

CHAPTER 6

Inkundla kukudla: Life-Giving Democracy

6.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an ethical perspective on Black Public Theology of liberation. The previous chapter looked at the *archē* (the beginnings or metaphysics of power or governance) and its relationship with theology. It was about the archeology and civilization of liberative publicity. The current chapter intends to delineate the *telos*, the goal of black power in public life. Our main objective is to argue that the *telos* of power is ethical - it is to give life. This is what liberation means.

We use the word fragmentation from Critical Theory to designate the disintegration of public spheres as a result of abstraction (Kellner 1989:7-8). Black ethics is critical ethics (Tsele 1994:132-133). Black ethics is premised on the awareness of the prophetic judgment of the existing system and the potential for its replacement. In this sense black ethics is *analectic*. Fragmentation designates the usurpation of sovereignty of one sphere, thereby becoming imperial and subjugating other public spheres. We do not imply that differentiation is undesirable. We do however, reject the “division of labour,” sharing of power, i.e. differentiation that conceptualizes the world as a machine fashioned by abstraction. To achieve our objective, we argue that the symbols of *inkundla* (open assembly) and *ukudla* (food) are so integral that they cannot be abstracted from each other. Thus the goal of publicity is to give life.

We then discern the signs of our times and engage in social analysis, employing the Habermasian tripartite analytical scheme of modern society with the view to demonstrating the fragmentation of spheres. Our key motif in this regard is democracy as speech or communication, hence we critically engage the Habermasian notion of *Rechtsstaat*. We argue that consigning sovereignty to one sphere distorts communication, which is power, and thus communication of efficacy which brings life.

6.2. *Inkundla kukudla* : The *telos* of the ecclesio-political paradigm of power

6.2.1. The Tentative Vision of *Inkundla Kukudla*

The symbol of *res publica* (*ekklesia*) is rendered as *inkundla* (open space). The symbol, *ukudla* literally means food and is symbolically used to make a case for an understanding of the *politike koinonia* as teleologically material and life-giving. This open arena or space, *inkundla*, is where God, people, work, land and their faith integrally come together and the kraal, *ubuhlanti* is an aggregate symbol and a communication of the efficacy of integrated life. The word *inkundla* and *ukudla* have the same etymological root. They share this etymological root with the word *amandla* (power). We have said that the word *ukudliwa* which shares the same root means punishment or judgment. We use this word *ukudliwa* as a symbol of jurisprudence and thus, a materialist view of law. Recently, President Thabo Mbeki, presenting the annual Nelson Mandela Lecture said:

Just as Darwin discovered the law of development or organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means, and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch, form the foundation upon which state institutions, the legal conceptions, art and even ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of vice versa, as had hitherto been the case (2006:11)¹

We have argued that liberative reconstruction should demystify in the quest for the rebuilding freedoms in public life. According to the Marxist law of the development of human history, humanity must first of all eat and drink. The goal of politics is thus *ukudla* that precedes politics, economics, religion and other spheres. This means that the production of *ukudla* and therefore, the degree of economic reconstruction constitute the foundation of law, religion, arts, and politics, hence *inkundla kukudla*, publicity is food. To emphasize this point Mbeki goes on to say:

Putting all this in more dramatic language, Marx had said “Man must eat before he can think!” In this regard, Vladimir Lenin, the leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, said: “Before we perceive, we breathe: we cannot exist without air, food and drink” (2006:11).

The task of liberative publicity is to judge, *ukudla*, and demystify the distortions that conceal the integration of public life by spheres that usurp sovereign power.

¹ Taken from <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2006/06073111151005.htm>.

Sovereignty belongs to God or gods only. The consciousness of the “solidarity of the shaken” provides the spiritual foundation for transformative justice appealed for by Sam Kobia in Port Alegre, Brazil, at the WCC Assembly when he said:

31. The *feira da vida* – the feast of life – is not a party. It is a celebration of life, which will sometimes be painful. The *feira da vida* invites you all into the household of God, to experience the pain and the suffering of others, and to feel yourself a part of the fragile and imperfect community of humanity. The vision of Christians gathered around a table in celebration recalls the gospel accounts of the last supper (2006:5).

Kobia asserted that the spirituality of the ecumenical movement is the *feira da vida* – the feast of life. We assert that the spiritual base of a life-giving democracy is *ukudla*, the feast of life. Such spirituality is in the interstices of *imvuselelo*, which is symbolically the spirit of unlearning ontological death experienced in shaken solidarities of subaltern counter publics, we have already said. It is the sharing of life and solidarity in shakenness, the pain of feeling part of the fragile publics on the underside of history.

The National Development Agency, the Centre for Civil Society at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the South African Grantmakers’ Association conducted a research on the state of social giving in South Africa (Everatt & Solanki 2005). Among some of their key findings they record that “Giving is not the domain of the wealthy: it is part of everyday life for all South Africans, rich and poor” (2005:9). It is the purpose of giving we must lift up from this report:

159. Overall, the dominant view remains clear: people prefer giving to causes that seek longer-term solutions to our problems than short-term charitable interventions although a significant proportion see the value of the latter (2005:159)

In relation to the question of food, *ukudla*, the report says:

68. Interestingly, people living in rural areas were the most generous with goods, food and clothes: 36% gave in the month prior to being interviewed, joined by 35% of people in formal dwellings and 19% in informal dwellings in metropolitan areas; and 30% in formal and 23% in informal dwellings in urban areas (2005:29).

Inkundla kukudla symbolizes a public discourse that takes sides with the generosity of giving food as life by the poor – the *festa da vida* of the marginalized. The *festa da vida* of the poor is the interlocutor of the reconstruction of public life, the resistance of “unfreedoms,” - famine being the key interlocutor for the freedoms that must be rebuilt by a democratic polity that is life-giving. *Inkundla kukudla* is a paradigm of democratic polity that views democracy not as a god in itself, but as an instrument for the attainment of the celebration of life. It grounds the ethic of democracy in human need.

6.2.2. Creation and Food

According to Wright Jr (1979: 48) black power speaks about the nature of humanity. Black power sees the end to which every aspect of human life must be directed as fulfillment.

Black people want to fulfill their potential for the larger enrichment of the common life of all humankind. In order to attain personal efficacy, or social efficacy there need to be the presence and the building up of power, Wright Jr. maintains. He makes a pivotal point, namely that the Greek words for power (*bia*) and life (*bios*) reflect the essential affinity between life and power. Power is basic to life. Without power, there cannot be any life. Institutions transacting ultimate social goals must dare to be power producing repositories. These power-producing repositories are enablers, facilitating human growth toward fulfillment. Hence *The Imago Dei* in the human being must reflect God's power, His majesty and His might. Our point is that power is life-giving. *Ubuhlanti* thus becomes a communication of the efficacy of *bia* - a power space for the re-making of life (*bios*).

It is Brueggemann (1999:108-122) who makes a clear connection between food and God's creative actions in the Bible. He pitches Genesis as an opening doxology in affirmation of God's endless generosity for creating a world of fruitfulness and productivity. Psalm 104 is one example of God's gift of food in Israel's book of Praise. It signifies the constant reflection by Israelites on the free gift of food, which the earth germinates. According to Genesis, there is abundance and availability of food in the intents and purposes of God's creation:

And God said, See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the land, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food (Gen 1: 29 The Amplified Bible).

In the same book of Genesis, chapter twelve introduces a story of famine. Famine is *indlala* in *isiXhosa*² and we see the etymological affinities between *indlala* and *ukudla*. Famine signifies something that is amiss in the generosity and abundance of God the Creator. Egypt in the story becomes the place of food and abundance. It is common knowledge that in the Bible, Egypt and the Pharaohs, particularly the latter, signify the antitheses to God.

“*Egypt is at the centre of the food problem in the Bible*” (Brueggemann 1999:110).

Genesis 47 depicts the link between bondage and food and thus the Pharaonic monopoly of food supply and probably the religious legitimation of this imperial monopoly. In the prophetic trajectory (cf. Ezekiel 29) the Nile appears to have been claimed by Pharaoh as his own creation and is thus condemned by the Creator for mocking the Creator of abundance by monopolizing food production and creating artificial scarcity. But it is in the book of Exodus that Pharaoh is a greedy, brutalizing dominion turning the life giving Nile into a sea of blood.

This point does not need to be overstated. Needless to say that, albeit with caution, the motif of Exodus and its relation to the paradigm of liberation should be recalled. It is after the departure from Egypt that God provides in the wilderness, again so adequately that the injunction is given against storing up food (Exodus 15:16-18). Israel had to depart and leave Egypt and its food practice with all its abusive apparatus.

² The same word in *isiZulu* and *abeNguni* languages, the Sesotho one being *tlala*

After the departure from Egypt and the Wilderness, the next moment of the food task is sharing, the alternative to Egypt, and the vision that was engendered at Sinai, where God entered into covenant with his people. The Sinaitic epoch re-makes Israel into a sharing community of covenantal solidarity. It is this tradition that is handed down to the fellowship of believers, the *to koinonion* of Christ: “take eat, this is my body,” placing the Eucharist, an exuberant sacrament of sharing food, at the centre of covenanting with God for the transformation and renewal of the world. It is in the eating and breaking of bread that Christ is revealed in resurrection (Luke 24:30-31).

Our understanding of covenant and politics has been explained in the previous chapter. We have made the point that covenant is the ethical dimension of the symbols of governance derivative of God’s contract (law) with his people. Covenant in Biblical terms is the power that bonds the elements of God’s relationship with his Creation; God, people, faith, land, and work. Stackhouse comments as follows:

The idea of covenant is among the central concepts of the biblical tradition, and has long been understood to be the paradigmatic, providential way of structuring the institutions of the common life in accord with God’s will, law and purposes while simultaneously pointing all in covenanted life toward redemptive possibilities. That connection needs to be recovered and recast for our contemporary situation (2004:189).

Covenant is a paradigm of structuring spheres, i.e. holding together differentiation, it is a bond. These spheres are held together for common life and in accordance to the will of God, His commands and purposes.

But it also points to redemptive possibilities, i.e. liberation (see chapter two) that must be recovered in our contemporary time. The perspective of Stackhouse on covenant is telling. There are different forms of covenant and these are implied by different Hebrew terms, translated in various ways into other cultural linguistic contexts:

- *bnai berit* and *baalei berit*, for example - and in the ways they are translated and adapted into other cultural-linguistic contexts: *diatheke* and sometimes *syntheke* or even *mysterion* (Greek), *testamentum*, *compactum*, *sacramentum* or *foedus* (Latin) in the New Testament and early Christian writings, and later in social, political and legal thought as pact, compact, federation, confederation, *Bund* (German; ‘bond’ in English), alliance (French), and thus league, agreement and promise, to use the most frequent usages in Western languages (2004:189).

The link between Reign of God (the structuring of God’s rule) and John’s notion of “life in abundance” (the mystery, *mysterion* of Life) is made at this point. Firstly, God’s structuring of his purposes is a mandate given to humanity as in monarchy, certainly with all the Biblical distinctive features of monarchy. Monarchy in Israelite terms is different from Pharaonic absolute power, thus kings represented God’s purposes in the symbolic polity structures of the Israelite nation. The mandate, “authority” as in cultivated power is distinct from the “dominion,” the Lordship or sovereignty of God. The power (authority) of the monarch was to galvanize, to harmonize, to bond, and to associate the indispensable elements of the contract between God and his people: God, land, work, people, land and faith in God’s household.

Throughout the Bible then the problem ranged between excluding other elements of the covenant (disassociation, disagreement, de-signification, fragmentation) and subsuming all and sundry under one (idolization, i.e false association, false signification, false bonding), hence unguided and unconstrained components of *oikos*, *bayith* or *indlu*.

According to Meeks (1989) political economy entails the social relationships of power purposed for the livelihood of the community and its members. The word *oikonomia* literally means the law of the household. By correspondence, the word we use in *isiXhosa* for economy is *umonotho* or *ubutyebi* (wealth) the latter which resonates well with the word *ukutya*, meaning to eat. In God's household, the law of the *oikos* is the Torah and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is a profound assertion given that we have defined gospel earlier in this work, as a promise of supreme good to the poor epitomized in the symbol of liberation. The notion of the *oikonomia tou theou* (the economy of God) is the application of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the life of the Christian community and simultaneously evokes God's acts of salvation for his household. In other words, while we apply the law of the household of God in history, it is also true that God himself is creating salvation for us. *Ubuhlanti* symbolizes and stands as a generative symbol of God's acts of salvation much as it points to the laws (customs) that must be given content and expression in the social relationships purposed for our livelihood.

