

Of Commandment, Africinity, Religion and Covid-19: Insights from the Seila-Tsatsi Story

Sepetla Molapo

(orchid: 0000-0001-9269-5505)

Department of Sociology

University of Pretoria, South Africa

DOI – <https://doi.org/10.35293/srsa.v43i1.1087>

Abstract

This paper explores the significance of the turn to the religion of the family and the clan (i.e., indigenous African religion) taking place under the contemporary conditions of Covid-19 in many African countries. It does this in order to exhibit the Africinity that is hidden by this otherwise pragmatic turn. The paper explores this Africinity by drawing from the classical African story of Seila-Tsatsi, which it argues has its roots in religious education. The key aim of its examination of this Africinity is to interrogate a politics of health it claims the World Health Organisation advances. The paper does not explore this turn by accounting for the meanings individuals attribute to it but is rather abstract and conceptual in its approach. The argument it makes is that the contemporary turn to the religion of the family and the clan exhibits desire for an inclusive form of relationality that ought to inform fair, equitable and just health outcomes. It argues that the WHO's politics of health is blind to this model because it stubbornly upholds binary thought.

Keywords: Commandment, Religion, Relationality, Remembering, Politics, Covid-19, Seila-Tsatsi

1. Introduction

One of the key features of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has been a renewed turn to religion. People have turned to religion for a number of reasons, which include, among other things, the search for hope (Roman, Mthembu and Hoosen 2020) and comfort (Bentzen 2020) given the anxiety and loss individuals and families face. This turn to religion has been documented in relation, mainly, to organised religion and specifically to religion as a feature of monotheistic traditions. Little has been done to study this turn in relation to the religion of the family and the clan (i.e., indigenous African religion) even though scores of Africans are turning to it (Isiko 2020). Consequently, the dynamics and the significance of a turn to religion in its unorganised form under conditions of Covid-19 have been somewhat concealed. It is the turn to the religion of the family and the clan, taking place under conditions of Covid-19, which inspires this paper. The paper asks what this turn may mean for a politics of health dominated by the World Health Organisation. The argument it seeks to advance is that this turn, evident mainly in the touted use of herbal remedies that have historically been central to indigenous African systems of health for centuries but fell to disuse under colonialism, signals a retreat to a life of commandment. The life of commandment exposes the poverty of a dominant politics of health advanced by the WHO, which is devoid of commandment. This politics is without commandment because it is unable to do the work of remembering which commandment demands. Consequently, it is unable to imagine relationality outside of binary thought.

Perhaps, unbeknown to those who under conditions of Covid-19 are retreating to indigenous African religion, this turn is of paramount importance. This is because even though this turn is mainly pragmatic in the sense that it is a return to herbal remedies and plants studied and classified by practitioners of indigenous African religion over centuries, underlying this turn is a significant symbolic gesture. It is a return to the idea that situations or conditions of crisis demand of us to reimagine relationality. They demand of us to investigate the maladies inherent to our contemporary order and to respond to these maladies in a manner that undertakes the work of repair. It is from these maladies after all that these crises often arise. The work of repair directs our attention to addressing the problems inherent in the socio-political and cultural orders of our times.

Reimagining relationality as a result is retrospective work because it is work undertaken in relation to an appreciation of a past out of which contemporary problems issue. Relationality and repair, therefore, belong together with memory seeing that the former is a way of dealing with the past. They are about reimagining life in a way that facilitates the experience of community. This is what the life of commandment implies and it is precisely to the life of commandment that this paper directs its attention. The paper tries to make visible the idea of commandment against a backdrop of rebukes by the WHO directed at the increasing use of herbal remedies to combat Covid-19 in Africa.

