid.[45] Someone like J. J. F. Durand, a co-drafter of the *Belhar Confession* and the first Vice-Rector of UWC, is worth mentioning since his second doctoral dissertation at SU evidenced a strong focus on philosophical themes, particularly on Thomistic metaphysics and the concept of dialectics.[46]

The influence of these traditions, however, on theological and ministerial training, especially at places like the Theological Seminary in Stellenbosch, was a fraught one. The Curatorium of the Dutch Reformed Church played a heavy hand in appointments in the Department of Philosophy, and was suspicious of the theological orthodoxy of Degenaar, especially after the synodal reactions to Johannes du Plessis in the 1930s;[47] and so they sought to minimise such influence through a splitting of the Department of Philosophy – giving the lion's share of the philosophical training of ministers to J. F. "Freddie" Kirsten.[48] Du Plessis, a missiologist heavily influenced by the piety tradition of Andrew

45 For a discussion of the history of systematic theology at UWC, see Ernst M. Conradie, two-part article "Reconstructing the History of Doing Theology at UWC – Some Fragmentary Decolonial Perspectives." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 7, no.1 (2021).

46 The influence of dialectical thought at Stellenbosch is thus reaffirmed in Durand's doctoral dissertation, even as it was completed under the supervision of noted apartheid apologist F.J.M. Potgieter; see J.J.F. Durand, *Heilsgeskiedenis en die dialektik van syn en denke: strukturele verbindingslyne tussen Thomas Aquinas en die Teologie sedert die Aufklärung* (Doctoral diss., University of Stellenbosch, 1973). Durand and Dirk Smit carried something of this Barthian tradition to the UWC, where they would spend a large portion of their careers. Along with Smit, he would be one of the key drafters of the Belhar Confession. Smit, for his part, completed a masters dissertation on Jürgen Habermas (under Hennie Rossouw) and went on to complete a doctoral dissertation on Karl Rahner at Stellenbosch; see Dirk J. Smit, *Teologie as antropologie? 'n kritiese beoordeling van die transendentaal-antropologiese teologie van Karl Rahner* (Doctoral diss., University of Stellenbosch, 1979).

47 For this section on Du Plessis, see Nash, *The Dialectical Tradition in South* Africa, 38–54; 74–84; Hennie Rossouw, "Die Du Plessis Saak" (August 2000), Unpublished manuscript (originally presented at the so-called Degenaar Discussion Group). My thanks to Robert Vosloo for giving me access to this text.

48 Anton A. Van Niekerk, "A Department Under Siege: How Philosophy at Stellenbosch was Split in Order to Survive." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 3.1 (2017): 453–462. The Department was split into the Department of Philosophy and the Department of Political

Murray, had argued for a philosophical optimism,[49] an ultimate reconciliation of faith and reason, which emphasised the radical difference between God's self-knowledge and the contingency of our approximations, while maintaining an eschatological harmonisation within the absolute. He opposed any doctrine of "double truth" that implied a final separation of religious and philosophical perspectives, or a dualism between the reasons of the head and the heart. For du Plessis, faith itself is the highest form of reason, one that finds completion in the absolute.[50] He thus expressed a greater openness to scientific developments and historical criticism, and could be classed as relatively progressive as regards the racial question. This caused enormous controversy within the Dutch Reformed Church, which led to vociferous accusations of "liberalism" against du Plessis, eventually resulting in his dismissal from the Theological Seminary.[51] Later on, Kirsten, even as he drew upon the tradition of du Plessis, served as a philosophical compromise (according to Andrew Nash) insofar as he was able to grant sway to an "epistemological flux" associated with historicism, evolution, and Bergsonian vitalism, on the one hand, while appeasing the Reformed Orthodoxy of the Curatorium by maintaining an "anthropological stasis" on the

Philosophy – where Degenaar was placed, along with others like André Du Toit.

49 Retief Müller describes Du Plessis as exhibiting "the optimistic rational intellectualism of nineteenth century academic discourse"; "Sacralisation and the Colonial indigenous Encounter In Southern African Christian History: The Memory and Legacy of Johannes Du Plessis as Case Study." *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 41, no.2 (2015), 85.

50 See Johannes du Plessis, "Geloof en Rede." *Die Soeklig* 11 no. 5 (15 May 1933): 141–151.

51 The charge of heresy was brought against Du Plessis by the Synod of the Orange Free State and led to a highly acrimonious legal battle between Du Plessis, the Stellenbosch *Ring*, and the Curatorium. Du Plessis ultimately won the legal battle, but was shifted out of teaching in the Theological Seminary. The so-called "Du Plessis Affair" became a watershed moment in the DRC, seen as symbolic for the purported struggle between "liberalism" and "Reformed orthodoxy" in the DRC. The movement against Du Plessis mainly came from hard-line Kuyperians and fundamentalists influenced from the Princetonian tradition of Charles Hodge and Benjamin Warfield.

other.[52] He was highly respected, being the first Afrikaner to hold a professorship in philosophy in the country; however, he seemed to keep himself above the fray of controversy, which in terms of ecclesiological politics was more acceptable to the Curatorium. The generation after Kirsten were somewhat more outspoken and tended to be much more openly critical of developments in the Dutch Reformed Church, especially in its granting of intellectual and philosophical support for the architecture of apartheid.

One could see these trends amongst Afrikaner liberals like Degenaar, but they were also prevalent amongst that generation of thinkers who were then transmitting the hermeneutical traditions from Europe into the Department of Philosophy and Ancient Studies. Exemplary here are Hennie Rossouw, a Professor of Philosophy and one-time Vice Rector of SU, and Bernard Lategan, Professor of Biblical Studies, and the founding Director of the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies (STIAS). Their broad focus on the hermeneutical standpoint was applied to biblical texts, but was also taken up regarding broader questions of "understanding" and "meaning," as seen in the tradition of Heidegger, Gadamer, and Ricoeur.[53] They were also involved in thinking through questions of cultural and social transformation in the aftermath of the 1994 elections, with Rossouw having a

52 Nash, *The Dialectical Tradition in South Africa*, 85–90. On this, also see Calvin D. Ullrich, "Philosophy and Theology: Reviews from Stellenbosch – Proposals from Paris?" *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 7, no.1 (2021): 1–28; DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17570/stj.2021.v7n1.t1.

53 See H.K. Rossouw, *Die sin van die lewe* (Kaapstad: Tafelberg-uitgewers, 1981); Bernard Lategan, "History, Historiography, and Reformed Hermeneutics at Stellenbosch: Dealing with a Hermeneutical Deficit and its Consequences," in Wallace M. Alston Jr. and Michael Welker (eds.), *Reformed Theology II: Identity and Ecumenicity – Biblical Interpretation in the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 157–171; Bernard Lategan, "Hermeneutics," in D. N. Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* III (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 149-154; Lategan, "Ricoeur in South Africa: Some Remarks on his Impact beyond Philosophy." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 4, No 2 (2018): 115–134. The hermeneutical philosophy exhibited at Stellenbosch, especially after Rossouw, has also been encapsulated by the likes of Anton van Niekerk – also a trained theologian; cf. Anton van Niekerk, "Understanding Theology as Understanding." *Acta Theologica* Suppl. 14 (2011): 112–127.

focus on higher education,[54] while Lategan brought hermeneutics, reception- and memory-theory into conversation with the questions of values- and identity-formation.[55]

As a side note, however, one should not plot any specific philosophical trajectory in the pre-1994 period along a strictly "right," "centrist," or "left-liberal" axis, as if a movement like RP was inherently conservative and Continental trajectories necessarily critical and progressive. The philosophical traditions are more internally variegated than a simplistic narrative would allow. For instance, Stoker was a strong proponent of apartheid and exhibited influence via the Afrikaner *Broederbond* and the far-right *Ossewabrandwag*; but the Kuyperian tradition was inherently unstable, tending towards both democratic impulses and hyper-traditionalist ones.[56] Strauss has maintained that Dooyeweerdian philosophy was intrinsically opposed to apartheid, insofar as it asserted both a non-reductive pluralism of sphere sovereignty and a refusal to reduce legal structures to the maintenance of the *volk*.[57] The Kuyperian tradition thus offers a contested legacy,

54 H. K. Rossouw, *Universiteit, wetenskap en kultuur : opstelle oor die krisis, uitdagings en geleenthede van die moderne Universiteit* (Kaapstad: Tafelberg-uitgewers, 1993).