In contrast to the two great anti-domination traditions of modernity, liberalism and Marxism, which tend to present a unitary or monological view of power, the *unitive* perspective aggregated by *ubuhlanti* presents a dialogical, “relational” (Germond 2001:22) view of power, meaning power that goes through rather than dissects the spheres of *ikhaya*. It must be remembered that the contest of liberty and justice emanates from the view that state power dominates. On the other hand, the Marxist perspective holds that capital dominates and liberation is seen to be the abolition of capitalist domination. A monological view of power tendentially removes God concepts from the economy. We concur with Meeks (1989:6) that power, authority and politics cannot be removed from the economic sphere. The existence of any political economy depends much on the support of its assumptions by most of the people among whom it flourishes. This implies the faith by which people agree to live on the assumptions of any political economy. Hence, no matter how divorced religion is from the public, its integrative role remains vital.

It must be understood that in the components of political economy, God’s concepts in our economic sphere are used to justify and depict authority, power and coercion. Ownership is an important component, including consumption, and they are justified by using God’s concepts. The centrality of Meeks argument is to demythologize God concepts that underpin utopian and ideological imports of economic assumptions. First, the immutability of economic laws, which almost present fate as an inevitable dimension of economics, contributes to the distortion of our understanding of God. It is as if God were not to be active in the economic sphere akin to the Deist view of God.

This aberration, stated otherwise, presents poverty as an eternal condition, as economy is distorted as an ahistorical discourse. Second, to demythologize “Godlessness” in economy, equality must be understood to be the goal of abolishing differences that result from wealth. Meeks (1989:11) says:

Equality means the thrust to abolish the differences that result from wealth, racial and sexual supremacy, ecological rape, and meritocratic privilege. Equality works against the experience of subordination. It works against some people having to fawn, defer, bow, and scrape because other people or groups have power over them. The equalitarian impetus of God’s economy is against all forms of domination by which the powerful “grind the faces of the poor.” It intends the end of the master-slave relationship.

He goes on to say:

The egalitarian thrust of God’s economy is meant to serve freedom. It does not aim at eliminating differences among human beings. It does not intend a conformist and leveled society. Rather, equality in the household of god means that radically different persons embrace and yet remain radically different. We do not have to be the same or have the same amount of things. What God’s household seeks to eliminate is domination over others, which prevents their access to what they need in order to keep their calling to be God’s image, child, disciple, and friend (Meeks 1989:11).

Third, is the question of possessive individualism. This is an antithesis to the model of *perichoresis* meaning mutual incoherence displayed by the Trinity. The myth of possessive individualism is the root cause of fragmentation in the modern world.

Last, scarcity, satiation and security go against the message of the Gospel which promises *pleroma*. *Ubuhlanti* evocatively demythologizes scarcity and false security attained through the fragmentation and crucifixion of the spheres of *ikhaya*. It is a restorative instrument that points to the plenitude of *ikhaya*, the harmony and salvation of existence against forces of death. It is the *habitus* of the living dead who hold all spheres together responsible for the satiation and security of *ikhaya*. As a generative, evocative design, with the circular dimension of time brought to mind, it is in the kraal where a “kraalonization” or “*ubuhlantification*” meaning a demythologization of God concepts in modern economic discourse that distort how we image God in his creative acts of salvation and the laws we apply to sustain His household, *ikhaya*. *Ubuhlantification* is like a hermeneutical circle, where the mediations of the bonds of spheres and the instantiation of their life take place. Notions of scarcity, satiation and security undergo a circular path that runs through the components of *ikhaya* rather than a singular path that either becomes patterned as centrifugal or centripetal.

By illustration, the historical exclusion of other components of *ikhaya* could be discerned. The idolization of one component or the exclusion of other components of the household can be deciphered in various epochs of our history. By elevating reason, Enlightenment gave reason a false “association” to one race and subsumed all components of life into this one race and its world view. In doing so it disassociated other races from God’s “home,” displacing and fragmenting the rest. What we are saying should not be misconstrued to imply that reason is firstly an attribute of a particular race. What we are saying is that the white race claimed reason for themselves.

Our discussion of *Gestell* depicts this scenario. The white race claimed technical knowledge and technological knowledge and used it to assert themselves as superior than other races. To this matter Edward Antonio testifies in this manner:

It has now been established by a number of scholars, both white and non-white, that the philosophers of the Enlightenment and the scientists as well as the would-be scientists of the nineteenth century showed a great interest in the question of race; an interest in which the humanity of blacks was ridiculed and sometimes denied. The gurus of Western philosophical thought, Kant, Hegel, Hume, Voltaire and other less well-known scholars, all produced works in which they openly displayed their racism against blacks. It is in the works of these men that the ‘grammar of racialised discourse’ which underlies much of modernity’s view of the self as, among other things, a racial subject, was forged (1999:66).

The Enlightenment paradigm, through its Instrumental Reason became a *Gestell*. It provided a grammar of racialised discourse in other words, racial reasoning that undergirds much of modernity’s view of the self. The contrast between the world that has come of age (*mündig*), whose starting point for theology is the non-believer and liberation whose point of departure is the non-person attests to the fact that man come of age did not include black persons in the Enlightenment paradigm (Gutiérrez 1999:28) . This led to a narrow sense of instrumental and calculative rationality resulting in the modern spirit of the fragmentation of life *ipso facto*, the denunciation of God and God concepts in public life.

Reason is a human attribute. The Newtonian value system which dominated the Enlightenment paradigm of reason made linearity and singularity to be the sovereign categories of objective reason or instrumental reason. The postmodernist discourse is an attempt not without limitations, to respond to the singularity and linearity of the Newtonian value system. Reason within the Newtonian value system cultivated an authority that turned into dominion and overturned and dethroned persons (Everett 1988: 145-151). Everett says, “The self, whether feudal, regal or republican, was a psychological monarchy whose throne could be given over to Christ, reason, or the devil” (1988:145). It is this expression we use to define reason as having dethroned other spheres including people and God who are part of *ikhaya*. Titles such as *homo sapiens* (rational self), *homo faber* (self as maker) elevated a central dynamic of human life to create a coherent philosophy to the exclusion of other dynamics or spheres. Distinct from *Ubuntu*, it is a self-centric rationality that attained a repressive monarchical sovereignty, we contend. Apartheid is the single most example of the Enlightenment provenance of the dominion and singularity of one race - a race commanding beyond its sphere, thus a false mandate of the modern spirit of reason which is now manifested in the globalization and the glocalization of the current world order.

The Kingdom of God is a symbol in the New Testament that is pitched in the context of an empire, a form of power that usurps sovereignty, hence a fragmenting and mystifying (distorted communication) order. The Reign of God is announced where systems of exclusion and false witness are the order of the day, empire being signified as legion in the synoptic Gospels.

The de-mystification of empire takes place through the sign and symbol of the Kingdom expressed in the life of Jesus Christ - God's incarnation in the world. This Son is the one who appears sharing food among thousands and multiplying it for the starving multitudes to have a share. But the power of God's Reign is in the injunction: "Take, eat, this is my body that is broken for you," and "Take drink, this is blood shed for you." This is not just a constant act of sharing and eating but a face-to-face relationship with God's entire creation with de-mystified (sacramental) and unified (bonded) people with the whole of His creation. It is the re-establishment of the foundational intents of God's mission for his creation.

Brueggemann's (1999:1-18) notion of covenant as "othering" is paradigmatic and implies seeing the other, recognizing the other, seeing the other in self and thus, transforming self into the other. Thus politics or power will remain opaque without the practical truth of adequate material resources and literally food in any principled democratic polity.

Ukudla, demystifies *inkundla*, the re-making in open space that is currently obfuscated and blurred by an order that is defended by force, violence and false association.

Stackhouse says:

All these (covenantal) terms refer to a voluntary bonding of persons, peoples or groups that otherwise would remain in isolation or conflict into a matrix of peace, justice, mutual obligation and care. Indeed in every genuine covenant, six elements are present: the Divine is disclosed in the midst of history; promises are made; community is formed; duties and rights are accepted; freedom and justice are made constitutional; a vision of a new, holy future is opened for all involved (2004:190).

This section which attempts to deal with the matrix of food and power in order for all to participate in a new and holy vision of promises of plenitude, generosity and abundance will not be complete without dealing with the myth of the shortage of food. We, however, need to bear in mind that the usurpation of power distorts communication. The enunciation of the Kingdom of God in the context of the empire brings good news, supremely good, to an audience that is living under false and distorted communication. The announcement of the Kingdom of God is an irruption of the communication of efficacy among the shepherds, the riff-raff of society who are the recipients of the good news. They are sent out to be the witnesses of good news and for good news to be efficacious communication to the marginalized, the jailed and the down-trodden.

6.2.3. The myth of Scarcity

The legacy of Thomas Malthus (1776-1834), an economist who postulated that the food supply increases arithmetically, while populations grow geometrically, has impacted on economic thinking up to this day (Henslin 1995:552-557). The notion of scarcity in economics cannot be understood without the Malthusian theorem. It is said that the potato brought by the Spanish Conquistadors from the Andes became the principal food of the lower classes in Europe and resulted in Europe's populations doubling by the 1700s. This rapid growth alarmed Malthus, who saw it as a sign of impending doom. As a result he postulated the theorem we have stated above that simply means population growth would outstrip food supply if it goes on unchecked. This has been of great fascination for contemporary demographers and economists alike.

At the heart of the theorem there is a belief that there is a constant threat of famine. The Malthusian answer to the question why there is starvation in the world is simply that there is a scarcity of food supply. Bwalya (2001:26), sampling the definition of economics, says that it is mostly materialist, economist and a-spiritual. By this he means that production, distribution, exchange, consumption, choice, efficiency and humanity are criteria present and essential to define the economic sphere and all of them revolve around what he calls *chrematistics*, i.e. wealth making. He concludes that scarcity is the root that defines both secular and religious definitions of economics. Scarcity is seen as a fundamental problem and a point of departure in modern economics and thus, insufficiency to satisfy needs and wants is a constant pre-occupation of the modern *homo oeconomicus*. Surely, without much ado, the norm of scarcity that under-girds economic thinking in the world today, rife in the theological traditions that brought Christianity on the African continent, is certainly unacceptable because it justifies poverty, presents the *homo oeconomicus* as a fragmented humanity and limits accessibility to goods and food in particular. This notion of scarcity is unethical and has no theological basis even though it has become a dominant paradigm even for the practice of the Church today.

The thrust of Bwalya's (2001) thesis is to argue against the notion of scarcity in favour of stewardship and *ipso facto*, a life-affirming, life-preserving and life-enhancing framework of economic vision. Nürnberger, along the same lines, challenges this paradigm of economics which accounts for the emergent economic crisis in the world today as being characterized by:

- Cancerous growth of the industrial economy;
- Growing affluence among its beneficiaries;
- Growing unemployment and marginalization among those rendered redundant by modern production;
- Growing population numbers among the poor;
- Industrial growth and population growth leading to rapid depletion of non-renewable resources such as crude oil, overexploitation of renewable resources such as rain forests, and overloading of the absorption capacity of natural sinks;
- Growing competition for scarce resources that causes growing conflict potential and thus growing investments in security, armaments, and crime prevention, which again gobble up scarce resources and cause more ecological devastation (1996:229-230).

It is not strategic reason we discount, but the pervasive power of the economic estate in commanding life beyond its sphere, thus becoming a negative force we vehemently must question. It is now generally agreed that the wealth of the entire world is in the hands of 20% of the world's population while 80% of the world is living in poverty.³ The skewed global economic relations leave much to be desired as "Africa exports 30 percent more today than it did in 1980, but it receives 40 percent less income from these goods" (<http://www.sacc.org.za/docs.NEPAD.html:p4>).

³ Cf. A presentation made at the World Alliance of Reformed Churches' General Council in 2004.

What the notion of scarcity does between people and to trusts is our bone of contention. It “thingifies” or reifies the bonds that hold together the spheres of public life. These reified relations present democratic societies, envisioned without food, as a habitus of unutterable “unfreedoms” (Sen) where labour ceases to be an inherent human right, but a ruthless monopoly of the invisible hand of the market⁴ and the system’s imperative of money. But the idolization of the system i.e. the false signification (*pseudo-mysterion*) of this order, to use our jargon, can be genocidal as most idols live on human blood:

Is Rwanda overpopulated and unable to feed itself? Throughout the 1970s and ‘80s, the Rwandese government successfully played on the preoccupation of the western donors and aid organizations with “overpopulation”- the supposed scourge of poor countries, no matter how thickly or thinly populated. The theory is simple: land has a “carrying capacity”, and when that is reached, it cannot produce any additional food without causing irreversible environmental damage, and hence food production declines and people go hungry. This is a version of the Malthusian theories of famine current in the nineteenth century (African Rights 1995:15).

