

“Lest We Forget”: A Postapartheid Perspective on Remembering in Liturgy for Healing and Justice

Hilton Scott*
University of Pretoria, South Africa

*Corresponding Author: Hilton Scott, University of Pretoria, Theology Building, Hatfield Campus, Pretoria, 0002, South Africa. Email: hiltonscottrev@gmail.com

Abstract

The idea of Remembrance Day (also known as Armistice Day) in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth countries carries two important notions: (1) to remember significant tragedies and sacrifices of the past by paying homage, and (2) to ensure that such catastrophes are prevented in the future by not forgetting. This concept can be applied to the South African context of a society and young democracy that is living in the wake of apartheid. In certain spheres this will include decolonizing the long-standing practices of Remembrance Day in South Africa, ritualizing the event(s) to be more relevant to those who partake by shifting the focus to tragedies caused during apartheid, and remembering that such a deplorable catastrophe should never be repeated. The important liturgical functions and pragmatic outcome(s) of this notion are reconciliation, restoration, transformation and, ultimately, liberation, as South Africans look to heal the wounds caused by the tragedies of the recent past and prevent such pain from being inflicted on others in the future.

Keywords: Remembering, reconciliation, restoration, transformation, liberation, healing, ritual, liturgy, postapartheid, decolonization

1. Introduction

“Lest we forget”! These are the three words most commonly associated with Remembrance Day¹ in many English-speaking or Commonwealth countries in which South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia are included, come the beginning of November each year. Around the same time of the year, poppies adorn the lapels and collars of many as they display that they will or do “remember.” Traditionally, some English medium schools with British heritage in South Africa play their role in Remembrance Day. On the eleventh day, of the eleventh month, at the eleventh hour the bell rings eleven times outside the school chapel. As a pupil of one of these schools in Durban (Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa), this will be the experience throughout one’s schooling career. Often while in the Remembrance Day chapel service, one will hear a reading of the ode below, as written by Robert Laurence Binyon (1914):²

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn;

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,

We will remember them.

While quintessentially this may be a ritual act performed in a colonialist culture or seen as a colonial idea and practice, the thought arises that Africans, and more specifically South

Africans, could apply the notion of remembrance to their own ritual-liturgical and lived contexts. As a nation, South Africans have various public holidays that bring forth associating a day with terrible or triumphant events of the past. Freedom Day³ and Youth Day,⁴ which are observed and/or celebrated on April 27 and June 16, respectively, are examples of how South Africans remember. However, are there episodes or situations such as Remembrance Day and the build up to it that allow those who were plighted to significantly remember and to themselves ponder “lest we forget”? The stanza quoted above is from one of many poems that are associated with Remembrance Day, not to mention the poppies and wreaths that decorate items of clothing and buildings—many of which are churches. What, of these elements, can South Africans draw comparison with of their own remembering? Before posing a critical question the following should be considered, as written by Knight (2018):

As Remembrance Day arrives, we often hear the commemorative phrase “lest we forget” as we remember fallen soldiers from World War I across the British Commonwealth . . . The phrase encapsulates our desire to remember the past tragedy and sacrifice and ensure that such bloody catastrophe never happens again.

Therefore the question arises: *can liturgy aid society by healing those who suffered and preventing further atrocities through constantly remembering?* This question will be discussed by constantly referring to the likes of Remembrance Day, the service itself as well as the period of time leading up to November 11. The main question above leads to further questions such as: (1) does the notion of remembering those who have fallen in conflict or oppression allow participants to purge the pain of their own experiences? As well as: (2) does repeating this remembrance aid in preventing such “catastrophes” from ever happening again? These questions shall be asked over and again as this topic is discussed using the fields of Pastoral Care, Liturgical and Ritual Studies. Perhaps a pertinent question that should also be asked is: should Remembrance Day be liturgically “decolonized” for communities of worshipers to participate in events that are appropriate to them? In this regard, such a practice can be applied across the continent. Examples of this could include more recent catastrophes such as apartheid, the Rwandan genocide, or the Marikana massacre of 2012 (also in South Africa) as well as the more historic, albeit numerous other atrocities committed or incited by European colonial empires across Africa. As Africa develops, it is important to remember these atrocities and ensure that they are never experienced by anyone ever again—“lest we forget.”

