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The growing, worldwide movement for Christian higher education

Some requirements for Christian tertiary education, especially in Africa

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Opsomming

Die groeiende, wêreldwye beweging vir Christelike hoër onderwys; enkele vereistes vir 'n Christelike tersiêre instelling, veral in Afrika

Hierdie en die twee volgende artikels bevat die bygewerkte teks van 'n lang lesing wat oorspronklik by die internasionale konferensie van die International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE) op 25 Mei 2013 by Calvin College te Grand Rapids, Michigan in die USA gelewer is. Die sentrale tema van die konferensie was "How to internationalize Christian Higher Education through IAPCHE". Ek is versoek om my lesing veral op Afrika toe te spits.

Die titel van my lesing was egter "How NOT to internationalize – and perhaps secularize and render irrelevant – Christian higher education on the African continent". Die rede vir die "How NOT..." was omdat ek nie so seker was dat die nuwe modegier van internasionalisering – ten spyte van die voordele wat dit mag inhou – nie ook (soos in die geval van die voorafgaande idees van ontwikkeling en globalisering) ideologies besmet is nie.

As gevolg van die lengte van die lesing word dit in drie agtereenvolgende artikels verdeel. Hierdie eerste een bied die agtergrond. Die tweede sal verduidelik hoe en waarom die destydse Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys (PU vir CHO) versekulariseer is. Die derde artikel sal sewe kragtige kontemporêre ideologieë bespreek as 'n belangrike rede waarom die PU vir CHO getransformeer is tot die huidige sekulêre Noordwes Universiteit.

In hierdie inleidende artikel word oor die volgende besin: (1) Die huidige internasionalisering van Christelike hoër onderwys (CHO); (2) Die Afrika-konteks; (3) Drie leidende visies wat in die loop van die geskiedenis ontwikkel het oor die aard en taak van 'n tersiêre instelling. (4) Die soort diens wat van so 'n instelling (universiteit of kollege) verwag kan word. (5) Die belangrikheid van 'n pluralistiese samelewingsfilosofie vir die (relatiewe) onafhanklikheid van instellings vir hoër onderwys van kerklike, politieke en ekonomiese oorheersing. (6) As oorgang tot die tweede artikel word ten slotte verduidelik waarom die skrywer (in die hieropvolgende artikel) dit as belangrik beskou dat die geskiedenis van die sekularisering van die PU vir CHO – as waarskuwing vir ander Christelike instellings – vertel behoort te word. (Hoewel die lesing nou in artikelvorm gepubliseer word, is die voordragkarakter daarvan nie drasties verander nie.)

0. Preamble

0.1 The new heartland of Christianity

There is no scarcity about books on Africa. Some of the most recent ones are those by Guest (2004), Meredith (2006) and Ilo (2012). Since our focus will be on Christianity on the African continent, let me mention the works by Baur (1998) and O'Donovan (2000), commemorating 2000 years of Christianity in Africa. To this may be added Oden (2007), emphasising the African contribution to Western Christianity and Ntarangwi (2011) about the social impact of the Christian faith in this part of the world.

We are also reminded by the works of, for instance, Jenkins (2002, 2006, 2009), Sanneh (1993, 2003) and Carpenter & Sanneh (2005) that, while Christianity is declining in the North and West, its heartland is today moving to the Southern world. Especially in Africa Christianity is growing very fast (cf. Johnson & Ross, 2010). According to the Pew Foundation for Religion and Public Life (at Boston) in its report on global Christianity (2012) it is

estimated that at the moment about 500 million Christians are to be found in Africa south of the Sahara. Christians in the 51 African countries represent 24 percent of global Christianity! Also many Christian schools, colleges, seminaries and universities are started (cf. Van der Walt, 2010c, 2010d).

0.2 The link between different levels of Christian education

It speaks for itself that the ideals of Christian-oriented (primary and secondary) schooling and (tertiary) college/university education are inseparable. If we don't educate children and young girls and boys at school, we will have no Christian students on campus. But we also need Christian academics, who will train our future school teachers in a Christian worldview approach to the basic subjects to be taught in our schools to eventually fulfil the needs of worldwide CHE (cf. Carpenter, 2008).

For more information about the world movement of CHE one can easily Google on the Center for International Higher Education (CIHE) and the Program for Research on Private Higher Education (PROPHE).

Since Christian schooling and Christian higher education go together closely, I will mention some still worthwhile works to be studied especially by teachers at school. They are: Carvill, Vriend, Olthuis and Vander Stelt (1970); De Boer, Van Brummelen, Blomberg, Koole and Stronks (1993); Fowler (1987 & 1991); Fowler, Van Brummelen and Van Dyk (1990); Lambert and Mitchell, (1996); McCarthy, Oppewal, Petersen and Spykma (1981); McCarthy, Skillen and Harper (1982); Mechielsen (1980); Stronks and Blomberg (1993) and Van Brummelen (1986, 1988 & 1994).

0.3 An effort towards a broader and deeper view

Three characteristics of a philosopher can be a real nuisance to other scholars.

In the first place he/she wants to see issues in a broader perspective. (This is the reason why this paper is published in three separate articles.) I could not simply discuss the issue of internationalization in isolation, but had to view it against the intellectual décor of both present Western and African civilization. Only then, I assume, can one truly understand what internationalization really implies.

Secondly, like a seismograph, the philosopher has to register the tremors of an advancing earthquake. Stated in biblical terms he/she has to test the spirits of the times (1 John 4:1), or to read the signs of his/her times (Luke 12:54-56). Accordingly he/she has to remind their fellow travellers that God

has placed everyone of them in *anno Domini* 2013 for a unique task to be accomplished (cf. Esther 4:14).

Thirdly, philosophers can be irritating because they always ask questions. But actually there are only two kinds of people who don't ask questions: those who think they know everything and those who don't know that they know nothing.

If you have to measure how large and deep a pool is, the advice of a Xhosa proverb is "Isizibasiviwangodondolo" – you need a long stick. The "stick" with which I will try to "measure" internationalization and its hidden presuppositions will be that of a Christian-Reformational worldview and philosophy.

To make this clear I now in advance provide my own definition of education.

0.4 A preliminary circumscription

If I have to briefly formulate my own viewpoint about education in general it will be more or less the following: "Education is a multidimensional, formative and worldviewishly (or ideologically) determined activity, which gives normative direction to a person's development by guiding, unfolding and enabling her or him to understand and accept her or his place and calling in God's world."

0.5 The setup of what follows

This long paper is published in three separate articles. The first provides the *general background*; the second focuses on the *history* of the secularization (caused by its internationalization) of the Potchefstroom University (PU); the third paper analyses the different *secular ideologies* hidden behind this development, illustrated with concrete examples of what happened at this university in Africa.