Indeed, one of the factors linked to the pathology of genocide in Rwanda is the myth of overpopulation or the myth of scarcity. President Habyarimana, the then President of Rwanda and one of the key architects of the tragic Rwandese genocide, is cited to have been fond of saying “the glass is full and I have nowhere to put the rest of the water” (African Rights 1995:16-17).

⁴ Cf. also Terreblanche 1999; 2002 for the systemic eradication of the Reconstruction and Development Programme and exclusion of black African labour power in South Africa. The point we are making is that of “global citizens without labour” in a global monoculture and dominion of economic strategies based on the notion of scarcity in the current world order.

Glass is a metaphor for scarcity in this statement and water for people. This was an expression of the “overpopulation” theory used as a scapegoat to argue that there was no room for refugees to return home in Rwanda. Rwanda is a small country with the highest population density in the world. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the Rwandese leadership were pre-occupied with the question as to whether Rwanda would be able to feed itself due overpopulation. The Rwandese genocide is directly linked to the theory of scarcity.

The move from God’s creation abundance to Pharaoh’s monopoly and scarcity, Brueggemann (1999:119) asserts, is contrasted by Israel’s ethic of sharing throughout the Old Testament with germane links to the New Testament. Jesus, performing His ministry in a tightly ordered *pax Romana*, enacted his “bread theology” in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 6:24); the feeding of the multitude (John 6”1-14) and the Last Supper that became the point of resurrection and thus, the breaking of walls and the opening of eyes for the disciples. One whom he loved retorted: “ It is the Lord” (John 21:7b) as they sought something to eat with bread.

Indeed, the *Gacaca*⁵ courts in Rwanda – open courts for reconciliation and unity, derive their name from the name of the grass that forms the “carpet” on which the assembly sits in open discourse of the common good and life of the community in harmony with Creation. The symbolic connection between *Gacaca* and reconciliation is profound.

⁵ In my recent (2005 14-17) visit to Rwanda as part of the South African Council Delegation, I was exposed to the open traditional courts in which perpetrators of genocide are called to account for their acts. The name of the courts is *Gacaca*, taken from the name of the grass on which members of the assembly sit. As this was explained it came to mean the same grass called *uqaqqa* in *isiXhosa*, hence a “royal” carpet for the African *republica*.

In *isiXhosa* the name of the grass is called *uqaqaqa* -hence nourishment, reconciliation, power sharing and open discourse are seated on *uqaqaqa* in *inkundla* (open assembly) hence, *inkundla kukudla*. Food is the basis on which politics, economics, religion, arts, education and another spheres should be conceptualized.

We have offered our vision of a life giving democracy through the symbols of *inkundla* and *ukudla*. This is a vision of an integrated public life of “cultivated authorities” which resists the dominion of one sphere over others. Public spheres are cultivated authorities, covenants, testaments or associations. Dominion communicates the efficacy of integration and not the elevation of one sphere. It might be asked: how Christian is the kraal? True to the tradition of Black Theology, and the symbolic interstice of Nongqawuze, learning to speak the language of the people beyond confessional vagrancies is typical to the school. African Initiated Churches are the largest forms of church in Africa. Their ecclesiologies are grounded on African culture. But more, public theology should learn to speak “religionlessly,” hence the heuristic device of *ubuhlanti*.

6.3. Discerning the Signs of the Times.

The quest for a life-giving democracy can only succeed with rigorous social analysis. It employs critical tools of social analysis. Critical reason is committed to transformation and engages in the struggle for social change. Critique is conceptualized as a method of attacking cognitive distortions produced by ideology (Kellner 1989:23).

We concur with Mosala (1989) when he says that social approaches may have advanced biblical or systematic studies, however, by adopting subtle ideological maneuvers of modern society, they can lend an academic aura to what is essentially ideological. He says:

The essence of my objection is not that the sociological approaches employed by biblical scholars (and systematic scholars)⁶ should not have had an ideological and political agenda. On the contrary, my plea is for an open acknowledgement of the class interests of the ideas that are being represented and thus an acknowledgement of at least the social limitation of the methods (1989:68).

What is the new situation of democracy in South Africa? As a result of the failures of democracy in Africa, Cabral appealed for “a return to the sources” (Eze 1997:317). A distinction between esoteric and exoteric forms of democracy must be made. We have argued that any form of polity, including democracy, might be a mirror of a particular ecclesiological understanding and thus, a public expression of a particular kind of religion. Eze says that the best form of democracy is one that reconciles both centrifugal and centripetal forces of its constituencies (1997:321).

⁶ Words in brackets are ours.

6.3.1 The Liberal Constitutional Democracy in South Africa

The current South African model of democracy is called constitutional. This implies that South Africa is a secular state where religion and other publics compete in influencing public discourse. Surely after the demise of apartheid Christianity lost its status as a “crown” religion in the Apartheid state. Etienne de Villiers (2005:2-5) discusses the loss of this status as the loss of legitimacy of transformation by the Reformed Churches. Churches of the Reformed heritage both Afrikaans speaking and the black ones in the main, had understood their faith to offer a basis for the church to participate in the creation of values in public life. He (2005:3) says:

With the dawn of the new political dispensation in South Africa in 1994 everything changed. Within a short time span it became apparent that the conviction that Christians have a calling to transform society in accordance with the gospel has almost completely lost the self-evident nature it had for Reformed Christians in the previous political dispensation.

Our point is that within a short time there was a change. Icons of the church of the struggle went into politics and in considering the place of Christian values in the new situation, the Church has to contend with the credibility it lost in the previous dispensation. De Villiers makes an important point which needs to be mentioned for our context. The current democratic order entrenches social structures and processes influenced by modernization.

He says that the loss of the legitimacy of the transformation approach of the Reformed tradition, since the dawn of the new political dispensation is caused *inter alia* by the introduction of a new liberal constitution (2005:4). For us this is the most important point. It raises a bar to a different matter than the current preoccupation by scholars of the role of the church in public life. It is important because to establish the role of religion in public life without understanding the form of democracy we have adopted is a futile exercise. Our form of democracy is liberal because the constitution we have adopted is liberal. It is the organization of power in this polity that is described as liberal against which we propose a life-giving kind of democracy.

First, our problem is that liberal democracy as De Villiers avers, “makes it impossible for the government to implement the distinctive views of a particular religious group” (2005:4). At a deeper level the problem is not that Christian views are not implemented, but a particular view of Christian faith that is commensurate with liberal polity might be given prominence. The influence of the liberal tradition in the development and evolution of Christian thought is a well known fact. In other words, it is the elevation of a liberal perspective of Christianity that continues to be a significant challenge for the project of democratization. The key problem in this regard is individualism that is associated with the liberal tradition. The elevation of an individual when communities were marginalized as communities is a serious challenge in public life. The ethical dilemmas of liberal democracy has recently been eloquently expressed by Bedford-Strohm (2006:2) in what he calls the *Böckenförde Dilemma* namely that the “liberal secular state lives from sources it cannot guarantee.”

When we begin to express this in this manner: “the liberal secular state lives on human beings it cannot guarantee,” then the problem of the liberal state becomes acute. We can also say that the liberal secular state lives on promises it cannot guarantee. This is the mammoth challenge we face in our public life. The solutions and programmes of rebuilding are coined around an individual. Nothing could be more fragmental in our context. In other words, even though the government continues to speak the language of the people, it walks the lane of an individual. The call by Mandela for the reconstruction and development of the soul is a pipe dream as communities are not restored as communities. “For Black Africa, it is not the Catersian *cogito ergo sum* (“I think, therefore I am”) but an existential *cognatus sum, ergo sumus* (“I am related, therefore we are”) that is decisive (Bujo2003:22). *Umntu ngumntu ngabantu* expresses the conviction that each one is human in the fellowship of life with others. Liberal thought does not promise or guarantee this conviction.

What is the alternative? Gyekye makes an important observation we would like to voice out. The failure of capitalism and socialism is mainly due to individualism (1997:142-143). Our public life cannot provide the basis for a human model due to the elevation of the individual in the public realm. Viewed from the perspective of the poor and marginalized, this is a refusal to accord the masses of this country their humanity. In one era they were called the savage. In another era they were called natives. In yet another they were called Bantus. Now they are called individuals. When will they be *abantu*, and then espouse the political space as “I am a political person because we are a political persons?”

Yet the self-eating and violent atmosphere in our democratic dispensation continues unabated. The challenge of our time is the restoration of humanity and the reconstruction of a person to participate in public life.

Secondly, and in this regard we shall be brief. The notion of a secular state is not bad, but creates a lot of dilemmas and ambiguities in South Africa. Secularity on its own is a product of a religion. It mirrors a particular kind of religion and its values. One of the criticisms leveled against NEPAD is that it failed to recognize the role of religion in a continent that is indisputably religious. Our problem is ambiguity. It is difficult to contend with the fact that certain religious values are elevated, masquerading themselves as secular values yet they represent religious values out of which they were “routinized” into public life. Stackhouse (2002:16) argues against this religious blindness, which in our context is ironically defended by religious leaders who once were icons of the church of the struggle in South Africa. The recovery of sight in this regard is the mission of the church!

Our perspective is that the liberal constitution with its ramifications poses a huge challenge to the church of our times. On the one hand, the “sovereignty” of the individual in public life is one of the most acute problems the church faces today. On the other hand, the notion of a secular liberal state is undermined by blindness to religious values masquerading themselves as secular values, thereby marginalizing religious sentiments and values that are representative of the black African masses in public life.

Botman's (2000) notion of the divine mandates taken from Bonhoeffer is pertinent for this discussion. About this notion he says:

The term 'mandate' refers to a concrete divine commission founded upon the revelation in Jesus Christ as witnessed to by the Holy Scriptures. It gives a demarcated warrant or mandate from God to act in the place of Christ in a specific social designation or commission (2000:101).

The intrusion of one mandate in the space of another divine mandate in the spirit of neoliberal democracy has competition as its basic value and norm.⁷ Solidarity is not the norm anymore, and where it still exists, it is being displaced.

6.3.2. The Global Empire

The phenomenon of globalization⁸ in the world today has attained levels of an empire driven by an ideology of neo-liberal economy. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches states in its Accra Confession that the world is now controlled by a system of empire.

⁷ There are numerous case studies that could be cited had it not been for lack of space. One of them is the altercation in the judiciary of South Africa. This matter attracted a lot of attention in public life as the ruling party began to voice its concerns about the inability of the judges to appropriate the national vision and values in their interpretation of the law. A similar case could be made about the research that has been conducted around the notion of human rights and democracy which do not take into account the values of the people. Similar questions are beginning to emerge within the Electoral Commission of South Africa. What is the value of a vote in relation to the life of a voter? (We participated in one workshop in the Eastern Cape that was organized by the Provincial Electoral Commission where this question was raised).

⁸ Globalization is a contested term with the nature and extent of global economic integration a subject of intense dispute. Generally speaking however, the features of globalization include the revolution of technology and the liberalization of trade in the world. For some globalization is a negative term while others use it as a positive term. Our view is in agreement with the manner in which the Accra and Agape documents deal with it. It is driven by a neoliberalism market system and is defended by military force.

The World Council of Churches has adopted a document for study called the AGAPE, which also states that the neo-liberal economic system is a pseudo-religious system which does no longer require the obedience of the people.

Since the 1400s, from the time of the expansion of Europe some five centuries now, the Europeanization of the globe included the religious dimension of European culture. Religion in this regard participated in the formation, establishment and the creation of monocultures. The eighteenth century missionary enterprise is one example of theological instrumentation in the creation of monocultures. It became part of the worldwide system that originated in Europe in the 16th century. The dominant mission paradigm was that of conquest rather than inclusion. It was the religious containment of the colonized and the production of a value system and consciousness bereft of the indigenous world of meaning and symbols, as many contributors in the field have hitherto tirelessly asserted.

The current world system rendered as globalization is not something new (*kainos*), but recent (*neos*), as colonization, missions and imperialism are in themselves forms of globalization. By *neos*, we acknowledge that there is some sense in which the globalization of the world is new (Stackhouse 2004: 179). The problem according to Wallersteins & Hopkins (1994:94-95) is that the world has become a global system of interrelated and interdependent parts where there is one expanding economy and multiple expanding states showing political interrelations framed by capital-labour relations.