It grounds its deliberations around the notion of commandment. It locates commandment at the heart of its reflection because its point of departure is that the turn to the religion of the family and the clan, evident in a renewed urgency concerning the use of indigenous herbal remedies to treat Covid-19, is not purely instrumental but expresses desire to revive the Africanity that remains marginal to the communication of health advanced by the WHO and its allied forces in the African continent. The paper does not concern itself with meanings individuals may attach to this turn but is abstract and speculative in the sense that it seeks to deliberate on the connections it sees between the turn to the religion of the family and the clan under conditions of Covid-19 and the Africanity that this turn presupposes. It is precisely this Africanity that it tries to elucidate. It borrows its notion of commandment from the classical story of Seila-Tsatsi and sees this story as having its origins in indigenous African religious education. The religious origins of this story is apparent in the emphasis the storyteller places on the figure of the healer and on healing that runs throughout the story's plot. The claim of this paper is that the lessons implicit in the contemporary retreat by a significant number of Africans, to herbal remedies whose origins are in indigenous African religion, can be elucidated by the classical story of Seila-Tsatsi.

2. Seila-Tsatsi and the Two Models of Relationality

The central role of commandment as a modality that facilitates the act of remembering is found, among other sources, in the classical African story of Seila-Tsatsi (Jacottet 2015, 97-9). This is the story of a couple who having married for a number of years could not conceive and have children. The couple respond to this problem by arranging to visit a healer for consultation. The story does

not say what transpired during the consultation except that the consultation furnished the healing they sought. Once the couple were pregnant, the healer issued a commandment that once the child was born he/she should never come into direct contact with the sun. Indeed, once the child was born her life was dedicated to the upkeep of the commandment. She never went out of the house during the day. Her life became a life that had to be lived in the absence of direct contact with the sun.

Seila-Tsatsi's dedication to the life of avoidance of direct contact with the sun comes under challenge once she reaches young adulthood and becomes, as a consequence, eligible for marriage. It is during this time that she comes into contact with a young bachelor, namely, Masilo. Prior to knowing about Seila-Tsatsi Masilo (heir to the throne of his kingdom) had a reputation for refusing marriage because he apparently found no woman alive at the time who could qualify to be his partner. Upon hearing of Seila-Tsatsi and her reputation for beauty he made arrangements to pay her a visit. Subsequent to meeting Seila-Tsatsi, Masilo comes back to inform his parents that he is finally willing to marry. Masilo was convinced that in Seila-Tsatsi he had found a perfect and suitable life partner. Masilo's parents first decline his proposal to marry Seila-Tsatsi because she has to live a life of devotion to the avoidance of the sun. Consequently, she could not be expected to assume the normal duties associated with marital life. Masilo insists however on marrying Seila-Tsatsi and promises to honour and respect Seila-Tsatsi's dedication to the life of avoidance of the sun as well as to take good care of her. Upon this undertaking, which he makes before both his parents and later to those of Seila-Tsatsi, the two families bless Seila-Tsatsi and Masilo's plan to marry.

Once the formalities of marriage were complete, Seila-Tsatsi and her entourage embark on a night journey to her in-laws. Upon her arrival at her in-laws, an intriguing incident happens. Her husband Masilo complains of thirst and the storyteller says that one of the women who was in Seila-Tsatsi's entourage went out to fetch water for him. Masilo refuses to drink the water and pours it out instead. He goes on to reiterate his tormenting thirst. Another woman goes out to fetch him water and he responds to her in the way he did to the first young woman. Then to everybody's shock he becomes explicit and states directly that he would not drink water fetched by anyone other than his wife. Upon saying this, one of the young women runs out and reports Masilo to his parents. Masilo

insists before his parents that only water fetched by his wife would quench his thirst. He declines even the offer of his own mother. Of course, his parents condemn his request and remind him of the oath he took to honour Seila-Tsatsi's life of dedication to the avoidance of the sun as well as to take good care of her.