The first article may be regarded as "carrying coles to Colebrook" by some of my readers. For the following three reasons I nevertheless include it. Firstly I am aware of the fact that it may be valuable to some of my African colleagues. Secondly, how can one speak about the internationalization of higher education if one does not have clarity about what *higher education* entails? Thirdly, it is of even greater importance first to ascertain the meaning of *Christian* higher education before one can meaningfully discuss its internationalization.

The first article, now following, therefore provides the following appetiser on our menu: (1) Contemporary internationalization and Christian education; (2) the African background; (3) the nature and service of an institution for higher education: three viewpoints; (4) the primary service of a Christian

academic institution; (5) an analysis from a pluralist social philosophy, and (6) the approach and aim of the next article on the secularization of the erstwhile Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education.

1. Internationalization and Christian higher education

I was invited by Dr. Mwenda Ntarangwi, the executive director of IAPCHE, to deliver a paper on "Internationalizing Christian Higher Education through IAPCHE; an African phenomenological reflection". I, however, took the liberty to change it with his permission to the above title "How *not* to ..." and simplified the subtitle to "Narrating an African experience".

Let me, however, first state clearly in advance that I don't want to reject internationalization out of hand, painting it in black. Firstly, we can all benefit from certain of its aspects. Secondly, I don't think (the correct kind of) internationalization is against God's will if we want to obey his well-known command in Matthew 28:18-20.

1.1 Internationalization, globalization, informationism and secularization

I changed the topic because I am somewhat cautious about a combination of "internationalizing" and "Christian (higher) education". I am suspicious that this new term may simply be a screen hiding various dangerous contemporary ideologies (cf. e.g. Venter, 1999b). To substantiate my viewpoint I will continuously refer the reader to the relevant sources, emphasizing especially those from a Reformational perspective. (Limited space will not allow a review of every bibliographical reference.)

1.1.1 Internationalization and globalization

One may distinguish between but cannot really separate internationalization and globalization. (The first concept seems to me to be more encompassing than the second that some writers tend to view as merely of an economic nature.) An Oxford dictionary (cf. Wehmeier, 2005:787) very briefly defines internationalization both in a positive and negative sense: "the belief that countries should work together", and "to bring under the control (or protection) of many nations". Globalization is defined as: "The fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world are becoming connected and *similar to each other*" (Italics added. See also Giddens, 2003).

1.1.2 International education in general

The explanation of the theme of this IAPCHE Conference accompanying its invitation to participate seems to be more or less in agreement with what can be found on a popular source like Wikipedia (2012). It provides some information about the meaning, contents and criteria of "international education" (the same as "internationalizing education"?) It has two general meanings: (1) Education that transcends national borders through the exchange of students and/or lecturers. (2) A more comprehensive approach to education that intentionally prepares students to be engaged participants in the international world.

Its contents include (1) knowledge of religions and cultures; (2) familiarity with international issues; (3) skills in working effectively in global or cross-cultural environments; (4) ability to communicate in multiple languages; (5) respect and concern for other cultures and peoples.

Its main criterion is to develop citizens of the world, but also universal human values, skills and knowledge that can be applied broadly, global thinking, assessment and international benchmarking.

Wikipedia also mentions a number of problems in connection with international *higher* education. (1) There is little consensus concerning the guiding theme of the field as well as its scope; (2) It is not a prominent feature in contemporary higher education and (3) not the primary concern of most scholars in the field. (4) Very few published materials are available. (Most of the sources mentioned by Wikipedia either deal with development or/and globalization.)

It thus seems to me that we need not differ about the very close relationship between the two concepts of globalization and internationalization. Even if African students do not study in Europe or the USA, but in neighbouring countries (e.g. internationally), they may be indirectly or directly shaped by the globalization process driven by the Western world. Many of the exchange programmes, initiated from the side of the West or already Westernized institutions, are aimed at making their students and/or lecturers more culturally sensitive to African cultures. But inadvertently they may lead to the opposite: carrying the baggage of "superior" Western internationalization to the countries they intended to learn from!

1.1.3 Globalization queried

I should also draw attention to the fact that the literature consulted which was written from an African perspective is mainly critical about globalization.

Many writers are of the opinion that the ideology of the global market seems only to enrich the world's industrial giants, produces gains for a few, causes the marginalization of many and polarization between poor and rich (cf. e.g. Moloka & Le Roux, 2001). They regard the benefits of economic globalization, for instance to South Africa, at its best tenuous, and at worst, doubtful. (Worthwhile reading on globalization is offered by Goudzwaard, 2001; Goudzwaard & De Santana Ana, 2005, as well by Goudzwaard, Vander Vennen & Van Heemst, 2008:139-156; Venter, 1999b and Dinakaral, 2010).

Since globalization is a multi-dimensional process it does not only affect economic life. It can, for instance, lead to the dominance of English and the marginalization and eventual elimination of many indigenous languages. Many languages all over the world have already become "endangered species" on the "red data list". South Africa has eleven and many other African countries hundreds of mother tongues and dialects – a precious cultural heritage – but English is gradually becoming the dominant language.

1.1.4 Informationism

One of the most powerful means of achieving internationalization and globalization is today's media and the electronic and other ways of fast communication throughout the world. Information technology is restructuring not only the economy but our entire social life (cf. Castells, 2004). According to a recent news report more people in the world today are addicted to their TVs, computers, cell phones and fast electronic communication media, like for instance Google, Facebook, Twitter, etc. than to tobacco and alcohol. I refer the reader to the books by Cavalier (2005), Breems and Basden (2012), Jones and Basden (2003) Schulze (2000 & 2002), Schuurman (2013), Taylor (2008) and Van der Stoep (1998 & 2001) for more information.

1.1.5 Secularization

My thesis is that behind these powers (internationalization, mass communication and globalization) we may discern a collection of non-biblical ideologies which may turn contemporary culture into a secular movement, dangerous to Christian higher education.

I will not enter here in a discussion of my viewpoint that secularization is a radical, anti-Christian religion (cf. Van der Walt, 2007 and Taylor, 2007). But let me at least quote from a warning sounded by Spykman almost thirty years ago: "The overwhelming crisis of our times is ... the omnipresent spirit of secularism – closer to us even than the nearest TV dial. Secularism is a half-way house to atheism, a form of practical atheism. Without denying the existence of God, secularists presume to exclude him from public life. Belief

in God does not count, so the argument goes, at those crucial decision-making centres in life where the important societal policies are hammered out which shape human culture and the course of history. In our social, economic political and educational institutions, in science, technology, the arts and the media there faith does not matter" (Spykman, 1986:78).

Sanneh (1993:208), a prominent African writer, has to say the following about secularism: "Contemporary Christians have ... sought to make common cause with secular forces in order to demonstrate the usefulness of Christianity, in other words, to transform Christianity into a secular establishment."