2. “Lest We Forget”: The Importance of Remembering

Immediately, the three words “lest we forget” and the related principles can be applied to the South African context of a young democracy in the wake of the apartheid era. South Africans, young or old, should not forget the wrongdoings that occurred legally before 1994. It should be noted at this point that forgetting should not be synonymous with forgiveness; Volf (1996, p. 92) writes that: “forgiveness breaks the power of the remembered past and transcends the claims of the affirmed justice and so makes the spiral of vengeance grind to a halt.” For the purpose of healing and reconciliation forgiveness is imperative, especially from a Christian perspective—as is evident in the Lord’s Prayer (cf. Volf, 1996, p. 93), whilst not forgetting concerns about the future of South Africa and the prevention of similar despicable acts. Discussed below is a twofold concept (or notion) of remembering in order to heal the painful wounds of the past as well as remembering to prevent further such tragedies. This concept, however, should not be understood as one that is limited specifically to the South African context, as theory on remembering from the perspective primarily of Liturgical

Studies, as well as Pastoral Care, including psychology, is explored from various nations (e.g., Ganzevoort & Sremac, 2019; Volf, 2006) usually stemming from the context of trauma in itself.

2.1. Remembering Tragic Events to Heal

This first component of the twofold notion is to implore those that remain to look back at the events that took place during apartheid—for example—and remember the pain that was caused to them, or by them, and all of whom they are aware. The reason for doing this is to bring to the fore that which needs to be healed so that the pain can be “forgotten”—however, not the events. A cathartic approach to healing serves as a good example here, where emotions (pain) are purged (forgotten) thereby moving beyond the incident(s) and focusing on an outcome (cf. Gerkin, 1997; Pollard, 1997; Scott, 2018, p. 115, Scott, 2013, p. 2, Wimberly & Wimberly, 2007; Willimon, 1979). It is critical to this theory that the events are not forgotten, the reasons for which will be explained in the next subsection concerning prevention and justice.

Volf (2006, p. 11) suggests that: “To remember a wrongdoing is to struggle against it.” In this section Volf’s statement reiterates that remembrance allows a just space for healing, albeit through means of reconciliation and restoration for example. Healing, from a pastoral care perspective, can take many forms including but not limited to reconciliation, restoration, and/or transformation (cf. Scott & Wepener, 2017), whilst also understanding that liturgy can, and does, “provide a safe space for people to remember and narrate traumatic experiences” (van Ommen, 2019, p. 204). In terms of the traditional form of Remembrance Day, which typically honors any and all British soldiers that lost their lives during any recognized conflict, there may be a significantly lesser need for healing than in the context of postapartheid South Africa for example. Much time has past since the events from which Remembrance Day stems, namely World War I. Thus it is imperative to apply the notions of Remembrance Day appropriately to the context, which means in South Africa—for example—the wrongdoing is more recent, somewhat still present, and hardly involves the loss of British soldiers’ lives. By making a comparison between the traditional British context and the current South African context, what can be noticed is the Commonwealth countries’ reason for continuing the tradition of Remembrance Day is likely more for the second part of the notion of “lest we forget”—to “ensure that such bloody catastrophe never happens again”—that will be described in the subsection below. In the South African context, there are people today that are in need of healing who have suffered as a result of oppression for the majority of their lives. It is highly likely that these people are not too concerned about the historic loss of British soldiers; rather they are concerned with their own suffering. Hence the emphasis being placed on applying the notion appropriately to the context.

With the importance that is placed on context and relevance in the above, Volf (2006, p. 11) poses a question that is appropriate to ask here as well: “How should I remember abuse as a person committed to loving the wrongdoer and overcoming evil with good?” From a Practical Theology, more specifically a liturgical and homiletic, perspective the question can be asked as: how can a worship service focused on trauma and remembrance assist the community to remember their suffering as a people committed to loving the wrongdoer and overcoming evil with good? In the South African postapartheid context, “loving the wrongdoer” includes forgiveness as part of the healing process while “overcoming evil with good” suggests an idea along the same lines of accepting difference, and triumphing over discrimination in its various—evil—forms.