Masilo, however, cannot be persuaded and once his parents take leave, Seila-Tsatsi succumbs to his unrelenting pressure. She takes a basin and readies herself to step outside of the house and into direct contact with the sun for the very first time in her life. As she walks through the door and comes into direct contact with the sun, a sudden but momentary darkness occurs following which Seila-Tsatsi turns into an anthill. Her lament and wailing is heard from that anthill and this wailing anthill leaves Masilo horrified. His temptation to test the word of the healer and the prohibition governing Seila-Tsatsi's life generates crises. Upon learning of the unfortunate circumstances of their daughter, Seila-Tsatsi's parents return to the healer whose consultation yielded their pregnancy. On his arrival (i.e., the healer) at Seila-Tsatsi's in-laws the healer performs a ritual of healing which brings Seila-Tsatsi back to life. Henceforth, however, she is to live a life that no longer avoids the sun. The healer's return lifts the prohibition on Seila-Tsatsi.

One way of reading the story of Seila-Tsatsi is to see it as a story that is primarily concerned with a contrast between two versions of relationality. The first is the primordial form of relationality that, in the case of the story, exists before the alienating experiences brought about by the institutional life of marriage. This is a form of relationality that consists in looking back to the past, to the original moment that exists prior to the institutions that are experienced as alienating (i.e., as disrupting the serenity of the original moment of relationality). This form of relationality consists in trying to secure its legitimacy and freedom by holding alienating forces at bay. The second is a progressive form of the expression of relationality which emerges out of lost origins. These origins may be lost due to interaction with forces that bring about alienation. This alienation may be of a shattering nature as we see in the story of Seila-Tsatsi. It may generate real crisis and disrupt the security that the primordial form of relationality promises.

The point that the story makes emphatically clear however is that the primordial model of relationality is impossible because it is always already lost because it cannot escape forces of alienation (i.e., it cannot cope with forces of alienation). Relationality, if it is to be real and matter, must be born of and make its home in alienation. It must be a product of interaction with the forces of

alienation that strangers, foreigners and all those othered persons make apparent. Any conception of relationality that tries to bypass alienation in order to secure security and serenity is nothing but a work of fiction. It is a false way of building hope against what is otherwise a creative force necessary for the realisation of relationality, alienation. The history of humanity is littered with some extreme examples of models of relationality that try to bypass alienation in order to realise security. Apartheid and Nazism furnish such examples. They resemble attempts to construct relationality apart from others whose mere existence in the world is considered a threat. In this case, the sheer presence of difference (racial and gender difference) in the world becomes a source of the experience of alienation from which separation is required. That relationality must of necessity be born of alienation is evident in that the storyteller allows Masilo to cause Seila-Tsatsi to stand in violation of avoidance of the sun, a practice that had up to this point secured her integrity. This is of course a dramatic moment and a moment of crisis. However, such drama and crisis furnish the resources for the realisation of a true experience of relationality. The story of Seila-Tsatsi, as a result, appears to dismiss the possibility of the existence of any form of relationality that can stand apart from alienation. Contrary to the vision of Marx (Sayers 2011), it appears to position alienation as a necessary component of the realisation of true relationality.

The two models that the story of Seila-Tsatsi makes apparent are important for this paper's concern with the contemporary turn to indigenous African religion, which takes place under conditions of covid-19. For one thing, this turn appears to express discontent with the primordial model of relationality that has historically come to inform the modern experience of life. The modern experience of life has the primordial model as its foundation because its ground is the fear of alienation. It is informed by the fear of co-existence with the racial and cultural other who is often perceived as a threat to the assumed purity of the primordial model. Consequently, the modern experience of life has subjected countless numbers of people whose presence in the world it deems threatening and alienating to subjugation. The modern experience of life, that is, denies co-existence with those deemed threatening by virtue of the difference they present in the world. This denial of co-existence has legitimised exclusion, poverty, racism, sexism and xenophobia among others troubling forms of cruelty. Many of the people who are sidelined and marginalised by this Manichaeic world, have

had to become the burden bearers of disease. They have had to inhabit a world that normalises the flourishing of high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, obesity and other diseases associated chiefly though not exclusively with marginality. The modern experience of life, consequently, has as one of its key features the normalisation of pandemics though its parlance does not refer to these diseases as such. It is only in the context of the outbreak of Covid-19 that it has become apparent that many of the people who are marginal to the modern experience of life have always lived with pandemics. Of course, the WHO and its allies (African governments) never see things that way. The main casualties of the Covid-19 disease show that we have been living with normalised pandemics for quite some time. It is thus ironic to refer to Covid-19 as a pandemic whereas it simply exposes the normalisation of pandemics by the primordial model of relationality that informs the modern experience of life. The primordial model normalises pandemics because it refuses fairness, equity and justice as the building blocks of the experience of life.

