





# Introduction

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This book arises from a long-standing collaboration between institutions of higher learning in South Africa and Norway. Over the past five years, this partnership has encompassed academic publications, conferences, teaching and learning, student supervision, project planning, and staff and student mobility.

The two editors have shared numerous ideas, insights, and perspectives on church mission and development. Research visits, sabbaticals, and institutional cooperation have offered valuable experiences and critical reflections that have enriched academic debate. This publication invites scholars from both countries to engage with the editors in exploring how mission and development, when viewed from diverse worldviews, need not be mutually exclusive or antagonistic.

Scholars from a range of disciplines across are encouraged to consider how scholarship from the two continents can contribute to a shared sense of humanity. This volume will examine reflections on internationalisation through collaborative engagement, focusing on the intersection and interaction of mission and development.



The so-called “classical” model of partnership - between donors in the North and recipients in the South, where material aid is accompanied by religion as an “added value” - will be contrasted with the concept of “reverse mission”, which may offer new insights into the dynamic between centres and margins in mission (Drønen, 2022). In addition, recent studies on the impact of globalisation on economic development, religious practice, and cultural exchange (Drønen, 2013) will provide a theoretical framework that supports a diversity of approaches to the questions addressed in the various contributions.

The specific interaction of ideas, perceptions, and worldviews amongst participants in the various academic activities over the past five years - combined with current trends in scholarship - will form one aspect of the academic contribution. Another will come from academics and postgraduate students currently engaged in either empirical research or conceptual analysis within the framework of mission and development, and its influence on internationalisation. A further valuable contribution will be made by those actively involved in faith-based ministries, whether lay or ordained.

Within the World Council of Churches (WCC), development forms part of missiology. At the 1970 Montreux gathering, economic activity was emphasised under three interrelated themes: economic growth, self-reliance, and social justice. The second gathering, held in 1975, built on the foundations of the 1970 event, with Indian economist Samuel Parmar as a leading voice. A moral perspective began to take precedence over purely economic, technological, and material notions of progress. People - particularly the poor - were placed at the centre of agency, while the dominant model of modernisation came under significant critique (Klaasen, 2021). These gatherings represent two Kairos moments in the history of the ecumenical church. The development focus of these ecumenical meetings aligns with major international initiatives such as Bretton Woods, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank. Despite the emphasis on development within church-led and, to some extent, secular approaches, there has been a clear shift from an exclusively economic model towards a more people-centred approach. Development has also evolved to encompass a range of forms, including gender development, social development, human development, and community development (Alkire, 2010).

These shifts, often referred to as globalisation, manifest through technological advancement, geographical and environmental changes, neoliberalism, and political or religious ideologies, all of which significantly influence mission and mission studies. This publication invites scholars whose work intersects mission and mission studies with these shifts and the diversity inherent in development. The aforementioned factors, along with the various forms of development, will be critically and theologically explored.

Ideas about the church, and religions more broadly, emphasises the practices and foundational principles of faith traditions. The World Bank has moved beyond merely engaging with religious figures and practices, now incorporating religious ideas into its development mandate. This shift was influenced by former World Bank President James Wolfensohn, who stated:

[My] aim was always to go beyond formal contact with leaders to engage with the ways in which religious ideas influence development processes right across the society. Serving as President of the World Bank, I came to realize how far religious ideas and attitudes that are link to them underpin vital facets of society like social trust and cohesion (Wolfensohn, 2011: vii-xviii).

A multidisciplinary approach will be adopted. Research areas include spirituality, faith-based organisations and values, and the role of church communities in development. Contributions are drawn from theologians and scholars from other academic disciplines.

This volume is primarily academic in nature, including professional theologians such as university professors, as well as students currently pursuing doctoral studies in theology with a focus on development or diaconia. One contributor is completing a Master's degree in Development and Social Innovation, representing the collaboration between VID Specialized University in Norway and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in South Africa - a partnership that has spanned several years. Many of the authors are also ordained ministers within their respective churches.