Immediately this concept of remembering, from a pastoral care perspective, can be associated to Gerkin's (1997, pp. 35, 141) quadrilateral schema that includes the ministry, church, and congregation's "care for the community of Christians" and "care in relationship to the sociocultural situation in which the Christian community finds itself." In this case the care would be enacted through liturgy as a worshiping, lamenting, and/or catharsis-practicing community. In other words, this liturgical concept of remembering for the purpose of healing can be seen as a function of pastoral care exercised through preaching and worship. Likewise, it can also be seen as a pastoral care function of liturgy as the worshiping community witnessing the narrative of God being connected with the stories of the people (cf. van Ommen, 2019, p. 205). Regardless, the principles are the same: in the worship service there are liturgical spaces created for healing through care for the faith community and the reality or context in which it exists. In the broader sense this is to understand one of the church leadership's roles regarding pastoral care to be: "the construction of a particular, context-relevant theological awareness on the part of both the pastor and people" (Gerkin, 1997, p. 121).

Liturgical performances that stem from (a) tradition are in essence a form of remembering in itself, as it is repeated at certain times and passed on from one generation to the next who should appropriate it in a way that is meaningful to them (cf. Senn, 1983, p. 38; Scott, Van Wyk, & Wepener, 2019). In this instance, the appropriation of a liturgical tradition similar to Remembrance Day could involve decolonization for the sake of relevance for the people in the worship service. Grimes (2000, p. 12) describes this ritualization as a hand-me-down quilt that is continually patched by each generation. This can also be understood as the liturgy connecting "the narrative of God with the stories of the people," as the relevance should be found in the connection, or the connection can only be made because it is relevant to the stories of the people (van Ommen, 2019, p. 205). Van Ommen (2019, p. 203) notes that: "Many do feel acknowledged in their situation of suffering. However, these feelings are because the participants in worship make the connection with the liturgy themselves rather than the liturgy making the connection explicitly." Thus, the opportunity is somewhat already present for a connection to be made so that the worship service can be a safe space for remembering as well as narrating traumatic experiences. However, this opportunity is only present in cases where those in suffering can recognize and apply the worship to their context, which is not to say that there are no liturgies designed for the purpose of remembering and healing.

This reality begs the question: in worship is the healing of those suffering from a traumatic past (and perhaps also present) left to coincidence? Alternatively, an equally important question is: has healing in the worship service been the responsibility of those who are suffering to initiate? Neither of these questions will be discussed at length in this article; simply by raising these questions substantiates the pertinence of liturgy specifically addressing pain, suffering, and trauma (cf. van Ommen, 2019, pp. 203–204). Likewise, van Ommen (2019, p. 207) asks the question: "How does liturgy care for participants affected by trauma?" This is especially pertinent in contexts of massive social impact, for example when an entire race, gender, social class, and/or culture—insofar as sexuality, nationality, language group, and so on are concerned—is traumatized or led to suffer. These concerns all refer back to Gerkin's schema focusing on "care in relationship to the sociocultural situation in which the Christian community finds itself."

The notion here is about more than just remembering; it is to remember in order to heal oneself of painful past experiences, alleviating the suffering associated with one's trauma.

However, this notion of remembrance is not only about the individual who was wronged but, as Volf (2006, p. 12) points out: “Since others are always implicated, remembering abuse is of public significance.” Thus, the notion becomes the worshipping community remembering in order to heal its entire structure of past experiences that cause lingering pain. This leads to an important point made by Volf (2006, p. 11) that, what he calls “remembering rightly” should not be understood as “what is right for the wronged person as an individual.” However, it must be understood as “also what is right for those who have wronged that individual and for the larger community.” In the South African context, perhaps it is more applicable to use the term “remembering justly” because justice is an important goal which can be achieved through restoration, reconciliation, and liberation.

Van Ommen (2019, p. 208), in his chapter entitled “Remembering for Healing,” writes: “Liturgy that does not attend to suffering . . . is not true to its deepest self. Indeed, theologically one has to say that suffering is at the core of the liturgy as it remembers and celebrates the God-story in which suffering has a prominent place.” As a majority Christian country, is nationwide suffering caused by apartheid being attended to in churches across South Africa? Ramphele (2012, p. 174), writing in a wider African context, suggests that: “failure in postcolonial Africa to acknowledge and undertake the healing process to address social pain is at the heart of our failure to make the journey from subjects to citizens.” In the South African context, then, liturgy that does not attend to suffering is also failing to acknowledge and commit to the healing process, including reconciliation and liberation, that is required because of apartheid.