55 Bernard C. Lategan, *Hermeneutics and Social Transformation – A Selection from the Essays of Bernard C. Lategan*, ed. Dirk J. Smit (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2015). See especially also the introduction to this volume by Smit. The comments of Rauche might also be pertinent here: "[in] view of South Africa's complex pluralistic society and the socio-political conflict emerging from it, the importance of philosophical hermeneutics and post-structuralist philosophy for the existential problem and the problem of relevance as they arise in South Africa's multi-cultural society becomes understandable"; Rauche, "Philosophy in South Africa (1990)," *Selected Philosophical Papers*, 452.

56 Bloomberg, *Christian-Nationalism and the Rise of the Afrikaner Broederbond*, 4–13.

57 See his interview with Pieter Duvenage in *Afrikaanse filosofie*, esp. 148–161. There were, of course, differing receptions of "pluralism" within South African intellectual traditions. In distinction from the Kuyperian-Calvinist trajectories, there are "liberal" traditions associated with R.F.A Hoernlé that advocated an integrative "pluralism"– here following the account of "positive liberty" of T.H. Green and Bernard Bosanquet. Hoernlé himself was ultimately opposed to separate development, even though he conceded it was the only feasible option under the white minority government of the time. Somewhat differently, though drawing on a similar tradition, A. H. Murray, a Professor of Philosophy at UCT, under

being used by both apartheid theologians like F.G. Badenhorst and F. J. M. Potgieter as well as anti-apartheid theologians such as B. B. ("Bennie") Keet, C. F. B ("Beyers") Naudé, J. J. F. ("Jaap") Durand, and A. A. Boesak, figures who came under the sway of Herman Bavinck.[58] For apartheid apologists, by and large, the deployment of philosophical and theological traditions for the justification of racial segregation came as retroactive justification for the already-existing separate development; these were themselves the outgrowth, amongst others, of setter colonialism, slavery, white trusteeship and paternalism, indirect rule, and "racial pragmatism." Other factors include the DRC's polities of segregated worship and missional theology, as well as *volkskapitalisme*, racism, along with RP, and especially its concept of "creational orders" deduced from the positing of racial difference. This variety of creation theology was adopted by some (like Stoker and Potgieter) as a *post factum* theologisation of white supremacy and separatism.[59] Analogously, positivism, as disseminated in the fields of anthropology, sociology, education,

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the influence of Jacobus De Mist, merged "plural liberalism" with support for a modified apartheid. See R.F.A Hoernlé, *South African Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit* (South Africa: Lovedale Press, 1939); A.H. Murray, *The Political Philosophy of J.A. De Mist: A Study in Political Pluralism* (Cape Town: HAUM, 1958). On De Mist, see David Johnson, "De Mist, Race and Nation." *Alternation* 5, no.1 (1998): 85-97; on Hoernlé, see William Sweet, "R.F.A. Hoernlé and Idealist Liberalism in South Africa." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 29, no. 2 (2010): 178-194. On Murray, see Sweet, "Philosophy under Apartheid," in Jonathan Allen Lavery, Louis Groarke, William Sweet (eds.), *Ideas Under Fire: Historical Studies of Philosophy and Science in Adversity* (Madison & Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson, 2013), 251-270.

58 See George Harinck, "'Wipe Out Lines of Division (Not Distinctions)': Bennie Keet, Neo-Calvinism and the Struggle against Apartheid". *Journal of Reformed Theology* 11 (2017): 81–98.

59 Indeed, this appears to be the tendency of apartheid theology throughout, at least since the infamous *Acta Synodi* of 1857 which formalised the already-existing practice of separate worship for black, white, and so-called "coloured" congregations in the DRC. Kuyper-inspired dialectics of common and special grace, diversely actualised within different national and racial groupings, along with missional theory of *Volkchristianiesrung* (e.g., Gustav Warneck), were used for a theological rationalisation of already-existing, racialised separate development, particularly after the contributions of G. B. A. Gerdener and his leadership of the Federal Missions Council; see Piet Naudé, "From Pluralism to Ideology:

and economics, traceable to traditions of European liberalism, was deployed by "racial pragmatists" such as H.F. Verwoerd who himself came under the influence of John Dewey as well as American traditions of sociology and philanthropy (exemplified by the Carnegie Commission's study on "poor whiteism"); these sciences were in turn appropriated for the knowledge production and social control of the indigenous population.[60] Something similar could be said for the phenomenological tradition, which has both a right-wing and left-wing reception within the country (as elsewhere). In South Africa, phenomenology was used to buttress "Fundamental Pedagogics" (*Fundamentiele Pedagogie*) at places like Potchefstroom, in line with the National Party's plan of Christian National Education; it commandeered the Husserlian language of *Lebenswelt* and *Weltanschauung* towards apartheid policies of racial difference and separation.[61] Even African

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The Roots of Apartheid Theology in Abraham Kuyper, Gustav Warneck and Theological Pietism." *Scriptura* 88 (2005): 161–173.

60 In this light, one could read apartheid policies as developing, at least partially, out of a combination of the Victorian-styled bourgeois and colonialist liberalism of the Cape, with its trajectory towards a universal "civilising" mission, with more pluralist and positivist view of cultural and economic development, which grew out of the urban and industrial centres of the northern provinces; on this, see C. J. Allsobrook, "A Genealogy of South African Positivism," in P. Vale, L. Hamilton, & E. Prinsloo (eds), *Intellectual Traditions in South Africa*: *Ideas, Individuals and Institutions* (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2014), 95–118. Indeed, Hermann Giliomee argues that apartheid originated amongst the Afrikaner intelligentsia of the Cape (e.g., D.F. Malan), who were comparatively more "liberal" than their northern counterparts. Figures like Malan had little taste for the neo-Calvinist trajectory found among the "Doppers" (members of the more strictly conservative Gereformeerde Kerk), such as Stoker. Overall, the actual influence of the *Broederbond* on the genesis of apartheid was tenuous. By contrast, the liberal nationalism of the Afrikaner poet N.P. Van Wyk Louw was more influential; see Hermann Giliomee, "The Making of the Apartheid Plan, 1929-1948." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29, No. 2 (2003): 373-392.