The turn to the religion of the family and the clan expresses not only discontent with the primordial model but indicates desire for the return of the healer. The return of the healer is a crucial moment because it signals desire for the realisation of a model of relationality that takes as its foundation, alienation, even if such alienation threatens order with its dissolution. Alienation, however, cannot fully become a resource unless it is accompanied by the act of remembering represented in the story by the return of the healer. It is only if we can remember, after all, that we can reimagine life anew and undertake the work of repair that remembering presupposes. The intimacy of alienation and the act of remembering is directed at the production of inclusive expressions of relationality. The act of remembering is of paramount importance because it shuns inclinations towards origins or the idea that the good life is one that is lived in the absence of threatening others. Remembering casts relationality as an impossibility in the absence of others since relating can only truly consist in encounter with the strange and the puzzling. This is why the return of the healer in the story of Seila-Tsatsi is of utmost importance. The return of the healer casts remembering as terrain for the repair of relationality. It is the combination, therefore, of remembering and alienation that places relationality firmly on the foundation of equity, fairness and justice. Only visions of relationality, it would appear, born of the intimacy of alienation and remembering have the capacity

to challenge, and possibly undo, the normalisation of injustice characteristic of the primordial model that assumes an ‘us’ and a ‘them.’ Consequently, only such visions have the possibility of inaugurating health dispensations based on fairness, equity and justice and that can withstand diseases such as Covid-19, which clearly exploit the normalisation of pandemics under the contemporary primordial model of relationality.

3. On Commandment

A careful examination of the story of Seila-Tsatsi seems to suggest that the story concerns itself not only with the two models of relationality discussed above. Important also to this story, is the theme of commandment, which is the overarching theme around which the story of Seila-Tsatsi revolves. Commandment, it would seem, directs our attention to relationality as consisting ultimately in the violation of the prohibition that safe guards the primordial model. The key question that this part of the paper tries to address relates precisely to what commandment might mean given its centrality to the story. The word of the healer bears testimony to the active presence of commandment throughout the story. The point of departure of this paper is that commandment is almost impossible to fathom outside of others who are lost to death (i.e., the ancestors). It is impossible to think of in the absence of loved ones lost to death. Dead others make commandment possible because they point to the participation of death in what is wholly other, divinity. It is precisely the participation of death in divinity that defines the nature of commandment. Commandment, as such, issues not so much out of opposition between forces because it is a product of the participation of death in divinity as we see in (Molapo 2019). Rather, what defines it is its orientation towards the rhetorical. Commandment is born of persuasion and its truth is persuasive truth. It is born of a world that does not perceive truth in binary oppositions and in adversarial terms as is the case with the modern episteme that (Fanon 1963) so beautifully illustrates. It is the offspring of the central theme of participation that defines the religion of the family and the clan.

The participation in divinity of loved ones lost to death is always a return to what is lost because it is in essence a return to others lost to death. Consequently, it is a return to an experience that was once available but is now lost. It is a return to an experience that though available has become impossible. This impossible

experience nonetheless appears to be constitutive of experience in the here and now or the experience resident in individual biography. It must be distinguished from experiences in individual biographies that lie hidden from conscious view. This is because such experiences do not know death – the thing that constitutes lost others as sacred by virtue of participation in the eternal passage of time. The intriguing thing here is that while the act of remembering – the return to a past – signals and acknowledges the authority of death it simultaneously portrays death as a failure. This is because while it is evident that death can take away life and that every life lives under the final authority of death, the debris that death leaves behind makes the act of remembering possible. The return to a past as a result is a form of vengeance on death (Mbembe 2002).