Journeying from subjects to citizens, to quote Ramphele, points toward healing as transformation. As discussed by Scott and Wepener (2017, p. 4), transformation usually requires a momentous metamorphosis which is associated with and defines a rite of passage. However, transformation can also be experienced as an “open and on-going process” (Scott & Wepener, 2017, p. 4). In the example shared by Scott and Wepener (2017, p. 4), there is still a metamorphosis; however it was a “slower process as a result of continual ritual practice in the form of weekly worship.” This necessary process could be referred to as a journey that concludes with people being at a place or state from which they cannot return: liberated citizens. Once this has been achieved, the focus can be shifted from “remembering for healing” to “remembering to prevent” which will be described and discussed next.

2.2. Not Forgetting Tragedies as a Prevention

In the introduction, Knight (2018) was quoted as describing the words “lest we forget” as ensuring that “such bloody catastrophe never happens again.” Again, in a uniquely South African context this can be applied. As a population, the majority of whom have suffered under the apartheid regime, it is absolutely vital that South Africans ensure that such suffering never happens again. Part of this is for the generation of first-hand sufferers to remember—or not forget—the ordeals they went through. However, as the next generation is being raised they should be informed as they too should not forget and should be reminded justly, rightly, and truthfully of the injustices of the past so that they may not create injustices anew (cf. van Ommen, 2019, p. 210). This can be equated to the understanding of Remembrance Day, in the sense that the majority of those who now “remember” did not participate in the tragedies or have firsthand experience of the catastrophes they are remembering. Thus, it is a more symbolic remembrance by means of ritualized activities from wearing a poppy on one’s lapel or laying a wreath, to participating in a minute of silence and/or standing to attention whilst “The Last Post”⁵ is being played on a bugle or

trumpet. This way of remembrance and the reason for doing so are explained in a concise but accurate manner by Volf (2006, p. 40): “By remembering, we pay a debt of honor to those who have been wronged and have suffered. To forget their violation would be to fail in our most basic obligation to do justice.”

As has been mentioned in the previous subsection, there are critical elements to remembering in order for this notion to be successfully realized—namely, remembering justly or Volf’s “remembering rightly.” Either of these terms suggest that morally right or good action(s) should be taken for the sake of healing and justice for the wider community (or society). There are then incorrect and/or wrong ways to remember too, which as Volf implies turns the “medicine” to “poison” or as van Ommen (2019, p. 210) writes: “Remembering untruthfully deepens the conflict.” One of the ideas behind the phrase “lest we forget,” which has also been mentioned above (cf. 1.; Knight, 2018), is that remembering events ensures that such suffering is not repeated in the present or in the future. Similarly Volf (2006, p. 39) eloquently writes the following:

Memories of wrongs suffered are morally ambiguous . . . They can serve to restore health and dignity, protect, and prompt the pursuit of justice. At the same time, such memories can also lead people to abase their humanity by nursing resentments and committing misdeeds. Though today many people rightly take the medicine of remembering wrongs against turmoil of the soul and violence in society, such “medicinal” memories often poison their patients with the very disease they are meant to cure.

As has been mentioned above, van Ommen describes remembering untruthfully as deepening the conflict, which as Volf points out turns the cure into the same disease the “medicine” is meant to treat. Whether it be termed remembering wrongly, remembering untruthfully, or—for consistency—remembering unjustly, the potential cure becomes further infection which turns reconciliation and restoration into revenge and retribution. Thus, where there could be healing as depicted above, there could also be further trauma. As an example of remembering wrongly take the popular, albeit perhaps biased and a matter of right-wing opinion, term “reverse apartheid” or “reverse racism” (Harvison, 2018; Du Preez, 2018). Some of the white minority in South Africa will claim that the injustices that the apartheid government enforced on the non-white population are now being subtly enforced back on the white population through employment equity law and policy. Max Du Preez (2018), a columnist, writes:

Afrikaner rights groups and right wing lobbyists have launched a huge campaign against what they define as reverse racism. They are even lobbying overseas and include black economic empowerment and affirmative action as arguments in their campaign.