61 More, "Philosophy in South Africa Under and After Apartheid," 153–154. The phenomenological influence can be seen from one of the foundational texts of fundamental pedagogics, namely C.K. Oberholzer's *Inleiding in die Prinsipiële Opvoedkunde* (J.J. Moreau & kie, Pretoria, 1954). On the philosophical status of fundamental pedagogics, see D. B. Margetson, "Pedagogics in South Africa: The Mystification Of Education?" *Philosophical Papers,* 6 no. 1 (1977): 31–56.

philosophy, as summarised by John Mbiti, could be exapted by thinkers like F. J. Engelbrecht to justify racial separation on the basis of supposedly incommensurable worldviews.[62] In a strikingly different fashion, the hermeneutical tradition of Heidegger and Gadamer was also taken up at Stellenbosch (especially after Hennie Rossouw[63]) as a mode of apartheid-critique, particularly regarding its scriptural exegesis.[64]

What, then, have I been saying so far? I have argued that there is little of a coherent "philosophical tradition" within South Africa that warrants talking about something like a unified tradition of philosophical theology – analytic or otherwise. What one has is a disparate array of approaches that seek to relate philosophy and theology in accordance with some generalised approach that may be broadly categorised as Continental, analytical, African, or some variation of Christian philosophy, whether this be Catholic or Calvinist in orientation. Moreover, I have argued that what usually goes by the name of "philosophical theology" in the northern hemisphere does not find wide reception within the South African context. Philosophical theology in Europe and North America, as we have seen, is usually associated with the conceptual clarification of Christian doctrine, or (amongst Catholics) in a modern deployment of Thomistic philosophy. However, with some exceptions (e.g., Brümmer, Shutte, Moulder), there does not appear to be a sufficient institutionalisation of analytical philosophy of religion to suggest that it has been taken up (or will be) as a significant

62 More, "Philosophy in South Africa Under and After Apartheid," 155.

63 Particularly in the wake of his highly influential and learned dissertation at the Vrije Universiteit, entitled *Klaarheid en interpretasie: enkele problemhistoriese gesigspunte in verband met die leer van die duidelikheid van die Heilige Skrif* (Amsterdam: Jacob Van Campen N.V., 1963).

64 By and large, it is worth mentioning here that those few theologians and philosophers who were trained in the analytic method, like Brümmer, Moulder, and Oosthuizen, were mostly critical of the theological developments in the DRC; however, they were too marginal to create an institutionalisation of such philosophical theology, probably due to several factors, including Brümmer's decades-long career at Utrecht, Moulder's outsider position in the theological mainstream, and Oosthuizen's move to Rhodes – combined with his premature death.

locus within the country. The paucity of professorial chairs in philosophical theology or the philosophy of religion only seems to confirm this fact. Philosophical theology, if practised, is usually taken up within the Departments of Systematic Theology within universities. However, if one broadens one's categories of philosophical theology to include a wide array of approaches that include some kind of thematic correlation of theology and philosophy, then one could say legitimately that there are enough practitioners, in pre-1994 and post-1994 period, to justify a special treatment.

Typologies of Post-1994 Approaches

With the above in mind then,[65] post-1994, it seems that the main traditions that we have to deal with are: (1) *Continental* thought, and more generally what could be classified under *Continental* philosophy of religion (CPR). This tradition, with its concern for hermeneutics, phenomenology, deconstruction, and so on, is by far the most dominant voice. (2) We will also have to address *Reformational* philosophy, particularly in the work of D. F. M. Strauss, which in recent times has been connected to the philosophy departments at NWU and UFS. (3) One will also have to talk about *analytical* philosophy of religion (APR), even though its reception is limited. Here, Vincent Brümmer will feature prominently as the most notable South African exponent of this tradition, but we will also allude to the work of others. However, notably absent in this genealogy is the presence of African philosophy, which (as we have mentioned earlier) has gathered momentum post-1994. It therefore seems pertinent to include accounts of what one could call an (4) *African philosophical theology* in the post-1994 period (APT).[66] Here, Augustine Shutte, Gerrit Brand, and Patrick Giddy will be discussed as exemplars

65 Here concurring with Duvenage, *Afrikaanse filosofie*, ii.

66 There has been some critical reception of Duvenage's book, precisely on this question of the relation between "Afrikaans" and "African" philosophy; see Dirk Louw, "The Phenomenon of Philosophy in Afrikaans: On Pieter Duvenage's *Afrikaanse filosofie: Perspektiewe en dialoë*." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 4.2 (2018): 777–797.

of a philosophical theology that seeks to take seriously the contributions of African thinkers and theologians.

Taking these typologies into account, I will move on to a more substantive treatment of the reception of philosophical theology in the post-1994 period.

Continental Philosophy of Religion

Beginning with the most disparate and wide-ranging of the South African traditions, I will start with CPR. While not exclusively located at such institutions, as regards the cultural production of *theology* it seems feasible to centre our discussion on SU and UP when talking about this specific tradition, before moving on to some others. Within the tradition of CPR, one may mention a few broadly representative figures who studied under and drew upon the legacy of Rossouw, Degenaar, and Lategan. The first that comes to mind is J. Wentzel Van Huyssteen, the James I. McCord Professor of Theology and Science at Princeton Theological Seminary (1992–2014); he is especially well-known for his juxtaposition of post-Kuhnian philosophies of science with systematic theology.[67] Van Huyssteen develops an argumentative and interdisciplinary theology, in a postfoundationalist mode, postulating the linguistic and cultural mediation of religious experience and the necessity of modelling and metaphor construction within both theological and scientific paradigms.[68] Hereby, Van Huyssteen moves towards an emphasis on how

67 J. Wentzel Van Huyssteen, *Theology and the Justification of Faith: Constructing Theories in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989); cf. *Essays in Postfoundationalist Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 105–123.

68 *Essays in Postfoundationalist Theology*, 11–52; 124–161. Other South African theologians who have evidenced a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary theology, under the influence of Van Huyssteen, include Ernst Conradie, Klaus Nürnberger, Cornel Du Toit, and Danie Veldsman. Of course, one also cannot forget the enormously influential work of George Ellis from UCT, and (in particular) his seminal text (co-authored with Nancy Murphy) entitled *On the Moral Nature of the Universe: Theology, Cosmology, and Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996). For more on this in general, see Ernst M. Conradie and Cornel W. du Toit, "Knowledge, Values, And Beliefs in the South African Context since 1948: An Overview." *Zygon*, vol. 50, no. 2 (June 2015): 455–479.

understanding and experimentation is mediated through human subjectivity and language, without thereby denying access to reality – hence his preference for a weaker form of "critical realism" that resists "strong forms of justification" outside of "the way of life" in which first-order faith commitments are contextually placed.[69] Metaphor construction in religion and science undermines a strictly referential understanding of language, and therefore moves beyond any direct or naïve realism. However, religious and faith commitments remain open to interpersonal and interdisciplinary criticism, thereby resisting a trajectory of irrationalism and incommensurability of discourses – as in some postmodern theory and narrative theologies. In this sense, he emphasises both "contextuality" and "transversality," that is, the situated and embodied placement of rationality, as well as focusing on the discovery of interdisciplinary criteria and "approximate truth" between distinct traditions.[70] For him, any criteria for theological rationality must aspire to realism and display a capacity for contextual and theoretical problem-solving, as well as evidencing constructive and progressive advancements in this regard. His major research in recent times has been in theological and scientific theories around human personhood and the evolutionary origins of rationality and human uniqueness, chiefly exemplified in his Gifford Lectures.[71] His later development has tended to focus more on pragmatic methods of problem-solving (after Nicholas Rescher); hereby, religious explanations and justifications aspire to an ideal of "maximally solving and meaningfully integrating problematic data" within "mankind's experiences of reality"[72]; this occurs within a broad pragmatism that acknowledges the different domains of rationality – the cognitive, the evaluative, and the pragmatic – and combines this with a theoretical argumentation that invests itself in real-world

69 *Essays in Postfoundationalist Theology*, 53–72.
70 *Essays in Postfoundationalist Theology*, 165–169; On transversality, see Calvin O. Schrag, "Transversal Rationality," in Timothy Stapleton (ed.), *The Question of Hermeneutics: Essays in Honor of Joseph J. Kocke*lmans (Dordrecht: Springer, 1994), 61–78.
71 Published as *Alone in the world? Human Uniqueness in Science and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).
72 *Theology and the Justification of Faith*, 95.

application, thus requiring the gradual development of epistemic skill and judgement.[73]