However, the implications are: "... modern Christians have arrived at the point where they could now retain the prerogatives of prayer and worship only by cooing like a private dove or else flocking with the public hawk with their religious wings clipped".

It is very important to realize that every human being is religious in nature and therefore believes at least in something (cf. Biezeveld, De Boer, De Vos & Dingemans, 2001). Also secularism is a powerful religion and worldview. But, while it demands from all other religions/worldviews to be confined to one's private life, it influences both the public and private domain (cf. Buijs & Paul, 2007).

But secularism is not only the number one danger for *Christian* tertiary education. Also scholars working at educational institutions with other orientations (e.g. Jewish, Muslim, etc.) are becoming worried more and more about the effects of the same phenomenon.

1.1.6 The challenge

Thus it seems to me to me that this conference has to face at least five challenges: (1) What is *internationalization*? (2) What does it mean to internationalize *higher education*? (3) How should *Christian* higher education (CHE) be or not be internationalized? (4) How could it be done without *secularizing* Christian higher education? (In other words to pursue it without its having perhaps unforeseen, detrimental implications.) (5) How can CHE be internationalized in such a way that it remains *relevant* to the local (e.g. African) context?

This last requirement leads me to a few introductory remarks about Christian higher education within the African context.

2. Christian higher education in Africa

Firstly a brief reminder about this continent's history.

2.1 Africa's history in a nutshell

Those participants outside Africa should be reminded at least about the following major events and the disruption, poverty and many other consequences it lead to on the African continent. While the West was for very long fascinated by the idea of *progress*, Africans have had (1) to suffer for centuries under *slavery* from the East and the West (human trafficking in today's terms). (2) From about 1884 African nations were *politically dominated* by Europe. In their "scramble for Africa" European nations divided the continent amongst themselves. *Economic exploitation* of Africa's labour, land, minerals etc. was often disguised behind the idea of "civilizing" the black "barbarians". (In South Africa both blacks and whites were affected: 34,000 white and 21,000 black men, women and children died during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 in British concentration camps!) (3) After independence of most African states (from the middle of the 20th century) the *Cold War* was fought between the US and Russia to win the friendship – and resources – of African nations – some of these conflicts continuing up till today. (4) Next the magic word "*development*" (unending growth) was invented. Another illusion of the twentieth century – it was soon replaced by so-called "sustainable development". (I cannot here go into the reasons why this last move also was a failure but discussed it in various of my publications like Van der Walt, 2001, 2003a, 2006, 2008.) (5) The next vogue approach to be tried out was *globalization*. (6) And the most recent slogan is *internationalization*. Will it also be an empty, temporary slogan or fad? A smokescreen to harm my continent? (For further reading see Fowler, 1995; Turaki, 1993 and 1997:11-93 and Gifford, 1998:1-20).

2.2 Western higher education in Africa

For our topic one should at least distinguish the following three types of social formations in Africa (cf. Turaki, 2011:4, 5). Firstly *transformed* pre-colonial, indigenous institutions or social structures, which reflect the new meanings of colonialism. Secondly, *migrated* social structures, which were more or less literally parcelled out or imported from the imperial West to Africa. Thirdly, *emergent* social institutions, neither indigenous nor brought from outside Africa. National statehood and universities are examples of the second kind of migrated institutions wholly imported from the Western world.

Unless I am wrong, because of the still strong influence of traditional religion and culture (a topic I have written on extensively but cannot go into now), Africa still has to integrate fully formal higher Western education into the African context to be wholly relevant to the continent. Internationalization (in other words further Westernization), instead of Africanization, may be counterproductive, a stumbling block to real indigenized, relevant education. (For an analysis of the differences between traditional African and modern Western culture, cf. Turaki, 1993:249-252; Van der Walt, 2003a, 2006 and 2008 and for Africanizing Western science cf. Van der Walt, 2011c).

Of course I do not for one moment say that IAPCHE does not have an international or global calling to promote *Christian* higher education – in Africa too. As will transpire it is today needed more than ever before. I want us to be cautious about *wrong* ways of internationalization.

2.3 Universities as cultural products

"Why not more positive?" you may ask. The main reason is that everywhere contemporary tertiary education cannot be isolated from our global world culture and the ideological forces driving it (cf. Van der Walt, 2011a:1-5). After *ecclesiastical* rule and subsequent *political* (colonial) imperialism, we today experience a new rule, the first global imperium. This new empire is a *commercial* one – not only dominant in the North-Western world, but also in the Southern hemisphere, the African continent included.

During a long history, a variety of ideologies have, however, secularized our Western cultural environment. Secularization implies not acknowledging either the true God or his directions for human life – unacceptable ideas to us as Christian scholars (cf. Van der Walt, 2007).

The basic philosophy behind secularization is (already as early as in Hellenist philosophy) the idea of human autonomy (derived from the Greek *autos* = self + *nomos* = law), viz. that the human being – especially his reason – should himself be the infallible norm to guide him in theory and practice. God's threefold revelation was replaced by human Reason (an absolutized mind and will) as an unquestionable pseudo-revelation (cf. Mekkes, 2010). In this way, after the fall into sin, mankind, therefore, not only wanted to be like God (replaced him), but also constructed his/her final – but deceptive – security (his/her own normative revelation).

This crazy idea also lead to subjectivism: Not acknowledging God as Lawgiver and his revelation as normative; creational things and human endeavours (subjected to his ordinances) were elevated to laws/norms. What *is* is also regarded as what *ought* to be!

Our electronic information culture, development, globalization and internationalization should therefore, according to a biblical viewpoint, not be norms in themselves (autonomous) but should be evaluated normatively! If not, they become like a dangerous train without any rails and therefore no direction to go.

2.4 Perhaps Africa's greatest problem?

To summarize my main concern: Should we burden Africa with imported Western internationalization, while it already has enough of its own problems? Sometime ago Kinoti (1994:15ff) mentioned only hunger, disease, injustice, dehumanization, economic and political problems. Recently Turaki (2011:3, 4) provided a list of no less than sixty serious challenges categorized under the following headings: Cultural and social issues, political, economic, judicial and religious issues. Educational problems are explicitly mentioned. And Van der Walt (2003b) wrote about the moral crisis in Africa. (It should be no surprise that Adeyemo in 1997 wrote a book with the title *Is Africa cursed?*) What is unfortunately missing in these lists of Africa's problems is secularization. In many places traditional African religion today is simply replaced by the secular religion of the West.