The central feature of this world system is the differentiation of the world into core and periphery where the economically more advanced assume the core with the less economically advanced assuming the periphery. This current global order is however, characterized by the supremacy and hegemony of one state or a singularly identifiable bloc on the globe. While globalization poses itself as world order of interrelations and connectedness, the term glocalization has often been employed to signify the fragmentation of the current global order. What this means is that even though we have moved from a bipolar world, there is one political and military pole on the globe which reaffirms neoliberal economics (Gutiérrez 1999:22). The fall of distinct walls of polarization with the emergence of information technology has now diffused the identity of the “enemy” or the “system” even if the enemy or the system might be present in the communities we live in. In our “grammar,” the communication of efficacy is distorted.

Stackhouse, who *inter alia*, looks at the implications of differentiation in the current world order and the forms of power it produces, provides us with a powerful lexicon. He uses the concepts of “principalities,” “throne,” “authority,” “dominions,” etc. to differentiate the powers and principalities at work in the current world order. His thesis is that differentiation produces power either benevolently or malignantly. The malignant power that differentiation unleashes is, in his terms, demonic. A demonic power is the kind of power that obtrudes the borders of its creative estate in its operation. Remember that covenant is rendered as “estates,” “bonds,” “associations,” “trusts,” etc. Covenant is power too, we have asserted. With this lexicon at hand, we look at his understanding of globalization briefly.

His view of globalization derives from what he says is a view of the world that “transcends the world itself.” Consequently, a view of the world that transcends the world itself is not distinctively produced by Western capitalism only, but could be found also in other values systems. According to him “a universalistic view that relativizes particular contexts has slowly produced what is before us” today (2004:179). The Hebrews, Taoists, Hindus, Buddhists, Western pagans and we include the Africans,⁹ in various ways knew of a single created realm where all peoples lived under divine command and could live toward the divine end. They all have their own distinctive views of the global meaning, the values that transcend the world itself. He continues:

Even the view that modified the global sensibilities in the West - the idea of one humanity in one world, which the one true, triune God created, commanded and commissioned –is as old and in principle universal, more globally encompassing than any naturalistic *kosmos* or *oikoumene* could be (2004:179).

The best view of globalization according to him is that the whole world is becoming one place and that God is in globalization. This point makes the necessary link between theology and globalization. The transcendental view of the world simply means that in globalization some different whole of the world is coming into being, creation is continuing, thus the *kosmos* and *oikoumene* are incomplete, flawed, unfinished or distorted even though sufficiently created by God. This view complies with the New Testament message that the world is good, but fallen and yet it is also something so loved by God.

⁹ Stackhouse does not include the Africans in his list.

As a result of God's love, the world is being redeemed (liberated) and those who are called (*ekklesia*, the church) do not to conform with this fallen world, but are called to transform and participate in its liberation toward a new creation and the Kingdom of God. Our problem is not globalization in this. It is neo-liberal globalization and its dominion in the world. We also should be careful in our reading of concepts such as universalism which easily lead us to creating monologues. The notion of "reiterative universalism" enunciated by Bujo implies that universal principles are validated in particular instances or contexts where there is a reciprocal acknowledgement of others as equal architects of morality (2003:26-27). The current world order is a monologue! In this context, we turn to Habermas to scrutinize forms of power in sociological terms, so as to clarify the imperial structure of a neoliberal –globalizing (Bedford-Strohm's designation) world system that continues to impoverish millions of people and making the rich richer.

6.3.3. The Habermasian Legacy and the System of the World

If the world system is a three pronged space of power, money and the lifeworld as postulated by Habermas, and further that the systems imperatives of power and money have coupled out of the lifeworld, then this is an important sign of our times. According to Habermas, there is nothing wrong in the "coupling out" of the systems of power and money out of the lifeworld, even though he accepts that these systems of power and money have the tendency to "colonize" the lifeworld. As a solution, he advances democracy or democratic procedure called discourse ethics –the *Rechtsstaat* as a means to curb the colonization of the lifeworld.

Jürgen Habermas is by far the most influential political sociologist today whose insights continue to influence debate on issues of power and the organizational structure of modern society.¹⁰ He is associated with a school of thought called Critical Theory, which is a Continental Tradition as opposed to the Anglo-American Traditions of political philosophy and theory. Critical Theory began as a sub-movement within the neo-Marxist social thought and then evolved into a neo-Kantian defense of liberal democracy.

Ingram (2002) asserts that later products of Critical Theory seem to “gravitate” around Jürgen Habermas in order to mute Marxist and existential themes of power. Habermas attempts to vindicate the Enlightenment paradigm and the ideal of liberal democracy.

6.3.3.1 The democratic *Rechtsstaat*¹¹

As a process of discourse and therefore communication, democracy and the law are important in the works of Habermas. We have also seen that Villa-Vicencio devoted some space to theology and law in his proposal for a Theology of Reconstruction. Let us briefly sketch the Communicative Action Theory of Jürgen Habermas.

¹⁰ It is interesting note that Jürgen Habermas is used by many of the works cited in this dissertation: B. Goba,; J. Cochrane,; D. Ingram,; R. Munch; J. Sara, M.Devey and J. Everett, J to mention but a few. Habermas is among the leading social theorists in the world today. Most of his writings are widely acclaimed among major contributions to the theoretical understanding of contemporary society. In addition to the scale, range and quality of his writings, Habermas attempts to reconstruct historical materialism and he defends capitalist modernization (Callinicos 1990:95).

¹¹ This notion is also used in Velleem 2002. It is taken from Habermas and used here to describe the juridification and thus, densification of law in modern democracy. The basic structure of the *Rechtsstaat* constitutes the mode of co-ordination by reasoned agreement or alternatively by fair compromise as a normative ideal of collective autonomy or self-determination in the modern world

First, Habermas appeals to Karl-Otto Apel to explicate and articulate the foundations of his theory and what he means by “validity basis of speech” (1979). He says:

I shall develop the thesis that anyone acting communicatively must, in performing any speech action, raise universal validity claims and suppose that they can be vindicated [or redeemed: *einlösēn*]. Insofar as he wants to participate in a process of reaching understanding, he cannot avoid raising the following – and indeed precisely the following – validity claims. He claims to be:

- a. *Uttering* something understandably;
- b. Giving [the hearer] *something* to understand;
- c. Making *himself* thereby understandable, and
- d. Coming to an understanding *with another person* (1979:2).

We need to recall that this theory is about social actions. Social actions are about what happens in social actors and between social actors. The sentiments above seek to outline the steps and stages of speech actions in and between social actors intended to make validity utterances given and accepted understandably by the conversing actors. Through the theory of communicative action, Habermas propounds a philosophy of language as the basis of his theory of modernity and distinguishes forms of rationality.

First, cognitive instrumental rationality conducts actions that aim at successfully realizing goals that have been privately defined (Deflem 1996:3). Within the ambit of instrumental rationality are action types that are either instrumental or strategic.

Action types are instrumental when they are directed at efficient interventions in a state of affairs in the world, or strategic when they guide attempts to influence the decisions of other actors. Habermas (1981:284) says:

We call an action oriented to success instrumental when we consider it under the aspect of following technical rules of action and assess the efficiency of an intervention into a complex of circumstances and events. We call an action oriented to success strategic when we consider it under the aspect of following rules of rational choices and assess the efficacy of influencing the decisions of a rational opponent.

Second, communicative action rests on communicative rationality, which is aimed at mutual understanding conceived as a process of reaching agreement on the basis of arguments resting on claims subject to validity tests between speaking subjects. According to Habermas, it is only through language, under conditions of rational argumentation that those social actors can co-ordinate their actions in terms of an orientation to mutual understanding (Deflem 1996:3).

“Reaching understanding [*Verständigung*] is considered to be a process of reaching agreement [*Einigung*] among speaking and acting subjects (Habermas 1981: 287).

Communication action to Habermas is when the actions of those who are involved are coordinated “not through egocentric calculations of success but through acts of reaching understanding” (1981: 286). He says that the concept of communicative action singles out above all two aspects, namely the teleological aspect of realizing one’s aims and the communicative aspect of interpreting to arrive at agreement (1987:126).

The commonly accepted background knowledge within which action communication is coordinated is offered by the lifeworld. Habermas says that the concept of lifeworld is complementary to that of communicative action (1987:119). He relates this concept to Durkheim's notion of collective consciousness. In other words, communication action takes place within the realm of collective consciousness. Habermas (1987:130) defines the lifeworld in this manner:

By the everyday lifeworld is to be understood that province of reality which the wide-awake and normal adult simply takes for granted in the attitude of common sense. By this taken-for-grantedness, we designate everything which we experience as unquestionable; every state of affairs is for us unproblematic until further notice.

For him “the lifeworld is given to the experiencing subject as unquestionable” (1987:130). It is the realm of those things that are not questioned, emanating from experience and unquestionable frames. As a realm of the taken-for-granted it owes this certainty to a social *a priori* rooted in the communication actions of mutual understanding in language. It is the taken for granted stratum of linguistic mediation in social interaction. Habermas however, argues that the action-oriented approach of the lifeworld is not adequate to account for all the intricacies of modern society. The process of rationalization should also be understood in terms of the “material substratum” of society. To supplement the lifeworld perspective, he introduces the *systems theory*, which specifically pays attention to the economic and the political systems.

He says (1987:153)

I understand social evolution as a second order process of differentiation: system and lifeworld are differentiated in the sense that the complexity of the one and the rationality of the other grow. But it is not only qua system and qua lifeworld that they are differentiated; they get differentiated from one another at the same time

Habermas postulates a process of what he calls juridification in European history. Juridification refers to an increase in formal law through the expansion of positive law. It means more social relations becoming legally regulated; and the densification of law, i.e. legal regulations becoming more detailed (Deflem 1996:7). According to Habermas, there are four identifiable waves of juridification in the European history, which demonstrate the resistance of the lifeworld to the colonizing workings of state and the economy. The outcome of this resistance in the first “wave” was achieved firstly by claiming individual rights, and then the democratization of the political order which was followed by the guaranteeing of freedoms and rights against the economic system. In plain language, Habermas says that liberal democracy is the product of the resistance of the lifeworld against the colonizing systems imperatives. He posits that under modern conditions, these systems imperatives “uncoupled” from the lifeworld. They function independently, no longer on the basis of communication action but in terms of the functionality of the steering media of money and power.

To explain this Cochrane (1997c:6) says:

For Habermas (1983) a “system” (objective economic and political structures of power) always coincides with “lifeworld” (the taken for granted substratum of worldviews and actions which “stands behind the back” of each participant in communication and which provides coherence and direction to life). A lifeworld becomes socially effective through processes and institutions which embody the values and the storehouse of knowledge passed from one generation to the next.

For Habermas this is the basic structure of the modern democratic *Rechtsstaat*. It is a product of juridification and the resistance of the lifeworld. Hence, democracy offers the basic procedural structure and logic of un-coerced argument without which there will be violence. Habermas thus welcomes liberal democracy as a product of juridification and densification of law that differentiated from the lifeworld. Key to this proposition is that Habermas insists that the modern development of social and cultural diversity cannot be replaced by a new unitary conception of the collective good life. Unity for him is located in the pluralism of ethical life forms and consensus in basic constitutional procedures and principles.

But how do we find “rootage” or legitimacy in a pluralistic, diverse political community? Habermas responds to this by saying that given the conditions that we have outlined above, the outcomes should be understood by the participants as compatible with the results of these procedures which guarantee collective deliberations.

In other words, the conditions of public deliberation and the making and implementation of the collective decisions must produce both freedom and legitimacy. Legitimacy is directly found in the same set of conditions or normative principles of a modern democratic dispensation, *Rechtsstaat*. The procedures by means of which we come to hold our views are in themselves our *Gewähr*¹² i.e. our warranty for and legitimization of our convictions. The *Rechtsstaat* is thus a procedure for a communicative rationality, a discourse of coming to grips with incoherence, contradictions and dissension. At the same time democracy is a sensor for exchanges between systems and lifeworld. So, society is a “trilogy” of power, economics and the lifeworld. The mode of co-ordination by reasoned agreement or alternatively by fair compromise is a normative ideal of collective autonomy or self-determination in the modern world, the theory entails. Most importantly, religion must reside in the lifeworld in this scheme of the social order.

6.3.3.2. The Colonization of the Lifeworld

The uncoupling of the system is not problematic in itself. Actions coordinated through these media are relieved from a constant threat of dissent that is rife in communicative action as a result of imbued difficulties in reaching consensus. Systems circumvent dissent with a high level of productivity and efficiency. Uncoupling is “a technisizing of the lifeworld” (1987:183). The problem according to Habermas is that systems have the capacity to penetrate back into the lifeworld.