The idea of “reverse apartheid” in South Africa, as an example, can be seen as proof that such a mindset is a result of not remembering rightly which prevents justice, restoration, and acceptance of differences. It may even deepen the conflict, which can also serve as evidence that sometimes the “medicine” does become a poison that allows further injustices. In this case, though, it is not those that were originally traumatized that are now inflicting injustice on their perceived perpetrators, thereby remembering unjustly. Instead it is—in most cases—those that benefited from the injustices of the past, the wrongdoers and their descendants, that are instigating injustice as they forget to “remember” “what is right for those who have wronged [race groups] and for the larger community” (Volf, 2006, p. 11). Du Preez (2018)

appropriately writes the following: “We white South Africans should remember that racism has a history going back several centuries, that it has its roots in Europe and that our ancestors brought it to Africa.”⁶ The key word in this quotation is “remember,” as he is reminding the reader to remember rightly, truthfully, and/or justly. Simply, this is the notion that Volf, seconded by van Ommen, is conveying that all involved remember for the sake of what is right, good, and just for those who were wronged and—importantly—for the larger community or society as well.

Taking the example of “reverse racism” above and learning from it, remembering justly should include remembering the traumatic events but also constantly remembering the right ideals for the purpose of justice. In the South African context, for example, this means to remember the intentions of leaders such as Nelson Mandela and the mission that he initiated:

During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.
(Mandela, 1994, p. 438)

The above excerpt is crucial to remembrance in the South African postapartheid context. This quotation is an invaluable statement that was made during the Rivonia Trial because it shows Mandela’s impression of justice—or what it should be. As such it also serves as a good example of not forgetting for the purposes of preventing further atrocities. It is important to remember the atrocities of the past in a way that encourages people to prevent similar incidences in the future, and it is equally important to remember the manner in which those atrocities ended. In an example such as apartheid in South Africa the intervention that finally led to the end of the turmoil is a crucial “ingredient” in the medicine that is remembering rightly.

In the previous subsection it was suggested that this approach seeks to heal by allowing for the pain to be forgotten but not the event(s) (cf. 2.1). One reason for this directly relates to the aspects of prevention and justice that have been described so far. In terms of healing as transformation it can be understood that one is healed once the pain is forgotten; in other words one has been transformed. From a Ritual Studies perspective, transformation involves a “momentous metamorphosis” that alters one’s identity and social positioning (cf. Scott & Wepener, 2017, p. 4; Bell, 1997; Grimes, 2000). Transformation then, when considering rituals and rites of passage, is the “transportation of a person from one state of being to another” from which they are unable to return (Scott & Wepener, 2017, p. 4). Therefore, it can be stated that transformation in terms of healing those suffering from trauma occurs when the pain is forgotten. In other words, transformation occurs as the person is transported to a state of painlessness although they remember the suffering. Van Ommen (2019, p. 209) identifies this healing or painlessness as follows: “Transformation does not deny the trauma but somehow the traumatic events are transformed and life beyond suffering germinates.” It is at the point of this germination that one’s momentous metamorphosis begins.

The reason for including this description of healing as transformation in this section rather than the previous is to show that once healing has occurred traumatic events can be remembered with the intention of prevention and justice. Thus, once healed, those that

suffered are transformed to a position where they can continue to remember to hold on to the memories of their traumatic past to prevent such atrocities from occurring again.

3. Liturgy Decolonized

Wepener (2014, p. 1) concludes an explorative article on liturgical inculturation by advancing an argument for a “more comprehensive understanding of the notion of liturgical inculturation in order to assist the liturgy to regain its prophetic voice in South Africa today.” He argues that, especially in the South African context, liturgical inculturation should serve simultaneously as liberation and inculturation (Wepener, 2014, p. 7). Important to this argument, Wepener (2014, pp. 7–8) writes: “Liturgical inculturation that goes deeper than merely so-called cultural aspects—such as liturgical dress or Eucharistic elements—and that truly engages with an African worldview of the spirit world will result in an inculturated liturgy that is empowering for those who participate in it.” What is of importance here is the term “an African worldview” because, as was briefly mentioned in the above sections, the notion of remembering and “lest we forget” that the British Commonwealth has associated with Remembrance Day could be applied to the South African postapartheid context as well.