This broad spectrum of authors and perspectives makes the volume a compelling starting point for what the two editors envisioned. The all-inclusive aim of the project is to explore the nexus between mission and development, and to consider the establishment of a formal research cluster

between institutions in Norway and South Africa. The goal is to foster a more egalitarian partnership in engaging mission and development - distinct from the colonial models of the past.

## **PART 1**

### **CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

The first part provides the context and background to the themes selected for this publication. Klaasen was involved with VID Specialized University for six years before taking up a position at the University of the Free State a year ago. Makgoba is a Master's student at VID Specialized University and is one of approximately 20 students from the African continent supported by the NORPART project. Funded by the Norwegian government, this initiative offers African students with opportunities to equip themselves for innovation and social development in their home countries. As a former student of UWC, Makgoba exemplifies the value of intercontinental collaboration in mission and development.

This chapter offers a brief overview of the research projects and types of cooperation grounded in mutual growth, reciprocity, and egalitarian relationships. The authors share insights from their personal academic journeys between two institutions, two countries, and differing scholarly traditions. Drawing on theology and development debates within the WCC, alongside the growing interest in religion and development, the chapter identifies key markers for fostering more effective internationalisation within academia.

Eriksen examines phenomena such as power, capital, management, and control as key mechanisms shaping mission between faith-based organisations (FBOs) from the Global North and South. The central concern lies in the capacity of international FBOs to apply innovation in fostering equitable collaboration in global mission and development.

Drawing on empirical research, Eriksen employs social-symbolic institutional theory and practice architecture to investigate and evaluate organisational and management approaches within international FBOs. Focus groups were conducted with participants from two international FBOs. The findings highlight features such as decentralisation, polyphonic and polycentric

organisational structures, and the use of a standardised membership structure instead of hierarchy. Issues of partnerships, power relations, and diversity are more effectively addressed through innovation and diversification. Within mission and development, issues such as management, organisation, and systems are critically evaluated against equal partnerships and power relations within the framework of innovation.

Bosman further explores mission and development from a biblical interpretative perspective, with a particular focus on marginalised figures, such as the woman in 1 Kings 17:8–16. Drawing on a narrative approach and the *Ubuntu* philosophy within African thought, Bosman provides an intelligent hermeneutic of the Scripture. Using the theoretical framework of *Ubuntu* and the emerging theme of personhood within religion and development, Bosman demonstrates the significance of hospitality, reciprocity, and becoming for equal partnership, mutual growth, and benefit.

## **PART 2**

### **MISSION, SPIRITUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

This second part addresses the fundamental aspects of mission, spirituality, and their role in development. The first section of this part discusses the crucial role of spirituality in the leadership of mission and development. Karlsson, Eriksen and Rapisarda analyse peace in Ethiopia as a mission of the Pentecostal movement. Their research concludes that religious leadership from movements such as Pentecostalism brings a dynamic to peace processes through the re-imagination of the role of religious leaders. At the core of such re-imagination is the ability to maintain the tension between the spiritual and secular, social reality and prophetic imagination, and the prophetic role and subjection to politics.

A critical examination of the history of Pentecostalism in Ethiopia and the practices of its leadership opens a crucial path for a renewed approach to spiritual leadership in contexts of serious conflict. This includes a critical analysis of the fundamentals of Pentecostalism, such as the role of the Spirit in leadership, formal theological training, conversion, and calling.

Pinyana shifts from denominational spiritual leadership to personal spiritual leadership development. The challenge of globalisation and the rapid changes brought about by technology, neo-liberalism, and consumerism challenge the essentialist approach of religious leaders to the resultant social, economic, environmental, and political uncertainty.

Drawing from the multiple spiritualities and leadership models within the Christian church and secular society, Pinyana seeks to formulate a leadership model based on spiritual development. Spirituality and spiritual formation provide the yardstick for sustainable and consistent leadership within uncertainty. Spiritual leadership serves as the connecting point between the sacred and the secular and therefore has the potential to address development issues more holistically and wholistically. Such leadership derives from a rootedness in the community and, through an all-encompassing process, extends the agency of the leader beyond the physical and relative. Spiritual leadership encompasses the development of the leader and the call to a ministry of social and spiritual maturity.