My uneasiness is the following. Perhaps because of the phenomenal growth of Christianity in Africa (cf. again Johnson & Ross, 2010) I could find very little on secularization from an African perspective (cf. Shorter & Onyancha, 1997). However, this may be Africa's greatest problem – if not now then definitely in future. Without an integral Christian worldview and lifestyle (not a mere "churchified" Christianity) the present rapid growth may soon be reversed into an even quicker decline of integral Christianity. The widespread influence of the so-called gospel of health and wealth (mainly imported from the US) can, for example, not really provide solutions to Africa's problems (cf. Gifford, 1998).

Thus in my view the motivation for establishing Christian schools and tertiary institutions should not be merely the failure of government institutions, decline of standards and bad moral behaviour, but primarily the secular character of education itself. (This statement implies neither that nothing good can be expected from secular higher educational institutions, nor that Christian institutions can in any way be perfect.)

The need for CHE established, the next question will be:

2.5 *When to start a Christian academy and what it implies*

Hart (1976:79) provides a few suggestions indicating when the time is ripe to venture in the direction of a separate Christian institution: (1) When the power of sin has taken on alarming proportions. (Then a Christian institution should also identify the key areas in which the power of idolatry has progressed far and make them its priorities.) (2) When it becomes evident that Christians can no longer work effectively in existing public institutions because they do no longer provide sufficient elbow room for one's deepest Christian convictions. (3) However, when Christians start an own institution they should know beforehand what a university is *not* (e.g. a moralistic hothouse) and what it *should be*.

2.6 *What a Christian university should not be*

Since it is often easier to say what something is not or should not be, let us begin by stating how the "Christian" of a Christian college/university in its full meaning should not be understood (cf. Van der Walt, 2011c). (1) "Christian" should not merely have a historical meaning; (2) it should not be interpreted in terms of *church* activities on campus; (3) or that Christian *evangelisation* is being done amongst students; (4) the "Christian" is also not located in *additional subjects* taught (like Bible Studies or Theology); (5) neither does it merely refer to the religious (Christian) convictions of most of the students and/or staff or (6) opening or closing one's lectures with *Bible reading and prayer*.

Let me for a moment focus on only one common danger to Christian education originating among Christians themselves.

2.7 *Not acknowledging God's threefold revelation*

A real risk in practising Christian scholarship (especially in theological schools or faculties of theology) is the tendency towards *Biblicism* or *bibliolatry*.

2.7.1 *The dangers of biblicism*

This approach firstly regards the Bible as a sort of rule- or textbook, instead of a lamp to enable us to read the text of creation. Secondly, it views the Scriptures as the only revelation from God. Thirdly, it gives the impression of being objective. In actual fact *biblicism* can be a method first to read one's own preconceived worldview (even an unbiblical one) *into* the Word (*eisegesis*), followed by reading it *out from* the Scriptures (*exegesis*) – but now divinely sanctioned! Next, this way of dealing with the Scriptures implies a wrong interpretation of one of the well-known passwords of the sixteenth century Reformation, viz. *sola scriptura*.

This Latin expression does not mean that we should regard the Bible as God's sole revelation. It actually means "by the Scripture alone". In other words *in the light* of Scripture alone (cf. Ps. 36:10, Ps. 119:105) will we be able to understand the two other "parts" of God's revelation.

Finally, a *biblicist* viewpoint may separate the Bible, especially when regarded as the field of investigation of only theologians, not only from ordinary believers but also from the scholarly work to be done in all the other disciplines. (The idea been that theology studies God's revelation – or even God himself – while all other scholars have to confine themselves to the investigation of creation.) Either these many other fields of study are then regarded as secular by nature, or other scholars have to enquire from the theological experts what the Bible has to say for their subjects. Both of these options are deplorable. The second is also diametrically opposed to the basic Reformational idea that the Bible is accessible to every believer. I do not deny the value of theological education, but it cannot – as many theologians might suppose – solve all our pressing problems. (This tendency clearly transpires from expressions like "theological economics", "theological ecology", "theological ethics" and many more.)

2.7.2 *God's threefold revelation*

The correct viewpoint is that God's one Word is a threefold Word. Already before the fall He revealed himself in creation, and continue to do so today. (In this regard I strongly recommend the book by Mekkes (2010) which emphasises the absolute necessity for genuine Christian scholarship to also acknowledge God's creational revelation.) After Adam and Eve fell into disobedience, He walked a second kilometre with us: First in an oral and then in a written form, He drives his Word even closer to us in the Scriptures, documenting the successive unfolding stages of revelation. Because of our unwillingness to hear and see, God so to say, walked with us all the way by giving us his final Word, incarnated, personified in Jesus Christ, the key to God's entire revelation (cf. Luke 11:52). One can only truly understand God's revelation in creation as well as in the Scriptures from his central revelation in Christ.

Thus to minimize or devaluate any part of God's threefold Word or revelation, will not only imply ignoring his full revelation. It will sooner or later also distorts one's view of creation, one's calling in this world – including scholarship – as well as one's relation to one's Creator and Redeemer. (For more on this perspective based on biblical evidence, cf. the clear exposition by Spykman, 1992:76-90.)

According to Mekkes (2010) God's revelation is also not static, but a dynamic power, a voice from beyond our human horizon to direct us in our thoughts and deeds. Nobody can really think or live without revelation. One either listens to the Truth obediently or rejects it and replaces it with one's own pseudo-revelation (Romans 1:18-20).

I am thus not rejecting or minimizing the Scriptures, but pleading for biblically oriented worldview and philosophy (cf. Van der Walt, 2010e).

2.8 The implications for Christian scholarship

If you ask me about the implications of the preceding ideas for genuine Christian scholarship, I would have liked to refer you to the two excellent articles of Vollenhoven (2011). But since they are in Dutch let me quote from one of his followers, Spykman (1991:19) in English:

Here then is the Christo-centric basis for Christian scholarship. Recognizing him [Christ] as the key to God's Word for creation and as the heart of his Word inscripturated, we can begin to "lead every thought captive in obedience to Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

By the impinging power of his creational Word, God in his preserving grace still maintains the structural order of the cosmos. This makes science possible. By the light of the written Word He redirects our hearts and minds and wills unto renewed academic obedience. In the Word who now claims 'all authority in heaven and earth' (Mat. 28:18). He answers the question: In whose service do we stand.

As a compressed definition of Christian scholarship Spykman (1991:19) offers the following:

(a) Seeking to discern the norms of God's Word for creation as they hold for our life together in this world; (b) illuminated and directed by God's Word in the Scriptures; (c) under the rule of God's Word in our Lord Jesus Christ; and (d) in the service of his coming Kingdom.

Of course this is an easy ideal to state, but hard to be practiced! (Cf. Griffioen, 1994; Felch, 2003; Young, 2013.)