¹² I take my cue from Callinicos (1990) who explains *Gewähr* as the motivation of a speaker to rationally persuade a hearer to accept the former’s speech act because he can assume the warranty for convincing reasons.

This is what Habermas refers to as the colonization of the lifeworld, where “the communicative potentials aimed at understanding in the lifeworld are eroded in terms of the systemic imperatives of monetary and bureaucratic systems.” He maintains (1987:196):

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In the end, systemic mechanisms suppress forms of social integration even in those areas where a consensus-dependent coordination of action cannot be replaced, that is, where the symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld is at stake. In these areas, the *mediatization* of the lifeworld assumes the form of colonization.

The implication of the statement above specifically for religion or theology is that as a form of social integration which is consensus-dependent, it is suppressed by systemic mechanisms. It is the mediatization of religion and theology that suffers colonization we decry in the context of neoliberal globalization. The scheme offered by Habermas is about how the world is operating today and for this reason we argue that the coupling out of power and economics is in itself the most fundamental symptom of the “corruption” of power if the geography of power is in-between publics. Remember that according to Habermas with whom we tacitly agree, differentiation produces power. But what form of power? Everett (1988b) says modern differentiation produces a partial *oikos*, -or *ikhaya* (Vellem 2002). Colonization of the lifeworld is the corruption of power to designate the anti-life tendencies of systems as opposed to life. When the power instantiated by differentiation is malignant, it causes fragmentation and distorts communication, for communication is power. Persuasion is power in open democracy, but it must have a life-giving *telos*.

6.3.4. Corrupted Power, A communication of “inefficacy”

Habermas’ thesis that the *mediatization* of the lifeworld in systems imperatives assumes colonization states our problem which we designate as corrupted power. In the neoliberal globalization context it is not only the *mediatization* of the lifeworld in systems imperatives only, but the “militarization” of the lifeworld, meaning the spaces that are solely consensus-dependent, that are colonized. From the African perspective, and within the perspective of Luther and Foucault, that power is not a possession but a gift, implies that it can be corrupted. Surely *ukudla* (food) can be corrupted!

Colonization usurps the giftedness of power for life, thereby corrupting it. It is the expansion of one sphere by contracting another. This is what we have attempted to elucidate when we spoke of a view of the world that “transcends the world itself.” When the neoliberal view of the world is universalized the local is contracted and the global expanded. Globalization is being universalized and relativized within the frame of a particular worldview. Colonization of the lifeworld corrupts reiteration and reciprocity of life in between spheres.

First, the conception of the idea of spheres can be traced from the notion of “estates” in medieval times. The Reformation notion of “orders of creation” also modulated the idea of spheres of public life in which each sphere has its own life, sense of justice and its own set of purposes. This notion of “estates” or “orders of creation” is differentiation in modern times and has parallels in various cultures and religions.

Within the Reformation thought, according to Stackhouse, what seems to have been the problem is the “onto-theocratic” view of differentiation, namely that God is understood to have created forms in which humans are to live – the familial, religious, political and economic spheres. The “onto-theocratic” view of differentiation could imply that some of these spheres could not be altered or changed. As we know, the struggle for the independence of religion from familial, economic, cultural or political control has a long history and has been developed in different ways throughout.

A theocratic view of polity, or public life would have its own response to the question of differentiation of family, religion, political and economic spheres. By the same token, a modern view will provide its own perspective of differentiation.¹³ While some areas of life or publics are rooted in creation (onto-theocratic publics), to proceed from our Reformed ethos, we need to concede that others are rooted in functional requirements of human living. In modern society, institutions that are not controlled by family, religion or regime are constantly formed. Some are even differentiated from homes and families themselves. How this differentiation is shaped in different cultural milieus is another matter.

¹³ One such view which could be placed parallel to the one of “onto-theocratic” publics is that of a “pre-state” public postulated by Everett (1999). To explain the role that religion has to play in a democratic environment, Everett coins what he calls a “pre-state public consensus.” Continual argument among competing and co-operating groups builds pre-state consensus. This means that democracy is about reorientation of power relations. It shapes the boundaries of power relations between publics of which religion is one. Another perspective is Bonhoeffer’s “divine mandates” we have already alluded to in this work.

Institutional spheres can be strange to a given culture and make demands for altered legal arrangements and new personal habits. When differentiation is viewed as a product of “providential development,” a kind of grace that operates beyond the common grace of creation, then other spheres need differentiated homes, as each area of life has its own logic (Stackhouse 2004). For us the “procreation” of differentiated homes, meaning, other publics through human agency is a theological statement of creative power at work in the dynamics of history. Differentiated spheres are differentiated “homes” that need social frameworks for their stability and guidance. We have said that differentiation produces power.

Second, the Bible speaks of powers that are real in life – “principalities,” “authorities,” “regencies,” and “dominions,” according to Stackhouse. These powers can become unconstrained and unguided, but they can also be reintegrated into society. We live in a world of vital, intelligible, spiritual forces that were created to be obedient to divine laws and purposes, which can also truly rebel against these divine norms and become “celebrants of their own potencies”. Nürnberger (1996:220-223) characterization of what he calls “traditionalism” and modernity could also shed light on this matter. He explains that the traditional system of meaning perceives the fabric of reality to be constituted by ‘dynamistic’ power. He likens ‘dynamistic’ power to the movements of winds in the atmosphere or currents in the sea to signify that dynamistic reality can be calm or tempestuous.

In itself and of itself this dynamistic reality is neither good nor bad and by means of appropriate rituals its currents can be channeled or guided in profitable directions or detrimental ones.¹⁴ Stackhouse sees these enchanted powers in modern society as identified by other terms such as “complexes,” “stereotypes,” “isms,” “taboos,” and “ideologies.” All these can dominate people, cultures and epochs, but the point is that they are always present and “social analysis must face the issues they pose; but only a theological view can touch the depths needed” to be touched (Stackhouse 2004:185). Power as a present created force needs to be channeled.

Third, we need to give examples of these dynamistic powers. Primal powers that are potentially disruptive have the designation of Principalities. Citing *Eros* to signify sensuality, Stackhouse predicates that while it is very personal and of intimate potency, *Eros* is equally a potentially pervasive power. Societies throughout have had to control this primal power, as it has the potential to command life beyond its sphere. By the same token, violence needs to be checked through organized force, but organized force becomes dangerous when it gains independence from society. Money too is indispensable, but it can also become an idol, in other words, it can command life beyond its sphere. It is a modern principality.

¹⁴ We need to clarify that Nürnberger’s explanation and thus his image of currents to explain dynamistic power in the fabric of reality. In this particular article he convincingly contrasts modernity and what he calls “traditionalism.” The fulcrum of his assessment of the world view in question is that it is culture and not nature; hence his view is that dynamistic power cannot be defined in terms of natural law. Pityana’s thesis quoted in this work is one example that should caution us from a truncated view of culture. It is also important to recall that the distinction made between culture and religion for example, when it comes to African Traditional Religion has been questioned in favour of a view that sees culture as a totality (Mugambi 1999). Ultimately, the mistake he commits is that the “demonic forces” of modernity cannot be explained through natural law or positivistic science.

In most societies we concur, it is religion that has played a vital role in holding these primal powers together for guidance and constraint. Also true is that religion could be subordinated to any one of these primal powers. So, we identify principalities as perennial powers that are part of the fabric of our reality that can threaten the harmony of “estates” or “spheres” when left unguided. The differentiation of public life, while not a bad thing, without bonds that tie together the differentiated spheres though, it signals malignancy. Glocalization is symptomatic of forms of malignant power we see in the current neoliberal globalizing world.

Life, as Robertson has said, is now ‘glocal,’ simultaneously global and local, ecumenical and particular, catholic and congregational, in part because we live in a period of the ‘compression of the world,’ which is not only multipolar politically (with contemporary hegemonies which others co-operate to restrain), multicultural, but increasingly linked technologically, economically, morally and in terms of the flows of information and population migrations - although some to be sure, are still left out (Stackhouse 2004:181)¹⁵.

The “compression of the world” is the key motif in the sentiments above to signify the exertion of force in the world that is globalizing and glocalizing. This motif of compression is very close to Habermas’s notion of suppression and colonization of the lifeworld. Perennial powers can be malignant when left unguided.

¹⁵ On the notion of glocalization see also Mendieta 2002.

“Authorities” are cultivated forms of power. In our contemporary life, Education, guided by science, according to Stackhouse meets the qualification, but also Law, Technology, etc. Expert knowledge creates regencies driven each by its own kind of spirit. These powers are not formed in the very structure of creation, but are historical. Cultivated power or harnessed power without *rootage* can doubtfully sustain the moral and spiritual imperatives of a people, a generation, an epoch and thus society.

Principalities and Authorities are powers that have their *rootage* in theological or religious discourse. Nonetheless, as we have already indicated, sometimes religion and theology do not reflect God’s grace in guiding Principalities and Authorities, but rather become ambiguous in relating them to God and the service of humanity. The moot question is: which religion should guide these powers? For, in spite of the ambiguities of religion, religion itself remains the only power that has the potential to shape, constrain and guide these powers.

The question of “dominions” in public life becomes palpable at this point. It is the form of power that is distinct from the rest, principalities, authorities, regencies and thrones. Stackhouse argues vehemently that “religion can and does shape principalities and powers, authorities and regencies, as much as they shape religion (22002:16). But the question is who the dominion is? Or, what is the dominion that sanctifies orientations that bond societal institutions and become incarnate in the ethos of common life? For Christians the Dominion is Christ, for the Hindu Krishna and Mohamed for Islam. And indeed for the Enlightenment paradigm, the Cartesian Ego or Rationality is the Dominion.

For us the dominion is the Lordship of Christ in order to draw principalities, authorities and dominions into God's service and humanity. It is from this perspective that we argue that the fragmentation of spheres signifies the corruption of power. The dominion of Christ is instantiated as love. The dominion of Christ does not suppress and colonize, it fulfils – it is a *pleroma*, an abundance of life.

Let us revert to our African perspective of the corruption of power and its effect.

According to Mdende (2002), African speech *ukuthetha* advances to ritual performative speech. *Ukuthetha* (communication) is about invocations and consecrations and hence about gods or God. Thus the “communicative rationality of systems imperatives” (Habermas) should reveal the gods or God in whose communion its communicative acts are performed. Let us at this juncture recall our symbols of analysis in this chapter. If we synthesize the thesis of “communicative actions,” the thesis of “the communication of efficacy” and the thesis of *inkundla kukudla*, communication that is a central motif of the democratization project, is distorted in the context of the empire.

The disintegration of *inkundla* and *ukudla* is the *dis-integration* of open speech and communication where there can be no consensus save through force. The colonization of systems imperatives is a “technisizing mediatization” “of the lifeworld - of a space that is solely consensus-dependent. This technisizing of a consensus dependent sphere is a *Gestell* meaning that the *Rechtsstaat* becomes a dense sphere of juridification that does not reiteratively reveal the *alētheia* of African polity and its *praxis*. This is distorted communication for us.

Bedford-Strohm (2006a:5) explains the discourse model as:

Communication and rules that guarantee a societal discourse not governed by the use of power, but by the power of argument. If a discourse is truly free, that is, governed by rules that prevent the domination of some by other, the result of this discourse can orient political action.

What we are saying then is that there is no power of argument in distorted communication. Secondly, as power itself, communication is corrupted by the “dominion” of money and power. Any power of dominion is a form of religion, hence the ambiguity of the place of religion in public life. The bonds therefore, – the power-fields between the differentiated spheres in God’s *oikos*, *bayith* or *indlu* (African) are corrupted and severely impaired by a distorted form of communication. We have referred to Brueggemann (1999) who argues that the whole notion of covenant is about “othering.” This “othering” of spheres in situations of domination is indicative of corruption and in technisizing tendencies it reifies. Yet in the positive sense each sphere of the household of God and thus *ikhaya* is bonded by an “othering” force field. This is transformative, this is remaking, this is rebuilding, or *ubuhlantification* to use our language. Yet in our African perspective, discourse is not dense and rigid, but practiced. Discourse is not limited to those capable of speech and action, but everyone, God, people, land, *uqaqqa*, faith, work, the whole community. Discourse or *ukuthetha* is incomplete without the *invocacio Dei* and relies not on instrumental reason but the excavation of truth (Bujo 2003:78-88)

The Accra Declaration (2004) is a deep confessional groan at this state of affairs and in its motivation it is said:

Ours is a scandalous world in which the annual income of the richest 1% is equal to that of the poorest 57%, and 24 000 people die each day from poverty and malnutrition. The policy of unlimited growth among industrialized countries and the drive for profit of transnational corporations have plundered the earth and severely damaged the environment. This crisis is directly related to the development of neo-liberal economic globalization, an ideology that makes false claims that it can save the world through the creation of wealth and prosperity, claiming sovereignty over all life and demanding total allegiance which amounts to idolatry. The integrity of our faith is therefore at stake.