W. L. ("Willie") Van der Merwe, a Professor of Philosophy at SU (1998–2008), and later Professor of Philosophy of Religion at the Vrijie Universiteit (2008–) is also worthy of mention. Van der Merwe's method is summarised in an inaugural lecture.[74] The Stellenbosch tradition is present via a proposal of a "cultural hermeneutics" ("*kultuurhermeneutiek*") that exists within faith and culture, theology and philosophy. Van der Merwe here places both philosophy and theology within the question of the meaning of Being, the sense of the Being of all beings ("*die sin-van-die-Syn van alle syndes*"). Echoing Aquinas, he conceives philosophy as an infinite orientation towards "ultimate significance," on the one side, while theology, on the other, commences from a presupposition of faith, seeking to reflect upon the diverse traditions in which this is configured. Like Gadamer, faith is conceived as a "living tradition" that continues to give meaning ("*singewing*") to believers, since it is only through the particularity of traditions that significance is made to "appear." The identity of traditions is always performed and retold differently, within a dialectic of a future-oriented identity that is continually "deferred" ("'*n na-die-toekoms-uitgestelde identiteit en/of 'n uit-die-toekoms-komende identiteit*"). Included here is the way that the Christian faith has been disseminated in various "cultural incarnations" within a postsecular milieu, offering an incentive for a philosophy of religion as cultural

73 See J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, *The Shaping of Rationality: Toward Interdisciplinarity in Theology and Science* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999). For an account of the development of Van Huyssteen's thinking, see Kenneth A. Reynout, "The Evolution of van Huyssteen's Model of Rationality," in F. LeRon Shults (ed.), *The Evolution of Rationality: Interdisciplinary Essays in Honor of J. Wentzel Van Huyssteen* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 1–16; Niels Henrik Gregersen, "J. Wentzel van Huyssteen: Exploring Venues for an Interdisciplinary Theology." *Theology Today* 72, no. 2 (2015):141-159.

74 "Tussen Jerusalem en Athene: Die christelike geloof in die hedendaagse kultuur." *LitNet Akademies* (8 October, 2009); accessed from https://www.litnet.co.za/tussen-jerusalem-en-athene-die-christelike-geloof-in-die-hedendaagse/, 25 October 2021.

hermeneutics ("*kultuurhermeneutiese godsdiensfilosofie*"). These "incarnations" of faith within contemporary society create a legitimate sphere of enquiry into the manner in which Christian faith continues to manifest and inform aspects of postsecularity – and here especially within the European context. However, such "cultural incarnations" need to be grammatically qualified by an "eschatology of transcendence" that resists any "immanentization of the transcendent"; such resistance is rendered tangible and legible for Van der Merwe in what he calls "a surplus of sense," a "givenness" that exceeds every "given" – here adopting Marion's account of saturated phenomena. It is within this dialectic between incarnation and eschatology that the relationship between philosophy and theology finds its ultimate ground for Van der Merwe.

Anné Verhoef, a Professor of Philosophy at NWU, has penned one of the more programmatic and representative recent texts on CPR in South Africa. He has proposed this tradition as a corrective to what he sees as the overly metaphysical, ontotheological tendencies of theology in South Africa.[75] Echoing a philosophical mood that is present at places like SU and UP,[76] Verhoef believes that CPR may provide a corrective to

75 "The Relevance of Continental Philosophy of Religion for Theology in Contemporary South Africa." *Acta Theologica* 37, no. 2 (2017):168–187.

76 One can reference here the well-received visit of Richard Kearney to both the faculties of theology at Stellenbosch and Pretoria, and the subsequent publication that stems from this visit; see Yolande Steenkamp and Daniël Veldsman (eds.), *Debating Otherness with Richard Kearney: Perspectives from South Africa* (Durbanville: AOSIS, 2018). Kearney's reception among younger scholars is especially noticeable in this volume, and in some postgraduate work completed at these faculties; see Helgard M. Pretorius, *Theology at The Limit? An investigation of Richard Kearney's philosophical hermeneutics in search of a responsible theological hermeneutic* (MTh diss., University of Stellenbosch, 2015); Yolande Steenkamp, *Post-metaphysical God-talk and its implications for Christian theology: Sin and salvation in view of Richard Kearney's God Who May Be* (PhD diss., University of Pretoria, 2016); Steenkamp, "Of poetics and possibility: Richard Kearney's post-metaphysical God." *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies* 73.3 (2017), a4689. https://doi.org/ 10.4102/hts.v73i3.4689. One should also mention reception of figures of Jean-Luc Nancy and John Caputo as well; Schalk H. Gerber, *Towards a Politics of Love: The Question of Transcendence*

metaphysics, particularly within Reformed traditions. Alluding to Heidegger's well-known critique of metaphysics,[77] Verhoef argues that ontotheology construes God as a "transcendental signifier," a *causa sui*, that gives "a logical structure" to being, while forgetting the difference between Being and beings, the uncreated and the created, thereby reducing the God of revelation to the God of the philosophers.[78] Hereby, the otherness and transcendence of God is reduced to a causal schema *within* finite being. Philosophy and metaphysics thereby predetermine how the God of revelation may appear. Verhoef, however, appears not so much to be opposing metaphysics per se, since any God of revelation should imply transcendence of some sort; but he does suggest that CPR can provide a helpful corrective to metaphysics. Moreover, under the sway of postfoundationalism, Verhoef also argues against any ghettoising drift towards "particularism" and "postmodern fideism," which is why he is not opposed to the search for something like metaphysical truth (with all the due qualifications, customary of CPR).[79]

At UP, a recent contributor to CPR is Johann-Albrecht Meylahn – a Lutheran minister and one-time Professor of Practical Theology at UP, and now at the Evangelische Hochschule

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as Transimmanence in the Thought of Jean-Luc Nancy (MTh diss., University of Pretoria, 2016); Calvin D. Ullrich, *Sovereignty and Event: The Political in John D. Caputo's Radical Theology* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021), an award-winning book based on a PhD dissertation originally completed at the University of Stellenbosch in 2019.

77 Martin Heidegger, "The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics," in *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Staumbach (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 42–74.

78 Verhoef, "The Relevance of Continental Philosophy of Religion," 174.

79 "Theology should guard against becoming so contextualised that it loses its metaphysical mooring"; nonetheless, he still insists that theology cannot be "pure metaphysics" either, and certainly not a theological nostalgia: for "a coherent metaphysical answer cannot be a move back to premodern fundamentalism, and it cannot be an uncritical move towards a new metanarrative." Rather, such a "theology – if it takes the criticism of metaphysics seriously – can give answers that take account of its constant need to question itself. In this way, theology remains an ongoing and open-ended task" (Verhoef, "The Relevance of Continental Philosophy of Religion," 182.)

Dresden. Initially trained in practical theology at UP,[80] Meylahn went on to complete a second doctorate in philosophy of religion at the Vrije Universiteit.[81] His early work exhibits an interest in Continental and critical theory, including the postfoundationalist approach of Van Huyssteen and the work of Heidegger and Derrida;[82] but in more recent times this has become much more explicit in his articulation of a "postmetaphysical" style. This approach places metaphysics *within* and *after* the linguistic turn, in which metaphysics is always-and-already *in-scripted*, always textually situated within an *archi-writing.* Moreover, through a reception of the "non-standard philosophy" of François Laruelle, Meylahn has proposed a postmetaphysical "Christo~~logy~~," a revisioned *theologia crucis* that seeks to cross out or "crucify" every transcendent logos in the name of an immanent and kenotically-inspired practice of theology.[83]

Several of the thinkers mentioned above offer revisionist accounts, commandeering postmodern theory for a re-imagining of theological loci. However, it is also worth alluding to a few philosophers who are similarly influenced by these trajectories, but who nonetheless seek a theological orthodoxy within this new philosophical context. For example, Callum Scott (a Professor at UNISA) proposes a renewed Thomistic natural philosophy, advocating for a reconciliation of metaphysics and science within a generalised *scientia* and clarified realism – based on Aquinas's concept of adequation between knower and known-thing – in distinction from post-Kantian and scientistic epistemologies

80 *Towards a Narrative Theological Orientation in a Global Village from a Postmodern Urban South African Perspective* (PhD diss., University of Pretoria, 2003).