This could be termed “decolonizing,”⁷ but it can also be called liturgical inculturation as tradition and culture meet to create something anew thereby liberating people in the process (cf. Barnard, 2010; Barnard, Cilliers, & Wepener, 2014; Chupungco, 1982a; 1982b; 1992). Although dated, this sentence is ever applicable: “every generation of Christians has been concerned that its worship be relevant, at least to them” (Senn 1983, p. 38). What is relevant about South Africans, especially those oppressed during apartheid, remembering fallen British soldiers? Beside the notion of remembering to prevent, there is little relevance therein. Surely what would be relevant is South Africans rightly remembering apartheid and all its injustices in a manner that heals those that suffered as a result and cultivates an inclusive nation with a common goal of never letting such detestable atrocities happen again. This is part of the argument for remembering that is being made here. Once more it can be seen as decolonizing; however it is inherently part of the process of liturgical inculturation for a space to be created where culture and tradition embrace and/or critically reject elements of the other (cf. Scott, Van Wyk, & Wepener, 2019, p. 4; Scott, 2018, p. 192; Wepener, 2009, p. 39). In other words, whether decolonizing Remembrance Day or applying the process of liturgical inculturation, a space is created where (South African) culture can embrace and/or reject (colonial and post-colonial) tradition resulting in the creation of a new entity—in this case a liturgy that encourages remembrance, creating a space for healing, for reconciliation, and for instilling a togetherness for justice, freedom, peace, and love that should not be forgotten.⁸ Van Ommen (2019, p. 211; cf. Volf, 2006, pp. 96–102) describes similarly what is encapsulated in the above:

Firstly, sacred memory shapes identity. These are not mere historical facts, but events into which those who commemorate are drawn in. It shapes rituals and liturgies. Secondly, sacred memory is collective, so community has a key role. Thirdly, sacred memory remembers not only the past, but also the future. It is forward looking. Finally, sacred memories remember the main actor of the event, i.e., God.

When observing remembrance through the lens of liturgical inculturation the essence of a new entity being formed is similar to above in the sense that the “historical facts” that are entwined with culture do in fact aid in shaping liturgy (and ritual). At least, from a liturgical inculturation perspective, this cultural history should play a role in shaping liturgy when

meeting with the longstanding liturgical traditions. In lieu of “decolonizing” Remembrance Day, the community and/or collective aspect of remembering play a critical role in terms of the liturgy being relevant. Van Ommen’s fourth point is comparable to the concepts of liturgical inculturation that were described in the Nairobi Statement by the Lutheran World Federation (1996, p. 1), namely that worship is transcultural where God is the “main [character] of the event” where everyone everywhere partakes in worship of the same substance and a foundational trust in God (cf. van Ommen 2019, p. 211; Volf, 2006, p. 102).

Van Ommen’s third point, however, refers more to the core concepts herein, that remembering is not only to heal the wounds of the past but importantly to also prevent such suffering in the future. Perhaps, in the South African context, what is important is: “It is forward looking.” Thus, remembering in this sense is to fixate on the past for the ultimate purpose of creating a greatly improved future. In an article focused on postcolonialism and decolonizing, Louw (2017, p. 2) writes the following:

In theory formation, postcolonialism is an endeavour to deconstruct skewed paradigms regarding inhumane forms of power abuse and its destructive impact on the value of people’s lives and their wellbeing in civil societal contexts. Because of critical realism, it deals with ideology that contributed to the shaping and structuring of the people’s lives in a negative way. It is critical, revolutionary, reactionary and in essence an anti-directed activism.

In essence, what is being described here is the liberation that Wepener is arguing for. Similarly, liturgical inculturation (or interculturation) proposes an outcome that is somewhat activism by creating a new entity through the critical-reciprocal interactions between cult and culture (cf. Wepener, 2009, p. 42). Thus, there is postcolonial and/or decolonizing thinking that already exists within the praxis theory of liturgical inculturation.