The point we are making for now is not about the differentiation of spheres, but how their fragmentation has become a matter of faith (*fides*) and *ipso facto* a Dominion - a “compressing” lordship of the world. We need to recall that world as distinct from earth is a space of performance – a space of symbolic meanings and a space of confirmations. The global empire of neoliberal economic communication suppresses the world, but more so, fragments the world.

6.3.5. Fragmentation.

The fragmentation of spheres implies the dominion of spheres against others. This Dominion in the Enlightenment paradigm is rationality.

Dussel (2002:268), citing one of the Christian philosophers assassinated in el Salvador, Ignacio Ellacuria, poignantly posits:

Even though society is not an organism...different human groups are those which biologically see themselves as forced to make history. Many of the natural as well as optional realizations are due to fundamentally biological determinants...Even more so when we attend to the riches and plentitude of the necessities and the biologically considered life powers.

The statement above is that society, while not a biological organism is determined and inhabited by biological beings. *Ukudla*, signifies this. In African terms society does not die, but human beings who are actors in society do. To be precise, community does not die. One of the established sets of expectations regarding the workings of society and community is life-its symbolic sustenance and perpetual significance for life *ad in finitum*. Society thus becomes a generation of life, a powerhouse of life. We now appeal to Dussel's (2004:265) view that the contemporary political theory can be perused as a subterfuge attempt to "uncouple substantive ethical orientations from the practice and formulation of political justice."

Dussel (2004: 265-278) argues that at the base of Aristotle's politics of the *to koinon agathon*, that is, the common good, was the connection of material contents with politics (power). He views Habermas as among those who obstinately reject material politics and conflating political action and economic action as we have seen.

According to Dussel, this contractual or discursive approach, which he terms *ratio politica*, makes sense in countries that are already in late capitalism. In countries of advanced capitalism the level of development is a guarantor for the survival of their citizens and legitimacy that complies with the procedural requirements of their democratic system. This kind of political philosophy viz. *ratio politica* is discounted on the grounds that it is not realistic in the world where the impoverished and the underdeveloped constitute 85% of the world's population today.

First, Dussel takes us to three foundational principles of politics, “the architectonic of political philosophy.” The first one is that political reason is practical and material. He asserts that humanity comes to an agreement to live together by means of reason in order to conserve and secure peaceful life. It is reason that makes humanity to move away from a chaotic state into a civil order for purposes of securing life. This view thus departs from the understanding of being as “Will” to one of being as “Will to Live.” Politics thus becomes the actualization of power for purposes of creating life and *ipso facto*, life becomes the ultimate *telos* of power. Hence it is not legitimacy that defines citizenry, but “Will to Live.”

Second, Dussel posits the symmetrical and democratic participation of all (*everyone*) affected as an important norm for validation. According to him, popular sovereignty serves as the source and destination of law. This aspect he designates as the “Democracy Principle.” This “Democracy Principle” is the political means to produce human life in community absolutely free of coercion.

The “Democracy Principle” becomes normative as a principle of popular sovereignty where the community is both the *archē* and *telos* of the law. Law does not live on itself and for its own sake. In some way, de Gruchy’s (1995) distinction between democratic vision and democratic system could be understood in this manner too. The vision of democracy assumes the same place as the “Democracy Principle” postulated by Dussel. The qualifier is that that vision is practical and material and can only be legitimate when it propagates the will to live. Hence, politico-discursive reason loses and forfeits legitimacy once it does not sustain and maintain the vision of human life for its citizens and popular sovereignty.

Third, let us move to instrumental reason (democratic systems), the means-end dimension of *ratio politica*. This cannot be an end in itself, but must be subsumed under the first two principles of life and symmetrical participation. Instrumental reason actualizes the two principles above, i.e. the principle of life and the principle of symmetrical and democratic participation. It is the practical feasibility of practical truth (life) and practical validity (democracy principle) managing the complexity of the concrete level. The common problem we encounter is the distinction made between formal reason and material reason (Weber). Formal reason is viewed as emanating from empirical judgments while material reason is viewed as emanating from value judgments which are subjective. This distinction, Dussel argues, is oblivious to the Life-Principle and Democracy –Principle enunciated above. It is reductionist, for “formal rationality is subject to quantification and calculation, and is aimed at ends already in place in the existing system (whether they be political, economic, technological, etc.).”

Furthermore, “there exists no possibility of positing or judging ends” (2004:272). The possibility of maintaining human life and the legitimate democratic determination of maintaining life constitute the ethical dimension of strategic reason. Only the law, action, system or institution that complies with life and political validity can make a claim to political justice.

Dussel enunciates his paradigm of critical politics on the basis of the principles above. *Ratio politica* is transformed into critical politics in order to assume responsibility for the negative effects of decisions, laws, action, systems and institutions. The purpose of ethical political critique is to disclose, demystify what is not true, not legitimate and make efficacious that whose *telos* is contrary to life and symmetrical participation in the search for life. Preponderant negative effects of the systems and thus intolerable and unacceptable effects demand critical reflection on systems:

Black Americans, Hispanics, feminist movements, ecologists, senior citizens, post colonial countries oppressed by the globalization process, exploited classes, excluded populations, the marginalized, poor immigrants, ethnic groups, and so many other social groups victimized by the present political systems, become the objects of liberation or *critical politics* (Dussel 2004:274).

This is the position of this dissertation. It is our contention that the monoculture of the globe created unprecedented discrepancies in the world today. One of these blatant discrepancies is found in the imbalance between experience and expectation today. .

In this dissertation democracy in the New World Order is thus subjected to a hermeneutic of suspicion. Having already pitched South African Democracy in this New World Order, the impact of globalization on the democratization of the South African public is equally negative. Third World democracies are glocalized and fragmented as the power of the state is undermined by the globalizing trends. The dominion of instrumental reason leads to fragmentation that reifies democracy, yet power is material and life-giving. *Inkundla kukudla*.

6.4. Conclusion

Open discourse includes everyone and re-establishes life in the community. We have seen how the *Rechtsstaat* overlooks the violent nature of the systems imperatives of power and money and have rejected their colonizing tendency as corruption –the distortion of the giftedness of power as an instantiation of life. The community that is in discourse requires the demystification of distorted forms of communication.

Dichotomies such as public/private rational/irrational inherently account for the disharmony in the spheres of *ikhaya*. All spheres are integral mandates (*izindlu*) of one home, *ikhaya*, fired by an *iziko* (fireplace) in the presence of God, symbolized in *ubuhlanti*. *Ubuhlantification* is a rigorous circular path of “othering” one by each of the spheres of *ikhaya*. The Dominion is Christ that takes sides, hence the *iziko* of Life-giving democracy is on the underside of history in our search for alternative community responsible forms of social organization for life.

CHAPTER 7

On A Tentative Agenda of a Life-giving Democracy

7.1. Introduction

The methodology of this dissertation is committed to alternatives, it is *analectic*. It resonates with the spirit of the Third General Assembly of EATWOT in 1992 epitomized by a cry for life and a search for alternatives. Liberation, in this work, points to the alternative world of meaning and shapes our endeavour to construct a Black Public Theology of Liberation. Liberation is the norm, the paradigm of Black Theology. Much as liberation is a global quest against domination for an alternative world order, the plight of the black suffering masses in the local South African situation is equally a global question in solidarity with blacks, people of colour and the marginalized on the globe. The interlocution of a black non-person provides a space for a conversation about God and the praxis for an alternative world.

The architecture of liberation is described in soteriological categories that locate the gestation of expectation among the poor and the marginalized in echoes of culture and the symbolic structures of the poor. After all, the moral architecture of every civilization will always mirror and reflect religious promises of salvation and commitments that point to an ultimate source of normative meaning, the *archē*. The term black is retained as a designation of a struggle against their ontological denial of existence. Liberative currents emanating from their culture are given preferential option.

Reconstruction starts from liberation, the dissertation argues. In essence, reconstruction proposes a shift within the contours of the same paradigm in circumstances of a legitimate change. Reconstruction cannot be an alternative to liberation and Black Theology but, an expression, a mode, a motif or moment that does not alter the essence of Black Theology of liberation. It does not reinvent the wheel but is purposed to unleash the power of liberation in public life. Black Public Theology of liberation harnesses development, reconstruction, transformation, nation-building and democracy in this manner. They are moments for the praxis of liberation in constructive impatient, restless, insurgent and less-embittered mode.

Amandla ngawethu proposes a different geography and topography of power that resonates with Black Theology of liberation. The notion of *amandla ngawethu*, elucidated through the heuristic of *ubuhlanti*, the aggregating symbol of *ikhaya*, is an African ecclesial symbol that conceptualizes covenant, publicity and the *politike koinonia* to locate the “biosphere” of power in the black experience. Power is not possession, but unity and communication of efficacy in *fides*, trusts, bonds and associations and the solidarities of spheres in public life. Open discourse, *inkundla*, is located in the African anamnestic praxis of *ukudla* (food), to designate a political economy in which *ukudla* “feeding,” “feasting” and “plenitude” at the interface of differentiated spheres render democracy as teleologically life giving. The goal of democracy is to intensify power, meaning the intensification of life rather than extending power beyond differentiated mandates in public life.

The dissertation further constructs the grammar of publicity through the Nongqawuze interstice designated as a space of counter subaltern publics in historical circumstances of social death. It is in this interstice where a profound intensity of alternative life and the re-generation of a unique spirituality that is symbolized in *imvuselelo* are traced. This dissertation thus offers a perspective of life lived and inspired by a particular spirit that is needed to re-make publicity and the democratization project in South Africa. NEPAD, reconstruction and development need this spirituality of “unlearning to die the death of slavery” in open democracy. This spirituality, discerned in the symbol of *imvuselelo*, is a spirituality of unlearning to live the life of a master and the imperial distortions of communication. The spirituality of unitive, integrated and harmonious publics is not only necessary in the dominating, *glocalizing* and fragmenting order of modern society and neo-liberal public life. It is also a form of resistance – a freed interstice of life amidst the vestiges and residues of values that perpetuate “unfreedoms,” *dis-integration* and “disassociation” of symbols and cultural structures of the marginalized. Democracy liberates the masses to live, rule and govern themselves in the domination and sovereignty of empires. It is an analectic moment for the communication of efficacy instantiated in the bonds of unity.

At this point, let us briefly demonstrate the application of these key thoughts of the dissertation in our public life. We do not give an exhaustive account on the public issues, but a demonstration of how they can resonate with our approach. We select church-state relations, the economic sphere, moral regeneration, HIV/AIDS and poverty.

7.2. Church and State: Critical Engagement

7.2.1. A critique of “Critical Solidarity”

In the South African interregnum a concept of “critical solidarity with the state” was coined. De Gruchy explains this notion of critical solidarity in this manner:

Being in critical solidarity means giving support to those initiatives which may lead to the establishment not only of a new but just social order. It means that the church remains prophetic in its stance toward the emergent nation...The touchstone for determining what critical solidarity means is twofold. First, it means taking side with all those who remain oppressed in one form or another in a new democratic society, participating with them in their never-ending struggle for justice, human dignity, and liberation...The second touchstone of critical solidarity is defense of the human rights of all people, especially minority cultural and religious groups (1994:16-17).

While this view of critical solidarity became dominant in our first decade of democracy in South Africa, it is easy to see how redolent it is with ambiguity. We should wonder as to whether it was “subsidiarity” between the church and state that was sought, as the shift from the preferential option of the poor is the basis for the solidarity of the church with the poor. It is doubtful as to whether this view ever attained any unanimity in South African theological discourse even though it has become a buzz word. However, in our view it is misnomer for the church to be in solidarity with the state, i.e. with power.

First, our problem arises out of the danger we must be always conscious of in dealing with the symbol “people.” The assumption that democracy in South Africa was legitimized by the people is correct only on the surface but, ultimately dangerous when the category “people” is left unexplained. While this notion is celebrated in liberation circles and used mostly as an ecclesiological motif such as in the “church as people,” Boff is quick to admit that it is a sociological construct, albeit useful to defining power relations in the church. As a sociological construct¹, the symbol “people” becomes extremely dubious once it is devoid of the touchstone of the preferential option of the poor – a particular category of the people.