81 *The Limits and Possibilities of Postmetaphysical God-talk: A Conversation between Heidegger, Levinas and Derrida* (Leuven: Peeters, 2013).

82 Cf. Johann-Albrecht Meylahn, "Postfoundationalism, Deconstruction and the Hope that Motivates Research in Practical Theology." *HTS Theological Studies* 62.3 (2006): 983–999.

83 "Postfoundational Practical Theology as Public Christo~~logy~~." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 35, no. 2 (2014): http://dx.doi. org/10.4102/ve.v35i2.875. Also see *Trans-Fictional Praxis: A Christ-Poiesis of Imagining Non-Colonial Worlds Emerging From the Shadows of Global Villages* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2019); *[Call], Responding and the Worlds Inbetween: Doing (non) Philosophy in a Time of Democratic Materialism* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2021).

(e.g., positivism, hyper-constructivism, naïve realism). Opposing scientistic expansionism, he places the empirical sciences within the limited order of the material world, and thus as simply one path within the economy of knowledge. Echoes with RP are probably not far off here: precisely because the metaphysical cannot be reduced to the empirical, or secondary causality to primary causality, he argues that the scope of empirical science cannot be coterminous with the totality of knowable things or the Being of beings.[84] Scott's retrieval of Aquinas echoes attempts by some other South African scholars to appropriate the resources of traditional and orthodox Christianity for philosophical purposes. Jacobus Erasmus's attempt to articulate and defend a modern form of the *kalām* argument appears to cohere with this tradition.[85] But there are others too: from diverse backgrounds and exhibiting distinct philosophical projects, they have drawn upon movements like Radical Orthodoxy for South African questions. One thinks here of Danie Goosen, formerly from UNISA but now head of Akademia, who in recent times – in distinction from his earlier leanings towards poststructuralism – has sought to reclaim a more traditional metaphysics to articulate an alternative to contemporary nihilism; he puts forward a communitarianism that aims to bypass abstract individualism or a homogenising spatiality of modernity through an emphasis on the particularity of place. This is mainly directed towards the political dilemma of the Afrikaner within the post-apartheid state.[86] Johann Rossouw,

84 Callum D. Scott, "Fides et Ratio: Science and Faith in Complement." *Phronimon* 11, no. 2 (2010): 49–67; *A Thomistic Exploration of the Unity of Truth in the Science and Religion Dialogue: Returning to the Oneness of the Human Experience of Reality* (PhD diss., University of Pretoria, 2014); "Primary Causality: In Defence of the Metaphysical Rationality of Faith in God as Creator." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 36, no.1 (2015): http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ ve.v36i1.1377; "The Frontiers of Empirical Science: A Thomist-inspired Critique of Scientism." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 72, no. 3 (2016): http://dx.doi. org/10.4102/hts.v72i3.3180; "Saint Thomas Aquinas' Ontological Epistemology as Clarified Realism: The Relating of Subject to Object for Ontological Knowledge." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 35, no. 3 (2016): 249–260.

85 *The Kalām Cosmological Argument: A Reassessment* (Cham: Springer, 2018).

86 Danie Goosen, *Die nihilisme: notas oor ons tyd* (PRAAG, 2007); *Oor gemeenskap en plek: Anderkant die onbehae* (Pretoria: FAK, 2015);

a Professor of Philosophy at UFS and an Orthodox priest, has put forward a comparable vision via a prioritisation of the liturgical ordering of time and space, combined with a theory of technological mediation (here following Bernard Stiegler).[87] Others influenced by Radical Orthodoxy include Jaco Kruger,[88] a Professor of Philosophy at St. Augustine's College, and Duncan Reyburn,[89] a Professor of Visual Arts at UP, both of whom have decidedly theological inclinations. One might also mention the work of Wynand De Beer, a convert to Russian Orthodoxy, who has expressed a significant interest in reclaiming an ancient and patristic metaphysics for understanding issues of evolutionary science and politics from a distinctly anti-modernist trajectory.[90]

Reformational Philosophy

The reception of RP has not been as extensive as one would expect. Its epicentres in South Africa have rather consistently been UFS in Bloemfontein and NWU in Potchefstroom. *Koers*, a publication heavily influenced by RP, continues to be published. By far the most outstanding representative of this tradition is D.F.M Strauss, an award-winning philosopher who has spent decades promoting and interpreting the work of Dooyeweerd within the country and abroad – being the general editor of *The Collected Works of Herman Dooyeweerd* (published by Paideia Press in Michigan) and penning

"Tradition, Modernity, and Apartheid." *Acta Theologica* Suppl. 25 (2017): 73–93.

87 Johann Rossouw, "The Politics of Liturgy Between Tradition and Modernity in South Africa." *Acta Theologica* Suppl. 25 (2017):111–125; "Bernard Stiegler's Theology of Writing and the Disorientation of Western Modernity." *Telos* 185 (Winter 2018): 149–64.

88 For instance, see Jaco Kruger, "Reassembling and Remembering – The Politics Of Reconciliation In South Africa." *Acta Theologica* Suppl. 25 (2017): 94–110; "Still searching for the pineal gland? Reading the Ricoeur-Changeux debate in terms of Meillassoux's critique of correlationism." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 4.2 (2018): 95–114

89 Duncan Reyburn, *Seeing Things As They Are: G. K. Chesterton and the Drama of Meaning* (Eugene: Cascade, 2016).

90 Wynand De Beer, *From Logos to Bios: Evolutionary Theory in Light of Plato, Aristotle, and Neoplatonism* (Brooklyn: Angelico Press, 2018); *Reality: From Metaphysics to Metapolitics* (Eugene: Resource Publications, 2019). These three latter figures were all doctoral students of Danie Goosen.

several works in constructive philosophy that develop a "non-reductionist ontology."[91]

For him, non-reductionist ontology implies a *sphere-sovereignty* grounded in the creational order of a distinction between God and beings, on the one side, and the differences, relations, and modal aspects existing between all beings on the other – what RP theorises as *inter-modal coherence, sphere-universality* or *enkapsis*. Strauss's philosophy is characterised by a consistent attempt to show how antinomies arise in thought when this rigour of conceptual distinctions is not adhered to, whereby different orders of being are confused or collapsed together, thus undermining the given diversity and lawfulness of being itself. However, neither should these spheres be separated dualistically since their interconnection also implies analogical *retrocipation* and *anticipation* between modal aspects. For him, Dooyweerdian thought does not imply a division of life into distinct spheres, but rather focuses on *how* the totality of the lifeworld is refracted ontically within any particular modal aspect (here echoing Leibniz). Modal aspects are not to be reduced to each other, but neither are they to be dualistically conceived. For instance, the lifeworld may become the subject of biological, scientific, or sociological research, which implies all the techniques and skills required to carry out such research. Such research takes place *within* these specific spheres of theoretical and scientific inquiry, in which their scientific objects are called modal aspects. But when one moves by reflective abstraction onto something like the philosophy or history of any of those modal aspects, then one has proceeded onto a distinct modal sphere of historical or philosophical study that is neither reducible *nor* separable from its object of study.