Because the commandment arises out of participation it belongs to the order of speech. That is, the commandment does not attempt to fix life in the way that writing is a form of the fixing of life and of the world as we see in Pickstock's account of the rise of modernity in Europe (Pickstock 1988). Commandment belongs to the order of speech not because of the lack of writing but precisely because it is opposed to the fixing that is apparent in writing. Speech as a result is terrain for the incarnation of commandment. Yet, even though commandment emerges out of and thrives in ephemerality it always presupposes some form of fixing in the sense that it is always directed to an adherent or adherents. The immediate implication here is that one of the characteristic features of commandment is the creation of an audience or audiences. Commandment generates the creation of an audience or audiences because it is about keeping a word. Those who have to keep the word constitute the audience. This points to the entanglements of commandment with archive because the word that commandment prescribes is restricted and restrictive. It is not a generalised word even if that word were to belong to the order of the ephemeral. It is important to note however that the opposition between what is fixed and what is unfixed is in the main polemical because as we have seen commandment also somewhat fixes by prescribing the word. Consequently, what is fixed and what is unfixed ought to be seen as mere points of convergence.

While commandment is always in an entanglement with death and loss and finds incarnation in speech it must also be understood as a particular kind of mood. It is the imperative mood of the restricted and restrictive word – that word that (underscored by do not) is uttered or given under circumstances that

demand a return to a past. Put another way it is the imperative mood of the word that is uttered or given in the act and moment that legislates remembering as a modality governing the everyday. In general, crises generate this moment that requires a return to the past – to what is lost. It is in response to crises that the imperative mood of the restricted and restrictive word becomes apparent. As the imperative mood of the restricted and restrictive word – that word born of crisis – commandment because of crisis takes us back to the intimacy of memory and loss in order to realise there the repair brought about by experiences that have not been lived but are available (i.e., those experiences that have not been fixed by history in personal biography – experiences that as such repair the myopia brought by history). This is precisely the reason why commandment takes us back to the intimacy of memory and loss. It does so in order to repair historical myopia in the life of individuals or collectives.

Commandment is the imperative mood of the restricted and restrictive word precisely because it arises out of the gift. This however is the gift of loss, which by definition is an impossible gift. It is impossible because it cannot be possessed in the manner that ordinary gifts are possessed. Consequently, it cannot be acquired and given in the manner of ordinary gifts. It does not arise from the terrain of things that can be possessed and given as one would his/her property. Thus, it is prior to the socially derived gifts even if such gifts may have as their ultimate aim the creation of bonds of solidarity. It is prior to the socially derived sense of solidarity. This means that it is outside of the resources that are available or can be found in the social terrain (i.e., it cannot be derived from a given collective because it is outside of community as a construct of the Maussian sense of gift). Further, this means that it is prior to a system of debt and obligation characteristic of community as a construct of socially derived gifts as we see in (Mauss 1954). It is outside of a system of means and ends. As such, it is prior to a structure of reason because it does not submit to the system of means and ends. But precisely because the commandment is the imperative mood of the restricted and restrictive word, it is also the result of a gift – a gift that cannot be possessed because it is always already lost. Commandment as such is outside of the realm of things that can be given in the manner of things that can be possessed. As the imperative mood of the restricted and restrictive word commandment can only be a gift – a gift of loss. That is, it is only because of loss that commandment can be commandment as such.

Commandment, therefore, can be seen as a form of attitude towards truth. It is a form of attitude that validates binary thought (evident in the primordial model) only to surrender it to alienation in the progressive model of relationality. Consequently, commandment is that attitude towards truth that considers binary thought legitimate but elementary form of thought that can only find its maturity in the dissolution brought about by forces of alienation. As an attitude towards truth, commandment sees alienation as the final destination of truth (this is what we see in the story of Seila-Tsatsi). In this final destination, alienation is of course in an intimacy with remembering because it is only that intimacy that enables the ethical work of repair. The turn to the religion of the family and the clan, taking place under conditions of Covid-19, therefore, resembles a deeper yearning for the experience of life that has commandment as its foundation. Only such life can overcome the myopia of a life that has until so far been surrendered to binary thought that has become the final destination in its own right. The consequence of this falsehood is that it has only served to legitimate the normalisation of pandemics that are being exposed by the outbreak of Covid-19.