2.9 Only preliminary signs

In spite of the worldwide movement towards CHE (cf. Carpenter, 2008) and the presence of Reformational Christian scholarship (cf. Van der Walt,

2010b, 2010c, 2010d & 2010f), also in our Christian academic endeavours we should not forget the importance of humility. Calvin already stipulated the requirement for what he called a *philosophia christiana* (Christian philosophy): in the first place humility, in the second humility and finally humility again. None of the symbols we erect as signs of the coming kingdom of God are here to stay. Also our academic institutions are only symbols of the new world to come at the return of Christ – they are not that new world itself. When they are not clear signs anymore we should break them down – just like the old temple in Jerusalem.

We turn now to our third main point:

3. The nature and service of an academic institution: three basic views

Usually only when there is time left – as a hobby – most academics reflect on the nature and task of their daily work. This is also the case at Christian institutions and important for our reflections about internationalizing universities.

As Seerveld (2000:2) correctly writes, the Bible (cf. Psalm 78:7-8) does tell us to instruct the next generation, but not how a university should be structured. The only option we have is to critically trace the history of university education of the past.

3.1 Three basic views

When one studies the history of universities it becomes evident that during its long history different viewpoints about its task have been held. Apart from Seerveld (2000:1-4) Venter (1975, 1978a, 1978b, 1978c, 1978d & 1987) provides an excellent overview and finally distinguishes between the following three main ideas: (1) the moulding of a person's whole life, (2) strictly scholarly (theoretical) education, (3) tertiary education (also) has the task to serve society at large. Generalized we may call the second the more European-Continental view and the third a more typical North American approach.

Especially Africans will expect their higher educational institutions to serve their people and countries. (Service, after all is a biblical idea. Cf. Matthew 20:26-28) However, the question is *what kind* of service, since the service rendered should tally with an institution's specific nature and task.

Let us start with a representative of idea number 2 to help us to reflect on (1) the nature of a university, (2) what kind of service it could render, (3) its critical role and (4) how it should be done.

3.2 *The university viewed as a strictly scholarly institution*

An impressive amount of reflection on the nature and task of a university viewed from a Reformational perspective was done in the past in the Netherlands (cf. e.g. Popma, 1969; Bruggemann-Kruijff, Voorluis & Zijlstra, 1978; Stellingwerff, 1971). I start with a definition of a like-minded scholar in English.

3.2.1 *A definition*

The oldest idea about the university was that it is (and should be) a community of teachers and students (*universitas magistrorum et scholarium*). The following definition with the addition of research (a task added during the 19th century) follows this idea:

A university embraces a community of scholars whose pursuit is to gain scientific insight into reality and to make their theoretic finds serviceable to society. To that end it engages in research and educates those who will translate the insights of the academy in terms of social functions for leaders in our culture (Hart, 1976:74).

Thus education at university is considered to be primarily of a theoretical nature. It brings the scholar into contact with the universally valid constitution of experience holding for everyone. But the academic does not get at this constant lawful behaviour unless he/she breaks up his/her experience and pulls part of it out of context. For that reason theoretical knowledge is always an abstract, a broken and distant and therefore limited kind of knowledge (cf. Blokhuis, 1985). It is more or less like looking down from a plane a few thousand meters above the earth. One will merely recognize the larger landmark contours like mountains, rivers, forests, deserts etcetera.

3.2.2 *Illustrations*

To use another simple example: Chemically speaking, water is H₂O, but what water really is is not exhausted in this formula of a natural scientist – you will not be able to quench a thirsty person by offering him the logical reduction of water to H₂O! But we are so much influenced by science that, for example, a medical doctor may be inclined to treat only a *migraine* by prescribing some pills – totally forgetting that he has to help a *person* not feeling well.

Furthermore every discipline only studies a small facet of the whole of multifaceted reality. An interesting example of how scholars from different disciplines analyse the *same* phenomenon from *different* theoretical perspectives is discussed by Runner (1982:152).

3.2.3 *Both unlimited and limited power*

Hart (1976:77) illustrates both the power and weakness of theoretical knowledge with the following example. An agricultural scholar is not primarily concerned about a particular crop failure. He asks the question: Why? His attention is directed at the circumstances that may predict the regularity of such failures. When he has completed his research his theories no longer deal with any one situation in particular, but with all possible cases under the same conditions. Because he deals with regularity of structural relations, his statements are unlimited, appealing to universal validity.

But because he deals with no situation in particular and since his theories always only approach reality and are not to be identified with it, his work is also limited. Kok (2004:63) agrees when he says that scientific work can deepen our understanding or enhance our ability to describe something – it is *more* than everyday knowledge – but at the same time it is *less* than pre-scientific knowledge because of its abstract character about a small part of reality.

3.2.4 *The kind of service to be rendered*

According to this viewpoint the function of scholarship is that it can provide a penetrating analysis of reality; it can help in foreseeing the possible; it can fulfil a critical function.

About the last kind of service Hart (1976:87) writes:

... the nature of scholarship is by definition critical. For that reason it is not only dangerous for the academy to be controlled by ecclesiastical, industrial and political powers, but it is even risky for the community for scholars not to be able to criticise these institutions or to be afraid of embarrassing them ... A critical community of scholars and students which exercise its critical function responsibly is not a danger but a service to society.

3.2.5 *Casting out academic "demons"*

According to Hart (1976:71, 72) apart from a critique of society and culture in general a university – in particular a Christian one – has the responsibility

to cast out enslaving demons or ideologies which hold the university itself under their spells and charms.

External powers

They are in the first place external destructive powers infiltrating an institution. Hart mentions all kinds of ideologies or -isms, like scientism, specialism, rationalism etc. The greater the conviction with which these viewpoints are held amongst the staff, and the more their origins and functions are hidden from Christian academics, the greater will be their influence.

The irony is that actually these damaging ideas did not originate outside the academy. They were conceived by intellectuals and academics in higher education. Like boomerangs these dangerous ideologies are now returning to attack their own "home" and "fathers"!

Internal dangers

In the second place more internal dangers can also affect an institution negatively. One example is (cf. Hart, 1976:94) that simply because of the size of an academic institution the growing administration and organization can interfere with the academic process. Structures, rules, meetings and more can kill scholarly creativity.

Of course the exposure of these dangers is merely preparatory to unleashing the liberating powers of a Christian academy.

3.2.6 The way in which the service should be given

From what was said already the first requirement for service is perhaps the university's own in-house service: To gain critical insight into its own work and thus not to idolise scholarly knowledge but be aware of its limitations, viz. its more *indirect* and *theoretical* service to society at large.

On how it should share its insights the following should be kept in mind: (1) The university can only provide *advice* and should not *decide* about e.g. economic policies. (Governments may closely follow the economic theorist's analysis without solving the economic problems of a country.) (2) Theoretic knowledge is *not neutral* but influenced by personal convictions and many other factors. (3) Since an actual, practical situation is never a mere copy of a theoretical model, academic *activism* can be dangerous – trying to force reality into its own ideals. (4) Especially Christian scholarly advice should be done *in humility*, in realizing its own inadequacy, incompleteness, temporary nature, fallibility and more. (5) Lastly, in the interest of quality service,

Christian scholars and a Christian institution should *not try to do everything* a secular one does. It will identify and focus on the real burning, central issues in a culture, crying the loudest for redemption.