Following RP, his thought aims to be a consistently *Christian* philosophy by orientating its *a priori* assumptions towards a theological metanarrative of creation, fall, and redemption, and thereby showing how every encyclopaedic science is properly understood when it is situated within such a context. For example, he is critical of what he calls "theo-ontology" in

91 His magnum opus remains *Philosophy: The Discipline of Disciplines* (Grand Rapids: Paideia Press, 2009).

which modal properties (e.g., time, space, and movement) are conceptually abstracted from the existing finite and created order, analogically attributed to God, and then duplicated once more in the natural world, as being creatively derived from God. There is a circularity here that he finds worrying, since it carries with it the suspicion of anthropomorphic projection. In an interesting fashion, comparable with post-Heideggerian commentators on the history of metaphysics, Strauss is critical of someone like Aquinas because, he argues, the Angelic Doctor presupposed a working, aprioristic account of "Being" which then in turn is applied to God-in-himself. However, quite differently to other practitioners of CPR, Strauss is not particularly fond of negative theology insofar as it might act as a corrective to "theo-ontology" since (according to him) it appears to go against the plethora of more "positive" usage of images and metaphors for God found in the Bible. However, Strauss is fully aware that any speech about God requires philosophical terminology or language drawn from the created world. This is the only language we have to work with. Nonetheless, such philosophy needs to be reflective of its own presuppositions, and properly ordered to Christian teaching in order for it to be theologically serviceable.[92] It is also worth adding that in recent times Strauss has also shown how he sees RP as an alternative account to something like Radical Orthodoxy. For, whereas Milbank seeks to order philosophy *within* the theological, so that theology supplements and completes philosophy, Strauss proposes that the modal aspect of theology *already* is reflectively determined by a philosophical gesture, since to conceptualise such a modal aspect, and its ordering within the encyclopaedia of knowledge, is already to make a philosophical decision.[93]

As mentioned, there is a tradition of RP linked to NWU and journals like *Koers*, and so by referencing Strauss I am by no means saying that he is representative of all practitioners of RP – or that his proposals are uncontroversial within the broader RP community. However, I have selected him because of the

92 D.F.M. Strauss, "Is it Possible to Do Theology without Philosophical Presuppositions?" *Acta Theologica* 22, no. 1 (2002): 146–164.

93 See "Theology and Philosophy within Radical Orthodoxy (Milbank) and Reformational Philosophy (Dooyeweerd)." *Acta Theologica* 35, no.1 (2015): 201–222.

persistence and expansiveness of his scholarship on RP, and because of his seniority and general philosophical sophistication.

Analytic philosophy of religion

Vincent Brümmer was a Professor of Philosophy of Religion at the University of Utrecht from 1967 until his retirement in 1997. He is probably the most significant philosophical theologian to have emerged from South Africa in the twentieth century. He is particularly associated with the tradition of APR, and was instrumental in developing a tradition of philosophical theology at Utrecht known for its mixture of philosophical analysis and hermeneutical approaches. Following in the footsteps of his father N.J. Brümmer and maternal grandfather J. I. Marais, he began his philosophical and theological training at Stellenbosch, before completing a doctorate on Dooyeweerd in the Netherlands. He spent periods of study at Harvard and the University of Oxford, and under the influence of figures like Gilbert Ryle gradually made a move from a more historicist focus, predominant at SU and UP,[94] towards the analysis and clarification of Christian faith and doctrine, moving from a *descriptive* focus to the practice of *doing* philosophy.[95] He taught for several years at the University of Natal and UNISA before taking over the position previously occupied by A. E. Loen at Utrecht. After his retirement, he held visiting and extraordinary professorships of the Faculty of Theology at Stellenbosch, the latter of which he held until his death in early 2021. Brümmer's reception has been felt significantly in the European context; he played a leading role in the European Conferences on Philosophy of Religion, and his standing as a philosophical theologian can be seen in the various thinkers he influenced (e.g., Gijsbert van den Brink, Marcel Sarot), as well as in the projects and publications he oversaw in that context.[96]

94 Nash, *The Dialectical Tradition in South Africa*, 93–105. At UP, P. S. Dreyer was a philosopher, and trained theologian, well known for his reflection on historicity; Duvenage, *Afrikaanse filosofie*, 43–58,

95 Cf. "Meanders in My Thinking: A Brief Intellectual Autobiography," 18.

96 Overall, see "Meanders in My Thinking: A Brief Intellectual Autobiography," 3–27. For his influence, see Gijsbert van den Brink, Luco J. van den Brom, Marcel Sarot (eds.), *Christian Faith*

Brümmer's philosophical theology, with the notable exception of Gerrit Brand, has not generated a significant reception in his birth country of South Africa though, and is probably linked to the aforementioned paucity of analytic philosophy within historically Afrikaans universities. His influence has been felt more recently, however, in a prize-winning book he wrote – in Afrikaans – on the history of theology in the Dutch Reformed Church, which he characterises as moving between the two poles of Reformed Orthodoxy, on the one hand, and pietism on the other.[97]

Brümmer has penned several books and dozens of essays devoted to philosophical theology.[98] His early work was focused on a critical engagement with Herman Dooyeweerd, which set the stage for his later developments. Because of his critique of what he saw as the inherent antinomies of Dooyeweerd's thought, and his related distaste for totalising philosophical systems, Brümmer sought to apply the tools of philosophical analysis towards the conceptual clarification of systematic theology. He did not, by and large, seek to engage in what Dalferth called "dogmatic philosophical theology,"[99]associated with traditional apologetics and older attempts to demonstrate the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, etc, via something like natural theology – especially in its post-Enlightenment iterations. For Brümmer, philosophical theology does not "demonstrate what must be believed";[100] rather, it should recollect the interior logic and grammar of religious speech and practice, and thereby articulate conceptual clarifications, limitations, and innovations which may be accepted without logical contradiction, with a degree of recognisability for religious adherents who aim for personal and spiritual integrity *within* the particularity of religious traditions.

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and Philosophical Theology: Essays in Honour of Vincent Brümmer (Kampen: Pharos, 1992).

97 Vincent Brümmer, *Vroom of Regsinnig? Teologie in die NG Kerk* (Wellington: Bybel–Media, 2013). The award in question was the Andrew Murray-Desmond Tutu Prize.

98 The most representative text available regarding the body of his work is *Brümmer on Meaning and the Christian Faith.*

99 Cf. Ingolf Dalferth, "Philosophical Theology," in David Ford and Rachel Muers (eds.), *Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology Since 1918* (3rd ed., Blackwell, 2005), 309–313.

100 "Philosophical Theology as Conceptual Recollection," *Brümmer on Meaning and the Christian Faith*, 449.

His first book, originally published in Dutch but later revised for English, was framed as a textbook for connecting philosophical analysis of axiology, epistemology, and ontology to the question of God.[101] This book, along with the rest of his oeuvre, exhibits the strong influence of ordinary language philosophy in the vein of Ludwig Wittgenstein and J. L. Austin. Like Van Huyssteen, the importance of metaphor and modelling in philosophical theology is emphasised in many of his published texts and monographs. In 1984, he wrote a text on the meaning of prayer, a book that was later revised into an award-winning monograph in 2009.[102] Towards the end of his career at Utrecht, he wrote two books on philosophical theology: one on the doctrine of God, which addressed the task of philosophical theology, theological language, and the themes of grace, evil, divine action, and theodicy.[103] The other dealt with the topic of love, both human and divine, and the pertinence such philosophical clarifications have for the doctrine of atonement and reconciliation.[104] Developing these themes, in a later work, Brümmer unpacks atonement theology and its interplay with the doctrine of the trinity.[105]

Two essays are worth mentioning here, as they speak to Brümmer's method in general, namely "Philosophical Theology as Conceptual Recollection" and "The Inter-subjectivity of Criteria in Theology."[106] In the first, Brümmer proposes philosophical theology as a mode of conceptual recollection, imagination, and innovation. In a revision of Platonic anamnesis, he argues that concepts should not be conceived as "mental representations" but rather as "mental capacities" that are "rule-based"; this happens by recalling how concepts are performed and, moreover, how they should be performed, thus implying