4. Conclusion

Remembrance plays a large role in liturgy. One need only to look at the liturgical calendar that highlights certain times of the year to remember important biblical events. Easter, for example, in liturgy means remembering Christ’s death on a Friday and his resurrection on a Sunday. Liturgically speaking, Christmas is the remembrance of the birth of Christ. All Saints’ Day specifies a liturgy that encourages remembrance, or honoring, of all the saints (known or unknown) in heaven, whilst on a recurring basis, Holy Communion or the Eucharist is a constant call to remember the suffering of Christ and the hope that arose therefrom (cf. van Ommen, 2019, pp. 211–212). These examples all point to a transcultural liturgy; however one that is inculturated would also encourage the remembering of appropriate cultural history, which in the South African context includes remembering apartheid for the improvements of a young democracy. In other words, an inculturated (or decolonized) liturgy ought to allow a space where worshipers can embrace the liturgical (colonial) traditions of remembering from the context of their culture that, for example from a South African perspective, includes in one way or another apartheid. This addresses the question that was asked in the introduction: *can liturgy aid society by healing those that suffered and preventing further atrocities through constantly remembering?*

From a South African perspective, apartheid is unfortunately a historical fact and as such is undeniably and inherently included in the culture of all South Africans; how it is remembered will define not only the nation but the church in the present as well as the future (cf. Buqa,

2015, Cilliers, 2010, Scott & Wepener, 2020; Scott, Van Wyk, & Wepener, 2019). Worshipers in South African churches can either relate to the wrongdoings or suffering of apartheid. When looking toward the future, the past needs to be remembered—justly with trust ultimately in God. Remembering rightly and justly should assist healing and liberation on this transformative journey.

ORCID iD: Hilton Scott. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9582-9481>

Notes

¹Also known as Armistice Day. However, the term Remembrance Day is used as this is how the 11th of November is known in the Republic of South Africa.

²Cf. <http://www.greatwar.co.uk/poems/laurence-binyon-for-the-fallen.htm> (accessed October 8, 2019).

³Freedom Day celebrates the freedom of all South Africans and commemorates the first democratic elections that were held on April 27, 1994.

⁴Youth Day commemorates the school pupils who peacefully protested against the apartheid government's department of Bantu Education in the township of Soweto on June 16, 1976. These protests were met by police violence, shooting, and riots that resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives including 12-year-old Hector Pietersen.

⁵"In military tradition, the Last Post is the bugle call that signifies the end of the day's activities. It is also sounded at military funerals to indicate that the soldier has gone to his final rest and at commemorative services such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day" ("The Last Post" n.d.).

⁶See also Reddie 2010, pp. 1–28.

⁷"Decolonizing" is a term that has gained traction in (South) Africa, especially in Practical Theology (cf. Louw 2017; Weber 2017 as examples).

⁸The terms "justice," "freedom" and "peace" are used here in recognition to Ackermann's (1998, p. 14) argument that: "The problem of difference lies at the heart of the inability of human beings to live together in justice, freedom and peace."

References

- Ackermann, D. M. (1998). Becoming fully human: An ethic of relationship in difference and otherness. *Journal of Theology of Southern Africa*, 102, 13–27.
- Barnard, M. (2010). Flows of worship in the network society: Liminality as heuristic concept in Practical Theology beyond action theory. *In die Skriflig*, 44(1), 67–84. Retrieved from http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2305-08532010000100005&lng=en&tlng=.
- Barnard, M., Cilliers, J., Wepener, C. (2014). *Worship in the network culture: Liturgical ritual studies: Fields and methods, concepts and metaphors*. Liturgia condenda, 28. Peeters.
- Bell, C. (1997). *Ritual: Perspectives and dimensions*. Oxford University Press.
- Binyon, R. L. (1914). *For the fallen*. The Times.