Usually Christian institutions will not be able to do everything also because of limited financial and other resources. Stated differently: Christian higher institutions of learning should scratch where it really itches. In biblical terms: they should erect tents of refuge, small signposts of the shalom of God's coming kingdom.

3.3 The university in the service of society at large

From an Anglo-American perspective Wolterstorff has published quite a number of books and other contributions on Christian education and Christian academic work. (Cf. Wolterstorff, 1980; Joldersma & Stronks, 2004; Sloane, 2003 and Stronks & Joldersma, 2002.) He is a representative of idea number 3.

3.3.1 Practice-oriented scholarship

Wolterstorff (1983:3 ff.) like Hart, rejects a world-aversive type of Christianity in favour of a world-transformative kind. However, his view about the relation between theory (scholarly work) and praxis (the world outside the academy) differs from that of Hart. Wolterstorff advocates practice-oriented scholarship to which he devotes a whole chapter (p. 162 ff.). Simply stated, one may say that, instead of orthodoxy, he favours orthopraxis (cf. Bolt, 1986).

What he has in mind does not only imply scholars' responsibility for the ways in which their theories are applied in practice. He sees a much closer relationship and even quotes Karl Marx's well-known words: our task is not to *describe* the world (theoretically) but to *change* it (practically).

3.3.2 Social responsibility

Wolterstorff in the beginning of his book distinguishes between the praxis-oriented theorist and the neo-Calvinist idea (p. 166), but later on he combines the two (p. 171) and concludes (p. 172) that social responsibility is inescapable for a Christian scholar. (This idea was to a certain extent also incorporated in South African universities' threefold task: teaching, research and community service.)

The following words more or less summarize his viewpoint:

The neo-Calvinists have focussed on the fact that Christian commitment involves 'a way of seeing reality', and they have reflected seriously on the consequences of that fact for the practice of scholarship. What they have failed to think through – so it seems to me – is the consequences of the fact that Christian commitment also involves a mode of engagement in society. Their understanding of commitment has remained too abstract. What is needed is reflection on the relevance of theorizing to obedient action, not just reflection on obedient theorizing. In truth, there can be no understanding of the nature of obedient theorizing without perceiving the relevance of theorizing to obedient action, and the need for theorizing to be of service to the action (Wolterstorff, 1983:172, 173).

Wolterstorff is clearly a representative of the third idea about the task of an academy distinguished by Venter above.

3.3.3 A critical voice

Seerveld (2000:3) is much more critical about the American type of universities after World War II. They were transformed into vocational institutions to enable students for the job market. Mathematics, natural sciences, technology, engineering etcetera were emphasized, while a wider perspective on the world was lost. These "educational cafeterias" or "degree factories" were furthermore closely linked with the market forces – universities become Big Business.

Seerveld (2000:3-4) writes

... the student get lost in the massive machinery of teachers needing to publish articles of expertise in refereed journals only the initiate can read, and the university's fixation handling the grades of a student's 'performance' efficiently rather than taking the time to judge the worth of the education given and received. And university administrators, rather than being held accountable for their visionary leadership of a community of scholars, often came to be evaluated by their success in raising funds. Large American universities today, I believe, are run more like business corporations ... and yet have become cultural power-brokers around the world on what higher education should be.

Seerveld (2000:9) therefore does not take the America Western model of university scholarship as the norm for what an institution for higher learning should be.

3.4 Comprehensive moulding as task of the university

We also have to say something about the first view of the task of a university mentioned above, viz. moulding or forming a person's life. Also this is an old ideal if one recalls that especially British academics saw the task of their universities as the training of the "gentleman". This view is considered today anew (cf. Jeynes, 2012 and earlier, in a more popular form, Anderson, 1995).

Since the issues remained the same and even intensified today, I will have a brief look at the report of a working group (under the chairmanship of Prof. L. Bouckaert) to the Catholic University of Louvain, dated 1992.

3.4.1 Point of departure and context

Its point of departure is that a university should not be a conglomerate of autonomous, isolated subject departments and faculties, merely held together by the administration of the university. Simply technical knowledge of a student's special subjects will lead to idiotism without the necessary formative influence on the students as concrete human beings.

As background this report first sketches the context, concentrating mainly on the economizing of the university, a relativism in values and (economic) rationalization.

The report is clearly critical about the idea that the university should become an economic unit in the market. Its reasons are *inter alia* that it would inevitably lead to competitive pressure to produce; place more emphasis on the market value of only some subjects; emphasize technical and professional training; and leave even less space for the important formative task of a university.

3.4.2 The meaning of moulding

The report correctly states that – like all education – the moulding or formative task of higher education is much more than simply the transfer of knowledge. It includes many facets like motivations, convictions, values and relations. Only in this way can a university be a cultural shaping institution, where technical specialization is not excluded but not overstressed.

3.4.3 Possible solutions

This report provides three strategies to counteract the lack in the formative character of education: (1) it can be done from a comprehensive view about the world and being human; (2) by no longer living "apart together", but an integration between the different sciences; (3) more openness towards interaction, dialogue and cooperation between all the fields of specialization.

In this way also students can be enriched by discussions – instead of *ex cathedra* education.

The report furthermore emphasises the value of subjects like philosophy and literature. In spite of the fact that they may be regarded as (economically speaking) not useful, they are value-able to remove the blinkers of specialization.

The report finally also recommends that courses in ethics should not only be offered in, for example, medicine, engineering and economics, but in every discipline.

We have now reviewed three basic ideals of what a tertiary educational institution should be. I leave it up to you to discuss which of the three models, or a combination of them, will be the most appropriate within the present African context.

We have now arrived at a fourth main issue:

4. The primary service of a Christian academic institution

The real danger exists – especially today – that the academic world's service to the outside world is overemphasized to such a degree that its *internal* service – the teaching of its students – is downplayed. Seerveld (2000:8) warns:

If a secular government promotes technology and engineering ... so that the university can assist a country to meet the rabid international competition of industrial production, one needs to ask whether the kingdom of God has the same priorities before one joins the crowd ... [towards] the godless, dominant rush to serve Mammon.

A college/university today, especially a large one, cannot be visualized consisting only of teachers and students – it also needs managers who administer the institution. I will confine myself here to a few remarks about the teaching process taking place between lecturers and students. However, later on (in the article following this one) it will become evident that a Christian educational institution without managers organizing it in a Christian way proves to be an impossibility.