101 *Theology and Philosophical Inquiry: An Introduction* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1981).
102 *What are we doing when we Pray? On Prayer and the Nature of Faith* (Basingstoke: Ashgate, 2009). For this book, he also won the Andrew Murray-Desmond Tutu Prize.
103 *Speaking of a Personal God: An Essay in Philosophical Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
104 *The Model of Love: a Study in Philosophical Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
105 *Atonement, Christology and the Trinity: Making Sense of Christian Doctrine* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2005).
106 *Brümmer on Meaning and the Christian Faith*, 433–470.

a normative and prescriptive element.[107] It involves – to use a Gadamerian phrase – a recollection of *horizons of understanding,* namely those "intuitive conceptual capacities" that are inherited through human "socialisation" and moreover how such intuitive capacities interact with the texts of religious traditions, creating new meaning through a fusion of horizons.[108] The creation of new meaning and concepts thus leads to the play of the imagination, in which "philosophers reflect on *possible* conceptual forms" and not just "their own *actual* concepts," thereby "producing conceptual forms that are to be *preferred* to those with which we are familiar."[109] Our conceptual capacities therefore will also have to innovate if they are to be serviceable for us now, and not merely an exercise in the theoretically descriptive. This implies a degree of relativity regarding conceptual forms, since intelligibility is dependent on context and consequently, to some degree, is "person-relative," that is, influenced by the horizons of understanding that frame communities and individuals. However, such relativity is not absolutised, and Brümmer believes (in similar fashion to Van Huyssteen) that there are criteria which may be approximated inter-subjectively so that intelligibility may be sustained across distinct traditions and horizons of understanding.

This is the concern of the second essay mentioned, which aims to set out those criteria which may be adduced in philosophical theology towards such ends. In distinction from "revealed theology," which tends towards fideism, or natural theology, which seems to be predicated on foundationalism, or descriptive theology, which is insufficiently critical, Brümmer proposes philosophical theology as a way of using publicly available methods of reason and analysis "to make an innovative contribution to the conceptualisation of the tradition."[110] For him, philosophical theology is about "clarifying and limiting our conceptual options," namely those that may be "accepted without contradiction."[111] Important for him is the fact that traditions,

107 "Philosophical Theology as Conceptual Recollection," 434–435.
108 Ibid., 437–441.
109 Ibid., 442–443.
110 "The Inter-subjectivity of Criteria in Theology," 459.
111 "Philosophical Theology as Conceptual Recollection," 448.

including Christian theology, are historical phenomena that are plural and subject to change. Because of this propensity for change, there is the need to reflect upon the quality of such changes: how is one to adjudicate the integrity of such changes? To help with this, Brümmer proposes criteria for thinking through the reality of innovation within religious traditions, in order to more reflectively consider their quality. Brümmer goes into some detail cataloguing these criteria, and so I will not belabour upon his own exposition, but in short he suggests that any "innovative proposals for re-conceptualising the heritage of faith," within historical change, will need to be "logically consistent and coherent, credible, intelligible, relevant and adequate to the changing circumstances and demands of life, and recognisable to the community of believers" so that they may "decide whether they are willing and able with integrity to make these proposals their own."[112] Brümmer believes that all of these criteria exist on a scale of being more inter-subjective, that is, more publicly available for evaluation, on the one side, and more person-relative on the other; but even the more person-relative criteria, he argues, should not be overly-particularised because they remain imbued with inter-subjective elements.[113]

Brümmer is not the only figure from South Africa to connect analytic philosophy to theological discourse, even if he is the most prolific. In this regard, it is worth mentioning the work of some other thinkers who have made contributions to this style of philosophical theology. In particular, one thinks of James Moulder, a philosopher, logician and one-time student of Daantjie Oosthuizen, who can also be classed within this broad tradition. He spent a considerable part of his career in South Africa, particularly at Rhodes University, the University of Natal, and UCT, and also lectured at US and was close to Johann Degenaar. He wrote several essays on philosophical theology, addressing questions such as: the question of religious perception,[114] the logical and semantic

112 Ibid., 460.
113 Ibid., 467–470.
114 "Aspectual and religious perceptions: A Reply to M. W. Hughes." *Sophia* 8, no. 2 (1969): 10–17.

quality of proofs for divine existence,[115] reflections on the concept of worship (in relation to the heated political issue of conscientious objection),[116]the solvency of Chalcedonian doctrine,[117] the problem of theodicy,[118] religious metaphor,[119]and so on. Martin Prozesky, an emeritus Professor at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, is another thinker worth mentioning who has written on themes relating to the philosophy of religion, comparative religion, and the idea of God.[120] More recently, Jaco Gericke, a Professor based at NWU, from a descriptive and postrealist vantage point, has sought to apply the tools of philosophical theology and the philosophy of religion to the God-language of the Hebrew Bible, attempting to clarify and elucidate the multiplicity inherent in such depiction. His proclivity is towards debates within analytical philosophy of religion, but he has not avoided engaging Continental traditions too.[121] This experimental juxtaposition of vocabularies is a novel approach to the study of the Old Testament, even as Gericke himself is aware of the limits of such an approach.

This section has tried to represent of some of the work done in the tradition of APR within South Africa, particularly in the post-1994 period. In this section, I have focused on Brümmer because of his local and international prominence. There is

115 "Logicians and Agnostics." *Sophia* 10, no.2 (1971): 1–5; "Convictions about God." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* (3 Jun 1973): 18–25.

116 *Conscientious Objection and the Concept of Worship* (Doctoral diss., Rhodes University, 1976)

117 "A Model for Christology." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 35 (1981): 10–17

118 "Philosophy, Religion and Theodicy." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 3, no.4 (1984): 147–150.

119 "Metaphors and Models in Religion and Theology." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 6, no.1 (1987): 29–34.

120 *Religion and Ultimate Well-Being: An Explanatory Theory* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984); *A New Guide to the Debate about God* (London: SCM Press, 1992).

121 *The Hebrew Bible and Philosophy of Religion* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012); *What is a God? Philosophical Perspectives on Divine Essence in the Hebrew Bible* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017); *A Philosophical Theology of the Old Testament: A Historical, Experimental, Comparative and Analytic Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2020).

certainly more work currently being done in this field,[122] but for the sake of space the above documentation will have to suffice.

African Philosophical Theology

African Philosophical Theology (APT) can be classified as those attempts which seek to bring African philosophy into an explicit conversation with theology, or subjecting African theology to philosophical analysis. In this regard, someone like Augustine Shutte or Patrick Giddy might exemplify the former trajectory, while Gerrit Brand exhibits something of the latter. Because this tradition has been addressed in more detail elsewhere,[123] I will not expand upon work already done, but rather indicate the broad outlines of this distinct trajectory. For his part, Shutte spent a significant part of his academic career focusing on the theme of personhood, one which emphasised the spiritual and relational nature of this concept, and its resistance to a purely deterministic and reductive analysis. He went on to argue that the irreducibility of personhood, here via a Thomistic account of metaphysical causality, suggested the personal nature of reality itself, and that the advent of personal being was most adequately explained if the ultimate cause was itself personal, as in the triune God of Christian faith.[124] Later on, he brought this focus on personhood into an explicit juxtaposition with African philosophy and traditional religion, arguing for a synthetic approach that showed the congeniality of a Thomistic theory of personhood with African accounts of sociality and cosmology (e.g., *ubuntu*).[125] Following

122 For example, see the work of the independent scholar Arlyn Culwick, who could also be classed within the analytic tradition; see "An Empirically Testable Causal Mechanism for Divine Action." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 6, No 4 (2020): 247–282; "A Theodicy of Kenosis: Eleonore Stump and the Fall of Jericho." *Open Theology* 6 (2020): 665–692.