Popular sovereignty without God or gods is equally dangerous and becomes plebiscitary absolutism. In the book of Revelation, it is the people who wanted emperor worship to be obeyed, much as it was the “people” who cried to Rome about our Lord: “crucify him.” It is therefore dangerous to employ the massive symbol of people uncritically by equating it to democracy as a rule of the people by the people. There is always a need for us to “deconstruct” the notion of the people so as to clarify the solidarities that need to be assumed. The sovereignty of people is common life.

Second, and related to the first, is that the New Testament offers at least three categories of the symbol people, the *ethne* (nations), the *laos*, (people or new Israel) and the *ochlos* (crowds) (Niles 2004: 145ff).

¹ The notion of people in sociological terms brings out notions such as “groupthink,” “collective behaviour” and therefore, rationalities associated with crowds which must be carefully unraveled in our use of the notion of people.

It is important to understand the interrelationships that exist between these terms. It is mostly to the *ochlos* (thongs or mystified crowds) that Jesus showed his compassion - the riff-raff of society. The interlocution of the people as a category for liberation is thus the non-person, the marginalized. It is the category of the *ochlos* that fits this interlocution.

There can be no solidarity with power (state) in a liberative framework of theology. The glaring option to be in solidarity with the state in the proposition of critical solidarity either betrays the option of the *ochlos* or grossly underestimates the form of power that is characteristic of the state in the current world. It is in the interstices of social death where the communication of efficacy and the vision of the alternative are located. The current analysis of the world system suggests that power as in the state, and money, as in the economic sphere, colonizes the lifeworld. We have argued that the coupling out of power and money as steering media that have their own language is indicative of the “corruption” of power. To be in solidarity with power can thus be dangerous for the church as solidarity means unity.

Our third point is that the post-Westphalian order presents us with the “state without power,” a unique anomaly in our times. It is now argued (Baker 2002:116) that the nation-states are gradually losing their capacity to facilitate self-determination. There is even talk about “global civil society” as power is increasingly getting globalized. Of course, there are contradictions in these attempts as there is no equivalent of a domestic state in which global civil movements can represent their plight.

Our example could be NEPAD, which is still “powerless” in spite of the fact that it brings together most states of the African continent. Yet there is *de facto* a global state “the Western state writ in large” (Baker 2002 :122). In this regard Hirsch (2005:69) says:

As ANC parliamentarian Ben Turok put it: ‘A new democratic South Africa will need to defend its interests against the predatory actions of international capital and institutions like the International Monetary Fund [and] the World Bank...The irony was that in order to stave off the power of international finance, the ANC committed itself to policies approved by the same financiers. In order not to get too indebted to those who could turn their debt against them, they had to be conservative and pander to some of their prejudices. And yet the electoral platform of the ANC was the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The legitimacy of the ANC rested on its ability to deliver an improved life for its constituents-poorer South Africans excluded from power and privilege under apartheid.

For us the question is not so much about the predatory actions of the international capital institutions. The irony that the promises to the people were abandoned as a result of the ANC’s commitment to the same predatory institutions remains ambiguous. The question is whether they did have any choice? Most Third World states are not in control of their budgets and have to comply with rules imposed by these so-called Bretton Woods institutions. Van Drimmelen (1998:21) asks:

Is the present process of globalization compatible with democracy, social justice and the social welfare state? If democratically elected governments feel obliged to obey impersonal market forces, who will be the guardian of social justice?

How can citizens participate in decision making processes that shape their future? There is an important tension between democracy and the emerging global market. Democracy believes in an equal distribution of political power based on “one person one vote,” while the global market operates on the principle that it is the duty of the economically capable to drive the economically incapable out of business. At present the egalitarian forces of democracy seem to be losing out to the cold-blooded forces which preach the “survival of the fittest” in a global market.

The state as the custodian of social justice is being undermined in these circumstances and democracy is losing out. The erosion of the sovereignty of the nation-states as a result of the development of the massive international capital is a reality we must contend with, yet there is *de facto* a global state, “the Western state writ in large.” Democracy is undermined by the vast pool of capital which sets the parameters for the policies of national governments, save one or a few, in the current world order.

Fourth, it goes without saying that the contours of church-state relations have changed. The loss, or impending loss of the mandate of state is a critical factor in determining church-state relations in so far as the state is equipped to serve its people and advance the egalitarian vision of democracy. In other words, do we continue to see the state that is losing authority as a sphere of power to which a critical distance should be maintained; in which case some form of critical solidarity would be plausible? Put differently, do we empathize with the fact that the South African government had to accept to play by the rules that are prevalent in the current world order and direct our critical distance and prophetic voice against those that wield power against the authority of the state?

These are difficult questions to respond to. However, dogging these questions will be the worst mistake that the church can ever commit. Yet critical solidarity with the state is not our option. Indeed, while imperfect and seriously under siege, the framework of equality between states upholds the principle of political equality among international states. The state, as a sphere of power that has “coupled out of the lifeworld” represents a sphere that is mediated by power that colonizes the lifeworld, the *politike koinonia*. By implication, the church is being colonized. Hence solidarity with the state can only be the augmentation of the power of a sphere that is already colonizing the poor. Most states choose to participate and obey the steering rules of capital and power. These choices can either be in favour of the people, or to their disadvantage even though the line that separates the two is very thin. Our view however, is that in the face of these challenges there still exists a nation-state with some measurable amount of authority, hence the state remains a sphere of power distinct from the church. The mandates are not the same, so the starting point of their relationship lies in their subsidiarity. They are differentiated spheres of public life.

It should also be recalled that the problem of church-state relations was never an African issue (Mugambi 1999:23-24). Africans have constantly been incapacitated to recast these relationships from their own perspective, firstly as a result of the Cold War and now, as a result of the current globalizing world of neo-liberal capitalism. The influence of liberal thinking and its dominance on the centre stage of South African public life continues to cloud this debate, which is Western in provenance.

What we are saying here is that the ideological permutations of the debate should be clarified in so far as they inhibit alternative forms and views on the matter. The hegemonic liberal democratic view on the subject should firstly be seen as one view among a host of other views. The division between the sacred and the secular still mirrors secularization debates and the struggle between religion and the state in the West. What is often omitted in the clash between church and state in the development of the western polity is that the victory of the monarchy over the church arose out of a misconstrued version of divine authority that led to absolute monarchy (De Jouvenel 1993:47-49). Sovereignty is not a right, hence there could be no sovereignty without God or gods. Sovereignty is the origin, the *arche*, it is external and controls power by conferring a mandate. Hence the matter is not a choice between the sovereignty of the church or the monarchy, but the mandates conferred to the two spheres and, of course, other spheres of life. There is always a transcendent principle behind power that is perceived by the subjects and this principle is armed with absolute authority to which power is effectively subordinated. Such a principle is life, critical life-giving bonds between church and state.

The absolute dichotomy between church and state or secular and sacred is unacceptable at this metaphysical level, because it implies a choice between the two spheres. Furthermore, our view is that solidarity unites and hence, the unity of church and state in the proposal of critical solidarity conspicuously consolidates power between the two institutions against the poor who are the voice of God.

The ultimate danger in the dichotomizing ethos of Western modern thought, particularly in a democratic polity that is dominated by liberal political strategies, is not the imposition of absolute power upon others. It is the reshaping of desires and the generation of new subjects (King & Kendall 2004: 232), because absolute sovereignty is in the individual, the notion of people simply meaning an arithmetic quantity and assemblage of individuals (De Jouvenel). If democracy is a form of “polyarchy,” (Baker 2002 :117) i.e. the sovereignty of the unity of numerous spheres, it is critical subsidiarity between church and state we propose, as subsidiarity disperses sovereignty into mandates of differentiated spheres. Critical subsidiarity allows freedom and cooperation of spheres and ultimately a sharing of sovereignty.

But even the most recent works we have come across (Madise 2005), shies away from any “benevolent” solidarity between the two spheres of church and state implied in the “cosy” notion of critical solidarity with the state. Our cue though, derives from Keum (2002). His study attempts to show that the revival of Protestant Christianity in North Korea was not the result of a compromising accommodation with the Communist government, but the consequence of its effective articulation of a *minjung*-centered approach to the church-state relationship in the Communist context. He (2002:339-348) talks about a range of modes or “paradigms” that shaped these relations in his context such as: *Minjung*-Centered Oppositional Paradigm; The Competitive Oppositional Paradigm; and the Diplomatic Cooperative Paradigm and The *Minjung*-Centered Cooperative Paradigm.

It is what he calls the “The *Minjung*-Centered Approach in Church-State Relations” that has a bearing on our discussion at hand (2002:346). About this he says:

Through our examination of the various historical paradigms, we have identified that the concept of the *minjung* has to be included in the bilateral relationship between church and state for establishing a proper relationship. The Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State had already argued in 1937 that the “community of people” remains an essential criterion for proper relations between church and state. In the North Korean context, this means that the notion of the *minjung* has to be the criterion for determining whether the northern church should oppose the state or cooperate with it. If the state developed policies in favor of the *minjung*, and the *minjung* support their government, the church can cooperate with the state. However, if a government is tyrannical and oppresses the *minjung*, the church cannot allow the legitimacy of the government, and must oppose the state. Therefore, the triangular approach of church, *minjung* and state is a highly relevant analytical methodology for the northern churches in critically assessing their church-state relations.

By including the concept of *minjung*, the preferential option for the broken-hearted and the suffering is maintained to sustain the liberation paradigm. In other words, the symbol of liberation needs to be included in the relationship between church and state. Keum concurs by saying that the only permanent feature that the church must always identify itself with is the suffering *minjung* to ensure the ceaseless reformation of itself, and to continually evaluate and reshape its relationship with the state accordingly. What is now included in this relationship is the “community of people,” certainly an often occluded dimension of these relations.

Again Keum qualifies this touchstone by insisting that it comprises the *minjung*. The “triangular” relation of *minjung*, church and state is ground-breaking. His work demonstrates that whatever paradigm is developed, whether one of opposition, criticism or cooperation, the *minjung*-centered approach and *ipso facto*, the liberation paradigm, is a key factor to determine cooperation between church and state. Indeed, we have tacitly made these connections: *koinonia* as a space of solidarity and the *politike koinonia*, as an interstice of the *iziko* of power and spirituality against social death.

So we have made four main points in relation to the notion of critical solidarity. An imperialist aggregation of individuals as people or nation is not in compliance with the category of people as employed in the liberation tradition. It is inconceivable for the church to be in solidarity with power as defined in the current world order given the complex challenges that are faced by the nation-state in the current world order. We then evoked Keum’s thesis which includes a third partner – “the community of the people” in the relationship. For us this community is the solidarity of the shaken – the Nongqawuze interstice of social death. From our African ecclesio-political perspective, this community, the *politike koinonia*, whose anthropological character in the dictum: “I govern because we govern,” “I am a monarch because we are monarchs,” signifies governors and monarchs in the presence of the empire. Sharp dichotomies and their resultant spirit of competition are rejected in favour of a liberative, “*othering*” relationship of the elements of the covenant. Church and state relations with the dimension of the community find expression and revelation in the anamnestic praxis of the poor, powerless masses.

This is the spirituality of democracy. Most potently, the misuse of the term “theocracy,” needs to be corrected. It is different from “hierocracy” (government of clergy) and “bibliocracy” (differentiated spheres of church and state subjected to the Word of God) (Bieler 2005:114). To conclude Andre Bieler (2005:113) says:

Between church and state there is never any real neutrality, whatever may be the philosophical and ideological positions on which a political regime is founded. The whole problem is to know the extent to which the church imposes its faith and ethics upon the state, and how far the state imposes its ideological, political and social ideas on the church.

7.2.2. The notion of a Developmental State

There has been talk of a notion of “a democratic developmental state” in our public life. This might provide us with a possible entry point in the discussion of church-state relations, particularly in answering the question: how does the church relate to the state in practical terms? But first, let us give a description of the notion.

Amidst the critique of liberal democracy, the *Rechtsstaat* in our terminology, the greatest threat is that any democracy that cannot deliver on the basic needs remains fragile. Cornel West (2006:22) rightly says that all democracies are fragile and to this we add: the situation is worse when they do not deliver on basic needs. We have said that liberal democracy lives on what it cannot guarantee, hence the quest for different forms of democracy. One of these endeavours is the notion of a democratic developmental state.

On the theoretical conceptualization of “a democratic developmental state” Edigheji (2005:4) maintains that development should go hand in hand with democracy.