4.1 Defining teaching

Kok (2004:60) provides the following definition:

Teaching our students requires that we *lead* them into ("intro-duction") places unknown or less known to them when they begin; that we *guide* them through what more often than not seems initially to be a maze of theories, concepts, facts and procedures; and that we do this all while *enabling* them to walk these paths confidently on their own – in community – in the future.

To lecturers Kok (2004:64ff.) gives the following advice: about an activity (teaching) that has many dimensions. The teacher has to know not only his stuff, but also his students; mastering the former and being open to the latter.

4.2 Relationships

The lecturer's relationship to his/her students does not imply her/him to be their buddy, but to connect with them, understand them and their needs. As a teacher you are there, ultimately not for yourself but for them, to facilitate their learning. Work with them, pray with them, make time for them also outside the classroom. If possible have them over to your home.

One should also share with them one's own vision of life and sense of vocation, of what inspires and excites one, of what one as a Christian stands for. This should be done without an attitude of complacency or coercion.

To be privileged to sit at the feet of such a mentor means much, much more to students than merely to read books or consult their computers for information only.

4.3 Method

In this regard Kok (2004:65) recommends Vollenhoven's thetical-critical method. One should not begin by defining one's own stance in terms of what one *negatively* rejects (an antithetical attitude) in secular scholarship, but by *positively* stating thetically one's own, albeit preliminary, Christian viewpoint. In addition to proceeding thetically, Christian's also need to work critically. We have to examine and test the spirits that seek to impact our everyday lives as well as permeate the academy. Students must be taught to know, question, analyse, evaluate their academic and cultural environment. Such a thetical-critical method has a double advantage: It helps students both to understand themselves better and to understand what is different from their own viewpoint.

4.4 *The master teacher*

Epstein (1981) is still worthwhile reading if one intends to become a good teacher/lecturer. He, for instance, mentions the following characteristics: (1) knowledge of, insight into and enthusiasm about the subject you teach; (2) commitment to one's students; (3) putting your own subject in a wider context; (4) being a bold intellectual pathfinder, not condoning intellectual orthodoxy.

Now a few flashes about a Christian university or college.

4.5 *A Christian university*

In sections 2.4 to 2.6 above we have already stated what a Christian university should not be, as well as what Christian scholarship entails, but nothing about the task of a Christian educational institution. We now listen to what Seerveld (2000) has to offer in this regard.

First he defines it as follows:

A university is an institutional community of an older and younger generation of scholars and students whose calling together is to discover and cultivate God's world with informed, imaginative reflection, and then as responsible, responding human subjects *coram Deo* together articulate their acquired wisdom in awed thanks to God, sharing its blessings with one's neighbours, and by taking care of all God's marvellous creatures (Seerveld, 2000:5-6)

In this connection Seerveld strongly emphasises wisdom against the technism of today and writes:

What the biblical Proverbs call 'knowledge' ... is a first-hand, intimate experience of what God wants done, and what the Bible calls human 'wisdom' ... is the Spirit-filled, disciplined ability to judge what God wants done, what is right to do, what is just ... (Seerveld, 2000:8)

Against specialization and the disappearance of a common perspective binding a university community together, he emphasises (p. 6) the need for a Christian worldview and a Christian systematic philosophy and historiography. About the second he writes:

By a Christian philosophical systematics I mean the practice of theory oriented towards probing the structured aspects of things, persons, acts and events, fettering out the interrelated meaning of the matters under scrutiny. A Christian idea of philosophy, you could say, is that philosophy is more a set of fundamental questions that it is a number of answers; philosophy is a constellation of categories within which one proceeds to think and make conceptual judgments. A Christian philosophical systematics itself will be a network of leading ideas what order how you analyse specific affairs and construe their encyclopaedic connections, and this network of leading ideas or orientational categories will be marked by biblical wisdom. (Seerveld, 2000:6. Cf. also Venter, 1999a on the role of a Christian philosophy at a Christian university.)

4.6 *The availability of an integral Christian philosophy*

The reader may be interested whether such an integral, biblically-orientated Christian philosophy exists to service as the basis for Christian tertiary education and to form a cohesive element, countering the dangers of a multi-university. The good-news is that such a philosophy is available today, also in the English language. (See my bibliography at the end.)

The ideal of such a genuine Christian philosophy originated already at the establishment of the Free University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands in 1880. But especially since the middle of the 20th century it crystalized more clearly and gained momentum with the work of professors D.H.Th. Vollenhoven (1892-1978) and H. Dooyeweerd (1894-1977). In South Africa it was supported by professor H.G. Stoker (1899-1993) in his own unique way.

Through the following generations up to the present day the heritage of these three "fathers" has been respected but also modified – not only in philosophy but as the basis for many other disciplines. The recent work (of 540 pages in Dutch) by Woldring (2013) traces this long history of about 135 years, telling something about the life and insights of every one of these Reformational scholars.

But it is important to be aware of the fact that this unique Christian-Reformational philosophy (and its applications to other subjects) was not confined to a small country (The Netherlands) and a language few people today can read. For detail about its impact around the world the reader may consult my article (Van der Walt, 2010f). I therefore encourage my English speaking readers to get acquainted with its liberating voice for a real Christian encounter with many burning issues for today.

To enable you to follow my argumentation, I should also make the following remarks (or fifth main point) about the kind of social philosophy underlying the idea of a Christian tertiary institution.

5. An analysis from a pluralist social philosophy

An important shortcoming of evangelical-reformed Christianity all over the world is its lack of a biblically-oriented, own "philosophy" about social life and consequently simply to accommodate to one or other secular viewpoint (cf. Runner, 1982:159-195; Van der Walt, 2010a, 2011b).

I therefore have to state in advance that I neither accept an individualistic nor a socialistic or communalistic view of social life or Christian efforts to "baptize" them. According to the first idea (of which capitalism is a prime example) the individual is regarded as of primary importance, while social structures are viewed merely as contracts between individuals. According to a socialistic and communalistic philosophy the opposite is the case: A certain societal relationship (e.g. a tribe, the state or a religious institution) is absolutized into encompassing all individuals and other social structures.

5.1 A pluralistic social perspective

In the light of what was explained already, a genuine Reformational perspective on social life also rejects the today very popular distinction between a "private" and "public" square, according to which the first may allow a place for one's religious convictions but the second should be secular (cf. Skillen, 1990).

The Reformational tradition prefers a third alternative, a pluralist social perspective according to which humans live in a variety of social relationships. Each of them (marriage, family, school, church, state, business and university) has a different task and calling. Therefore each one has a different kind of internal authority vested in their own office bearers with limited power and qualified responsibility (cf. Skillen & McCarthy, 1991; Skillen, 1992 and Van der Walt, 2010a). One societal structure (e.g. business) is therefore only in exceptional cases allowed to interfere in the internal affairs of others (e.g. a university).