Hannibal uses spirituality in a broader sense than Karlsson, Eriksen and Rapisarda and Pinyana. By employing the ordinary human activity of walking, she draws from her own experience as an experienced walker. Hannibal explores walking as a spiritual exercise that lies at the heart of human and spiritual development.

Using ethnographic methodology and qualitative, semi-structured interviews with a sample of 30 women over a lengthy period, she concludes that the incorporation of walking into daily life leads to significant improvements in spiritual health and overall well-being. The research findings indicate that walking enhances qualities such as caring, healing, engaging, sympathy, thinking, and sharing. This preliminary research provides valuable insights into the potential for spiritual formation amongst those involved in mission and development.

Beukes investigates the role of spirituality development and mission as a mechanism to foster social transformation in relatively religious societies such as South Africa. A careful analysis of the socio-economic, cultural, and political landscape of contemporary South Africa, coupled with a cursory

description of spirituality, development, and mission, sets the backdrop for Beukes' threefold nexus for social transformation. The nexus refers to the interconnectedness of spirituality, development, and mission.

## **PART 3**

### **CHURCH, MISSION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Drønen provides an overview of the Protestant churches' mission in conflict situations. A detailed analysis of migration and the causes thereof within Cameroon provides the context for the church's missionary activities and the role of the church in development in the aftermath of war and the ecological and environmental decay that is the consequence of such devastating violence. The response of the Full Gospel Church, referred to as a guesthouse approach, provides those on a short stay in towns with a space to find a home and a sense of belonging. Migrants and refugees find networks and job opportunities, such as farming. The eco-theological approach is associated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon. This approach is diaconal and involves institutions such as schools and hospitals, supported by non-governmental organisations such as Doctors Without Borders. These social actions are supported by an ecological theology that cares for the whole of creation.

The next contribution reverses the roles, approaches, and dynamics from a giver-receiver model to a multidirectional missionary activity. Models of church, such as "mother" and "daughter", and the long-standing development model referred to as the so-called "dependency syndrome" within ecumenical relations and the development discourse are critically engaged with. Focusing on Pentecostal Christianity, Andrews posits that mission and development (including diaconia) need to undergo a decolonisation of mission and theology. He further argues that a contextualisation of mission in Pentecostal Christianity through the lens of decolonisation will present the church with a more critical understanding of the *missio Dei*. This approach to mission and development leads to missional transformation.

Analysing the conflict between Gaza and Israel, Haugen analyses the responses of churches and church-related organisations concerning "apartheid" terminology. Emphasis is placed on the events leading up to the 2022 WCC

General Assembly's statement, *Seeking Justice and Peace for All in the Middle East* and the Young Men's Christian Association's (YMCA) World Council statement of *Just Peace for All - A World Free from Occupation*.

Haugen draws on the conceptual framework of "*vocatio, ad-vocatio, provocatio*" and Luke's "theory of power", along with Mott's outline of Christian ethics. Identifying two opposite responses - provocative and effective - Haugen concludes that churches and church-related movements are more effective when responses to crises are part of broader movements rather than single entities. Terminologies like "apartheid" can cause antagonism and forward movement. Haugen concludes that such terms could benefit from appeals to international law.

The final chapter in this section analyses the diaconate as a diaconal ministry within the Anglican Church in Southern Africa (ACSA). Tracing the diaconate from the Early Church, it is described as social responsibility and liturgical formation. An analysis of the diaconate within the ACSA provides a glimpse of the distorted emphasis on the liturgical aspect of this ministry. The transitional nature of the diaconate has positioned this ministry as subordinate to priestly ordination.

Walters offers a critical analysis of the diaconate, proposing that a mission-driven model provides the framework for a holistic ministry that integrates social responsibility and liturgical formation. Deacons are presented as distinct yet integral to the mission of the church. Their ministry is transformative in nature - vocationally rooted within the margins of society and amongst the vulnerable - with a call towards wholistic liberation.

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