Development and democracy should “reinforce” one another. As freedom, development can only be enhanced by democracy. “A democratic developmental state is one that not only embodies the principles of electoral democracy, but also ensures citizens’ participation in the development and governance processes” Edigheji maintains. This means bringing citizenship back into politics by placing a greater premium on “participatory democracy,” in contrast with “representative” democracy, what we designate the spirituality of politics in our language.

Associations of politically marginalized people, explains Edigheji, due to contestations in civil society, are best suited for consultative processes that will ensure redistribution and the reduction of inequalities in this model of a democratic developmental state (2005:7). In addition to this, this model fosters economic growth and development at the same time, it is asserted. There must be clearly defined socio-economic goals that require the intervention of the state. The key point for now is that the community-embedded organizations of the marginalized are a criterion for a departure from representative democracy to participatory democracy. The notion of a democratic developmental state started in East Asia in countries such as Japan. What is attractive to us is the fact that, in broad terms, it is a combination of two motifs that have dominated this work, namely, democracy and development. Development is freedom, while democracy is life-giving. If we draw together all these insights, the church-state relations can be defined in liberative terms as impatient constructive life-giving relations.

A democratic developmental state lends a high premium to participatory democracy, especially the participation of the marginalized groupings. It is embedded in the counter-publics of the marginalized. In this sense, the state cannot be in solidarity with the church. Liberative reconstruction is itself committed to the subaltern counter publics for the rebuilding of freedoms and thus can not be in solidarity with state. Church-state relations are at the interface between publics where life is instantiated. Mbeki himself used the phrase “engaging power,” in the ME’99 (1999:9). For us engaging power in open discourse means to communicate efficacy in the bonds of “trust” in between the spheres of church, community and state. Critical engagement is the model we propose. To this effect, church, community and state bonds must be directed to an alternative order purposed for life.

7.3. The Economic Sphere: *Inkundla kukudla*

We have attempted to argue that power is food and the etymological origins of the word economics from *oikos* and *ikhaya* adequately point to the connectedness of this sphere to others in God’s household. The problem for us is not the differentiation of economics, but its fragmentation of public life. Its propensity is to command beyond its sphere thus to corrupt. Van Drimmelen (1998:xi) says:

The word “economy” comes from the Greek words *oikos*, meaning house or household, and *nomos*, meaning law or rules. Economics, therefore, literally

refers to applying “household rules”- and in this economics is as old as humanity, because people have always used household rules.

It is the “rules” of economy we need to question ethically in our times. These rules allow the economy to “govern” beyond its mandate and cultivated authority. One of the main points we raise is the quasi-religious tone of economics we should engage in our black African ecclesio-political discourse. The first area is that of advertisement. Mosala pointed at the manner in his book. He says:

For example, a current advertisement for Xtra-strong sweets/candy steals a black mineworker’s oppositional discourse, which is expressed in the form of a song, and uses it to strengthen capital’s domination over labor. The song in question is the famous “Chocholoza kwezintaba, setimela sivela eRhodesia (sic) (1989:175)`.

Coca-Cola has enticed buyers with phrases such as “ Give me your tired ones, your thirsty ones..., those who are exhausted,” and “ I was thirsty and I was refreshed,” (van Drimmelen 1998:4). This secularized “eschatology” is found also in the terms used both in writings and thoughts of the school. For example banks talk of “savings,” some even evoke sentiments of salvation. Such a view, we hold, echoes sentiments expressed by Francis Fukuyama.

Fukuyama celebrates the triumph of capitalism and has postulated that there is no alternative to this and history has now attained its climax. Paradoxically, all these schemes have close links with certain religious symbols.

In different epochs of history the contestation between religious symbols and secular ones have either completely removed one of the two types of symbols from the scene, thereby creating an imbalance or, at best a fragmental value system.

Still, when the current economic system is traced to one of the Western celebrated sociologists of economy, Thomas Malthus, the notion of the scarcity of resources which has been central to the development of economic theory associated with the Enlightenment paradigm can be genocidal. Yet the truth is that there is enough resources today to reduce the scale of poverty and avoid the resultant famines, when reasonable sharing of resources can be achieved. Whether religious or not, these matters are essentially issues of *fides*. *Fides* in its crudest sense means a force that galvanizes cohesion, while the absence of cohesion is chaos that is feared by all believers and non believers. Black publicity looks at the *fides* in between spheres as insurgent bonds for the remaking of publicity.

Any futuristic projection is a leap of faith. Economic dispossession, however, is violence and calls for justice. Would it be possible to revive among the wealthy the spirit of unlearning to die the death of a slave as wealth is a form of slavery in our times? Slavery implies work without God/gods. The current trends of creating wealth for the sake of it “absent” God/gods and create a predisposition to work that is godless. This is Mammon. Bieler says wealth confronts a human being with a choice, an alternative to recognize it as a sign of grace or attach to it an autonomous power and effectiveness that denies the Lordship of Christ (2005:278).

Our reading of the Reformed ethos is that Reformation should act without respite “to conserve a proper balance between economic growth and social justice” (Bieler 2005:148). It is what is proper for life and not profit that constitutes the ethical course of black publicity.

7.4. Rebuilding “Communication of Efficacy” in Public Life

Having devoted much space to power and economics above, our general thesis is that publicity as power sharing is about mandates that should not be allowed to command beyond their spheres but feed life in between bonds. An analysis of what each of the spheres feeds on in other spheres is the task of Black Public Theology of Liberation. It is the discernment of the permeation of the “spirit,” *fides* or “faiths” of cultivated authorities in public life that is our task in our public constructive engagement.

7.4.1. Moral Regeneration

The core problem of moral degeneration in public life calls upon the exponents of liberative reconstruction to a spirituality of polity embedded in counter publics that point beyond the current moral order. Against the absolutising morality of the current world of consumerism, the spirituality of liberation searches for the alternative and does so in a holistic manner where the morality of dichotomization is prophetically engaged.

The call for the reconstruction of the country is about a spirituality that is not fragmented from life. Certain values should be accorded sovereignty, while authorities that command their influence beyond their spheres must be questioned.

The dominant paradigm of morality reduces morality to the “property” of possessive individual responsibility and freedom. That the moral regeneration agenda is located in government and driven from there points to a jagged if not partial approach to the question of moral regeneration. Power and money permeate our public life and in its current form, with all good intentions, moral regeneration is misplaced for as long as it is governed by power, i.e. the political sphere. If the renewal strategy of government is the renaissance, then the church should be the site of *imvuselelo*. The *hodos* of spirituality demands critical, insurgent bonds between church, community and state where analectic modes of life are germinated in the subaltern counter publics. Moral rectitude is misplaced when TV stars, wealthy figures of all sorts become an inspiration for moral regeneration. *Imvuselelo* challenges “distorted desires” for success by harnessing liberative currents of right doing that is not a property of the market.

7.4.2 The Challenge of HIV/AIDS

The pandemic of HIV/AIDS will annihilate our continent and the world if the “sovereign” remains an individual and the “dominion” the power of *Eros*. The politics of *Eros* in our liberal conditions present freedom and solidarity as competing categories.

Eros, as a perennial force, can only be channeled through the solidarity of the community. Liberative polity and thus life-giving democracy has as its starting point the corrupted power of *Eros* which colonizes the sphere of intimacy by turning sex into a commodity of an individual instead of a perennial power that could be harnessed to give life by the community.

Eros is now symptomatic of a fatal *thymotic* pride where the freedom of an individual to satisfy his/her desires for “recognition,” targeted by pseudo-religious neoliberal capitalism and globalization, is a threat to the solidarity of the entire human race. The shortfall of liberal democracy must be seen at this point as in the struggle against this pandemic, the ethic of the survival of the fittest reigns supreme.

The *iziko* (fire place in *ikhaya*) and *ipso facto*, the inspiration regarding our engagement in the pandemic, is the restoration of the elements of *ikhaya*. Interventions in this regard should be integrated in all spheres of public life as the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a deadly call for an analectic of restructuring public life, a profound transformation of social logic echoed in the Nongqawuze interstice. *Thymotic* pride, the drive to satisfy desires, coupled with the reshaping of desires as a target by the steering media of power and money, should be our key entry in public life. During war, people abstain and must be in good relations with their gods. We cannot deal with this pandemic without integrating all spheres of *ikhaya*. The “world” (public professions, convictions and symbols) of *Eros*, its rootage and trusts and bonds, its people and gods must be demystified.

Too much emphasis on sex as enjoyment to the exclusion of its symbolic role to create (*ukwaka* – construct) cripples our society. To participate in procreation is not about two people, as it is often argued, but more about being part of a creative life-giving community where intimate relations resonate with the presence, instantiation of God or gods, land, work, people and *fides*. The roots for our strategies to engage and search for alternative ways of engaging the politics of Eros are in the echoes of the subaltern cultures. How can we persistently engender a spirit of unlearning to die the death of HIV/AIDS? A sacrificial spirituality of intimacy could be our starting point: to govern intimacy in the presence of a fragmenting disposition to intimate life.

7.4.3. Violence Against women and Children

Indlu and *Umzi* are important spheres for Black Public Theology of liberation. In building houses we should not separate building houses from building homes *Imizi* (or *amakhaya*). Home and people should shape the agenda of our public agenda. Women and children are the inhabitants of *ikhaya* which must engender a habituation of integral values of faith, work, God, and love of people: *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*. The physical structure of home which is *indlu* (house) cannot be the powerhouse, the geography of power to govern human relations, without graduating into *ikhaya*. Building houses must be accompanied with “homemaking” which was destroyed by centuries of migrant labour that dislocated work, God, faith and people from their homes. The *invuselelo* of homebuilding needs to point beyond physical structures and infrastructure of squalor.

It must inspire critical and insurgent empowerment of women and children as agents of life in our communities to rebuild and reconstruct homes that were destroyed by our past history. The sovereignty of patriarchy is opened up by liberative polity. Black Theology of liberation has long ago viewed the position of women as a double-sided affair of marginalization and oppression. The cultivated authority of men is now so absolutised that the life space of women is at stake in South Africa. The violence that is so rife in this country calls upon the exponents of Black Theology to view gender as a matter of *Kairos*. Violence in South Africa is committed not by strangers, but people who are its victims are familiar with the perpetrators. Hostility and not hospitality is a feature in our homes, demanding us to ask whether the elements of *ikhaya* have not attained foreignness in homes.

One such aberration is the notion that violence is caused by men, feeling uncertain and undermined, and having being brought up in a particular culture, feel challenged by strong and better educated women. Education that does not develop a culture of a people is demonic. As a cultivated authority, could not the problem be a form of education that is foreign to the culture of the people and does not empower them to progress and resist life threatening tendencies? The elevated form of culture is resistance, we have argued. Does our public life re-make a culture of resistance against violence? Liberative polity will argue against a mere counting of numbers and therefore, the involvement of women in the democratization of public only in terms of numbers. As depicted by the Nongqawuze interstice, in situations of empire, women suffer most. The empire must be demystified in power and money relations of women, children and men.

7.4.4. Poverty

Poverty in South Africa threatens the stability of our democracy. It is not poverty in Black Public Theology of liberation that is the main concern but, impoverishment. We raise the question of poverty as a reality that challenges public life in so far as the systems we employ continue to impoverish the masses while they simultaneously create unprecedented levels of wealth. The poor remain helpless in an order that targets and reshapes desire.

How do we make of the situation where people who are caught up in vicious cycles of poverty and unemployment continue to be bombarded with images of wealth and become targets of a 'credit economy'? It is not difficult to get a tin of Coca Cola in the remotest parts of the country where even water is difficult to get. The task to revive the desire to be a people led with need and not want is a challenge for Black Theology in public life. Yet in our vision of instantiating the anthropological dignity of the poor, in the re-Africanization project of our democracy, the anthropological pauperization of the rich, which results from a skewed and distorted form of a spirit of wealth-making is our task for the restoration of humanity, *umntu ngumntu ngabantu*.

7.5. Conclusion

The agenda of Black Public Theology of liberation is a critical reflection on power sharing and participation in power to instantiate life. Power and money are steering media of the imperial relations that exist between spheres. The *Imvuselelo* of power as a communication of efficacy threads our ethical agenda in issues such as moral regeneration, HIV/AIDS, violence against women and impoverishment. The communication of efficacy is an evaluation of that which is fed on by each sphere to another in public life. Hence, the unguided and unconstrained components of *oikos*, *bayith* or *indlu* meaning, the integral whole of public spheres, require our constructive, insurgent impatience in a less-embittered mode. Black Public Theology of liberation is an agenda for a life-giving form of democracy. *Inkundla kukudla*, is the *imvuselelo* of democratization thus the spirituality of public life.