- Buqa, W. (2015). Storying *Ubuntu* as a rainbow nation. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 36(2), Art. #1434, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v36i2.1434>
- Chupungco, A. J. (1982a). *Liturgies for the future*. Wipf & Stock.
- Chupungco, A. J. (1982b). *Cultural adaptation of the liturgy*. Wipf & Stock.
- Chupungco, A. J. (1992). *Liturgical inculturation: Sacramentals, religiosity, and catechesis*. The Liturgical Press.
- Cilliers, J. (2010). The liminality of liturgy. *Scriptura*, 104, 343–351.
- Du Preez, M. (2018). The myth of reverse racism. *News 24*. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/Columnists/MaxduPreez/the-myth-of-reverse-racism-20180403>.
- Ganzevoort, R. R., Sremac, S. (Eds.) (2019). *Trauma and lived religion: Transcending the ordinary*. Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Gerkin, C. (1997). *An introduction to pastoral care*. Abingdon Press.
- Grimes, R. L. (2000). *Deeply into the bone: Re-inventing rites of passage*. University of California Press.
- Harvison, A. (2018, May 30). Is South Africa on brink of “reverse apartheid”? *Mirror*. Retrieved from <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/south-africa-brink-reverse-apartheid-12622228>.
- Knight, L. (2018, Nov. 11). “Lest we forget”: The story behind the iconic Remembrance Day phrase. *Mirror*. Retrieved from <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/lest-forget-story-behind-iconic-13571698>.
- “The Last Post” (n.d.). *The Australian War Memorial*. Retrieved from <https://www.awm.gov.au/commemoration/customs-and-ceremony/last-post>.
- Louw, D. J. (2017). “Black pain is a white commodity”: Moving beyond postcolonial theory in practical theology: #CaesarMustFall! *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 73(4), a4504. 14pp. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i4.4504>
- Lutheran World Federation (1996). *Nairobi statement on worship and culture: Contemporary challenges and opportunities*. Lutheran World Federation.
- Mandela, N. R. (1994). *Long walk to freedom*. Abacus.
- Pollard, N. (1997). *Evangelism made slightly less difficult*. InterVarsity Press.
- Ramphele, M. (2012). *Conversations with my sons and daughters*. Penguin Books.
- Reddie, A. G. (2010). *Black theology, slavery and contemporary Christianity: 200 years and no apology*. Ashgate.
- Scott, H. R. (2013). Transformation in the worship service: A ritual-liturgical exploration. MA Theology mini-dissertation (unpublished), University of Pretoria.
- Scott, H. R. (2018). Praying, believing and being church: A ritual-liturgical exploration. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Pretoria.
- Scott, H. R., Van Wyk, T., Wepener, C. (2019). Prayer and being church in postapartheid, multicultural South Africa. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 40(1), a1964. 8pp. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v40i1.1964>
- Scott, H., & Wepener, C. J. (2017). Healing as transformation and restoration: A ritual-liturgical exploration. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 73(4). a4064. 9pp. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i4.4064>
- Scott, H. R., Wepener, C. (2020). Ubuntu in the worship service as heterotopia: A liturgical-ecclesiological exploration. *In die Skriflig*, 54(1). a2514. 6pp. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v54i1.2514>

- Senn, F. C. (1983). *Christian worship and its cultural setting*. Fortress Press.
- Van Ommen, A. L. (2019). Remembering for healing: Liturgical communities of reconciliation provide space for trauma. In R. R., Ganzevoort, S., Sremac (Eds.), *Trauma and lived religion: Transcending the ordinary* (pp. 203–223). Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Volf, M. (1996). *Exclusion and embrace: A theological exploration of identity, otherness, and reconciliation*. Abingdon Press.
Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.uplib.idm.oclc.org>.
- Volf, M. (2006). *The end of memory: Remembering rightly in a violent world*. Eerdmans.
- Weber, S. (2017). Decolonising youth ministry models? Challenges and opportunities in Africa. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 73(4), a4796. 10pp.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i4.4796>
- Wepener, C. (2009). *From fast to feast: A ritual-liturgical exploration of reconciliation in South African cultural contexts*. Peeters.
- Wepener, C. (2014). Liturgical inculturation or liberation? A qualitative exploration of major themes in liturgical reform in South Africa. *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies*, 70(1), Art. #2644, 8 pp. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i1.2644>
- Willimon, W. H. (1979). *Worship as pastoral care*. Abingdon.
- Wimberly, A. E. S., Wimberly, E. P. (2007). *The winds of promise*. Discipleship Resources.

Author Biography

Dr. Hilton Scott holds a PhD from the University of Pretoria in South Africa, where he is currently a research associate at the Faculty of Theology and Religion. He continues to research along the trajectory of his PhD thesis, examining and testing the functions and roles of liturgy in pluralistic communities in the South African postapartheid context. This involves developing praxis theory for encouraging inclusivity and accepting differences, healing the pain caused by the apartheid regime, restoring justice and reconciling communities and societies.