The Reformational tradition also rejects hierarchical authority, meaning that God (or a god) *transfers* his divine authority to people (officers or managers) in authority in a societal structure. Such an idea of *derived* (semi-divine) authority usually results in authoritarianism and elevates people in authority

above any critique. Authority implies the insight of the leader(s) in the specific task of a school, university, business, etc. and a willingness to obey that task. If not, they should be reprimanded or replaced.

To keep this in mind is of the greatest importance, especially for university leaders, managers and administrators. We cannot discuss it here, but in the next article the vital importance of a correct view on authority, power and responsibility for managers will become evident.

5.2 The implications for a college/university

The upshot of the above plural view of social life is:

Only when the typical structure, the unique intrinsic nature of an institution, is accounted for, will it be possible to come to a meaningful distinction what *typically* does and does not belong to the task of that institution (Strauss, 2009:594).

Because of urgent needs of various kinds, a societal relation may sometimes undertake a-typical tasks – not to make another social structure (permanently) dependent or subservient – but with the aim to strengthen the typical task of another social structure.

Therefore Strauss (2009:595) continues:

When universities – for the sake of relieving poverty, uplifting communities and opening opportunities involve themselves in a-typical tasks ('community service'), the aim should always be to help various sectors of society to grow and mature to a point where they can properly function within their social orbits.

5.3 Confessional pluralism

In the Reformational philosophy an important distinction is made between two concepts: structure and direction. The first refers to the variety of *creational things*, plants, animals and humans; the second indicates the *religious direction* of human beings and various things they create.

Structure and direction should be clearly distinguished (not confused as in the dualism of nature and supernature), but can never be separated, since they are inseparably related.

An example of their *separation* is that of two development workers. The secular expert knows everything about the know-how (structural side)

of development, but may not do his work out of real love. The Christian, on the other hand, is motivated by real compassion (the correct direction) for the underdeveloped poor, but completely lack the insight on how to do development.

An example of *inseparable nature* of structure and direction is that of a marriage. It may legally and otherwise fulfil all the requirements of married life, but if the direction (mutual fidelity) is lacking, the marriage structure will eventually fall apart because of its wrong direction.

These two concepts (structural and confessional) are also applied in a Reformational philosophy of social life and education. Apart from *structural pluralism* (already explained above) the reformational tradition also believes – since today we live in a pluralist society (cf. Newbigin, 1966, 1986, 1989 and Hunsberger, 1998) – in *confessional pluralism*. This refers to the *direction* of social structures and institutions, to the inescapable fact that social life cannot be separated from a specific worldviewish-religious commitment. All humans should therefore have the equal right to express their deepest convictions also in public. Secularists, Muslims and Christians may, for instance, establish their own religiously-oriented educational institutions, political parties, etc. (cf. McCarthy et al., 1981 and McCarthy et al., 1982).

Boer (2006:16, 17) regards confessional pluralism as the only real solution, for instance, of the long, bloody struggle between the approximately 80 million Christians and the same number of Muslims in Nigeria to obtain a say in so-called public life. (Muslims are also fighting Western secularism.)

5.4 Diversified love

God does not prescribe in the Bible how a university should be structured. At the time of the Bible no such institution existed. As a result of human cultural activity many societal relationships only developed later in history. But all of them have to be obedient to God's central commandment of love in order to fulfil their specific tasks. Like the many colours of a rainbow love should become concrete as public justice in politics; as careful stewardship of resources in economics; as mutual fidelity in marriage; and in the academic world as loving God with your mind, when trying to understand the world as well as your specific calling.

However, in this fallen and broken world, to really love God and our fellow creatures does not imply a kind of romantic love. It irrevocably implies suffering for oneself and suffering with others (compassion). Also in the academic world we must first stand at the cross where Christ suffered out of love for

us, to be able to become his followers, suffering out of love when ignored or persecuted because we want to be his faithful witnesses in scholarship.

6. The approach and aim of the next article

For the following article I have decided to follow the African way by telling you a real story, leaving it to you to draw your own conclusions and challenge me with your questions. (For a similar but fictitious story cf. Van der Walt, 2001:167-183.)

6.1 The aim of the story

This story is a *practical* illustration of how not to internationalize Christian higher education. It will assist you in seeing the *concrete implications* of various international secularizing ideologies at a higher educational institution; that these ideologies are not abstract ideas but real ways of living, also influencing education.

Differently stated: How Christians themselves have – within only about fifteen years – secularized a large African Christian higher educational institution with about 20,000 students on campus and an additional 45,000 off-campus students. A very sad story indeed. When I walk on the Potchefstroom campus these days (the School of Philosophy and the Faculty of Theology perhaps the only exceptions) I feel a bit like Nietzsche in his well-known story: In bright daylight with a lantern looking to find God and his norms somewhere.

6.2 Testing the spirits of our age

After the fall into sin every culture everywhere is always a mixture of good and bad. As Christians we therefore have, as said already, to test the spirits of our times (1 John 4:1) – not only in a pre-scientific but also in a scholarly way. Full human well-being – not only well-fare – is the green light in a culture, a sign that we obey God's ordinations. But Christians should also be aware of orange and red warning lights, indicators that a culture and its institutions do not follow God's guidance.

In such a situation Christians are often tempted to take a dualistic approach: on the one hand accepting the dominant secular culture of public life, while on the other hand trying to remain faithful Christians in their private and church life – the already mentioned phenomenon of a divided heart. However, in this way Christians do not avoid the danger of secularism but fall right into its devious trap. Eventually it becomes evident that it is impossible to live a double life, sitting on two chairs, serving two masters.

6.3 The positive aim

Thus the sad story about the secularization of the erstwhile PU for CHE (Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, since 2004 renamed the North-West University) to be told in the next article is nevertheless narrated with a *positive* intent: IAPCHE and the recently newly established Christian colleges and universities all over Africa and elsewhere should take note of how and why a prominent African educational institution, with a rich history of 135 years, was robbed of its Christian character. A totally different Christian African university at Potchefstroom could have emerged (cf. Van der Walt, 1998).

History does not belong to the dust-bin of the present: God uses the past to teach us wisdom for the future. May this story move your hearts and minds to discern, apart from possible benefits, the lurking dangers behind internationalization.

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Note: Due to the fact that not much has been published elsewhere on the history told in these articles, this bibliography is firstly, though not exclusively, mainly confined to the publications of local (Potchefstroom) authors. (My apologies for including so many of my own publications, but after all, this is my personal story.) Secondly, without excluding secular works on higher education and ideologies, I have deliberately tried to draw the attention of the reader also to sound Reformational sources. Thirdly, I have milked many cows, but the cheese I have made remains my own product and responsibility.

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