123 Khegan M. Delport, "Pathways in African Philosophical Theology: Augustine Shutte (1938–2016) and Gerrit Brand (1970–2013)." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 7, No 1 (2021): 1–26.

124 See "What Makes Us Persons?" *Modern Theology* 1, no. 1 (1984): 67–79; "A New Argument for the Existence of God." *Modern Theology* 3, no. 2 (1987): 157–177

125 *The Mystery of Humanity* (Cape Town: Snail Press, 1993); *Philosophy for Africa* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 1993); *Ubuntu: An Ethic for a South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Press, 2001).

in this line, Patrick Giddy (a student of Shutte and an expert on his work) has taken something of this tradition forward. His work has exhibited a Thomistic trajectory from its beginnings,[126] which continues up to the present day, touching on themes that are germane to the field of philosophical theology.[127] He has also published research in the field of African philosophy, as seen in some of the work he has done on Placide Tempels.[128] In a similar vein, Callum Scott, who was discussed earlier, has also sought to bring Thomistic philosophy to bear on the topic of African philosophy and decolonisation.[129]

Unlike Shutte, Giddy, and Scott, Gerrit Brand came from a distinctly Reformed and Protestant tradition. In several shorter and more popular works, he touched on some traditional areas of philosophical theology.[130] His most significant work is his doctoral dissertation, which aspired to be a work in "meta-theology," one that combined systematic theology, the philosophy of religion, and what could be called a philosophy of theology.[131] He completed this work under the deep influence of Vincent Brümmer, and

126 *Ethics and Human Nature: A Reconsideration of Ethical Naturalism in Contemporary Thomist Writings* (PhD diss., University of Cape Town, 1993).

127 "Special Divine Action and How to Do Philosophy of Religion." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 30, no.2 (2011): 143–154; "Human Agency and Weakness of Will: A Neo-Thomist Discussion." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 35, no. 2 (2016): 197–209; "The Human Spirit and Its Appropriation: Ethics, Psyche, and Religious Symbology in the Context of Evolution." *Religion & Theology* 25 (2018): 88–110.

128 "Can African Traditional Culture Offer Something of Value to Global Approaches in Teaching Philosophy and Religion?" *Acta Academica* 45, no. 4 (2013): 154–172; "The Ideal of African Scholarship and its Implications for Introductory Philosophy: the Example of Placide Tempels." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 31, no.2 (2012): 504–516.

129 "The Decolonial Aquinas? Discerning Epistemic Worth for Aquinas in the Decolonial Academy." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 38, no. 1 (2019): 40–54.

130 For example, see Gerrit Brand et al. *Godverlanger: 'n Huldingsbundel vir Gerrit Brand*, edited by Willem De Vries and Robert Vosloo (Stellenbosch, SUN Press, 2014); "Om God in goed en kwaad te sien. Oor twee vorme van teodisee." *NGTT*, 53, Suppl. 3 (2012): 1–12.

131 *Speaking of Fabulous Ghost: In Search of Theological Criteria, with Special Relevance to the debate on Salvation in African Christian Theology* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002).

sought to apply his philosophical approach to the questions of African theology. In particular, he juxtaposed Brümmer's criteria for adjudicating integrous change within traditions to the question of African theology. Following a postfoundationalist approach, he articulated the criteria that he discovered within traditional "Western" theology, and then moved onto an in-depth and wide-ranging exploration of African treatments of the topic of salvation, with the goal of addressing whether similar criteria in such traditions would be discovered or not. His explorations found a significant amount of overlap, even as African theology brought the question of contextuality much more explicitly to the surface. In line with the so-called Utrecht school and Stellenbosch tradition, Brand's work also exhibited a strong interest in philosophical hermeneutics, engaging before his death with the work of Ingolf Dalferth.[132]

Space again does not permit extensive engagement with the topic. There are certainly others who seek to bring philosophy and theology into conversation within an explicitly African context,[133] but once more I sought to represent those who are the most notable and representative within the APT tradition, as far as I am aware.

Concluding Thoughts

As we bring this chapter to a close, some provisos and disclaimers should be given concerning the above account of philosophical theology in South Africa. The first thing to

132 This is based on several conversations the author had with Brand, shortly before his death.

133 For instance, from an especially CPR and African perspective, see Silakhe Singata, "Justice for the Dead," *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 6, no. 4 (2020): 319–345, which seeks to bring John Caputo's eschatology into conversation with traditional African religious thought, particularly on the theme of the living dead. Even more recently, outside the ambit of Christianity, Thaddeus Metz and Motsamai Molefe have attempted to reconstruct the philosophical monotheism of African Traditional Religion; Thaddeus Metz and Motsamai Molefe, "Traditional African Religion as a Neglected Form of Monotheism." *The Monist* 104 (2021): 393–409. Justin Sands, from St. Augustine's College, is also developing a project of philosophical theology inspired by African philosophers such as Tsenay Serequeberhan.

mention is that although it is possible to draw broad typologies regarding different streams within the post–1994 context, much theoretical overlap can be found between theologians who work across differing traditions. I have already mentioned the fact that someone like Brümmer works within a broadly analytical framework; however, his hermeneutical tendencies create overlap with many of the other thinkers who will be discussed. This is understandable because of the deep impact his training at Stellenbosch had on him. We can see this in other areas too. Van Huyssteen's postfoundationalist and transversal approach to the question of truth and realism has significant parallels to Brümmer's plea for the development of intersubjective criteria in philosophical theology and for the discernment of integrous change within religious traditions. This complicates the typology hereby given, but it does appear nevertheless to have some heuristic value. Another complication is that the category of CPR is so widely spread and disparate that people of radically different and opposing trajectories can and will be included under the same broad taxonomy. Despite this limitation, this seems to be the most elegant solution to the problem of categorisation, especially when considering the space that would be required to multiply further categorical differences.

Another challenging and troubling aspect of this theme, worth mentioning, is the almost complete hegemony of "white" men amongst practitioners of philosophical theology. In other contexts, the names of Marilyn McCord Adams, Sarah Coakley, Grace Jantzen, Catherine Pickstock, Eleonore Stump, and Edith Wyschogrod are still synonymous with cutting-edge research in the field. Unfortunately, South Africa does not appear to boast comparable examples. The reasons for this are probably not simple, but one cannot avoid invoking the historical chauvinism of both the theology and philosophical guilds respectively. It might also be due to the aforementioned suspicion of philosophical theology as being largely irrelevant to the broader task of theologians in South Africa. Why should we engage in the metaphysical or philosophical clarification of doctrine, for example, when we are surrounded by more pressing issues of gross inequality and violence? What does philosophical theology

have to say to these realities? Whatever the reason for this, the gaping absence of women within this field is worrisome.

Connected to this concern is the marked lack of racial diversity within this guild of research. Africa boasts a list of impressive philosophers who have reflected on theological themes, whether this be from a Christian, Islamic, or a traditional African religious perspective. But within the South African context, it is difficult to find comparable examples, particularly amongst Christian theologians. One can find exceptions to this general trend in figures like the Catholic thinker Mongabeli Mabona; however, his body of work is very limited and his general occlusion only appears to confirm the historical tendency overall. Again, the reasons for this being the case are probably not simple, short of alluding once more to the continued factor of institutional prejudice and racism within the sector of higher education. However, there are promising signs that some of these discrepancies are currently being remedied at places like UNISA, which shows a strong drift towards the study of African philosophy and theoretical decolonisation more generally – as some of the contributors to this volume will show.