4. A Politics Without Commandment

A politics of health that informs Covid-19, driven in the main by the WHO, can be seen or characterised as a politics without commandment because it is a politics without remembering. It is a politics premised on opposition between friends and enemies that the primordial model of relationality presupposes. This orientation is manifest in, among other things, the opposition that the WHO has towards the idea that indigenous African health systems can respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. This opposition exhibits only one thing, the claim that there is only one form of truth about health and that that form of truth is the truth of science. While on the surface this claim may appear to express concern with issues related to public safety due to the potential and possibility of dangerous concoctions entering the market, the truth is that this concern conceals a deeper problematic which is that the truth of science stands opposed and finds alternative forms of truths about health repulsive. This is because the truth of science has its foundation in a modern episteme that because it dispenses with pathos it becomes a system purely grounded in what is rationally plausible. Consequently, the formal and rational become ground informing the articulation of truth as

a construct of scientific knowledge. The extent therefore to which the informal and the non-rational can contribute to knowledge about health disappears from the radar screen of the knowledge claims propagated by institutions such as the WHO. The consequence of this is a ruthless and aggressive relationship that the WHO and its subsidiaries within respective nation states have towards truth claims that temper with the neat division between pathos and its opposite, rational investigation of truth.

Now, because the politics of health informing Covid-19 is opposed to pathos it becomes a politics without remembering. This is to say that it is a politics trapped in a binary system that assumes an enemy to be captured, conquered and inducted in the only truth that matters in issues pertaining to health and the outbreaks of diseases such as Covid-19, outbreaks that of course, furnish yet another opportunity for the hegemonic truth to reassert its monopoly of truth. This politics is without remembering because caught in binary oppositions it is unable to undertake the work of repair that must of necessity follow the shuttering of lives by Covid-19. This shuttering is, of course, broad and must be seen to include lives of loved ones who had to surrender to the brutality of the pandemic as well as economies that have had to bleed livelihoods due to hard and sometimes prolonged lockdowns. The urgent need for repair in the context of a global risk society has recently surfaced in the work of (McLaren 2018) and (Jackson 2014). Yet, while this scholarship advances a critical notion of repair, it does so in the absence of what this paper calls remembering.

Remembering presupposes the ability to transcend binary oppositions in order to arrive at the possibility of re-imagining politics as terrain for a rhetorical understanding of truth. This is the terrain of persuasion and not of the destructive violence that accompanies truth as a product of dialectics evident in the primordial model of relationality, which sustains the modern world. Herein lies the possibility of seeing value in complementarity, multiplicity and difference. Why, after all, would anyone seek persuasion who does not in the first place see value in difference (epistemic difference in this regard). In the absence of life lived through and as persuasion we can only encounter remembering as repetition of the horrors we have by now become familiar with – racism, endemic poverty, unemployment, gender violence, wars of greed, etc. In fact, truth be told this is not remembering but rather a way of looking at the past and seeing others only as threats to one's existence. If remembering does not bring about healing of

systems, lives and the planet - all shuttered by the violence of a politics of health without commandment - then it has ceased to become remembering. Rather, it must be referred to by its appropriate name, commemoration, or the refusal to look into yesteryear and see the enemy as a friend or oneself as the enemy.

It must be pointed out also that the WHO's politics of health is without commandment precisely because it takes for granted the marginalisation of millions of people who inhabit a world framed around the primacy of the primordial model of relationality that has turned these people into outcasts. This politics does not question such a world but tries to put bandages around its festering wounds. Consequently, it is unable to imagine a new world order in which health and its provision issue out of a new conception of relationality that sees in alienation the final destination of the experience of being human. It is unable to imagine this possibility because ontologically, it conceives of reality to consist of contest between adversaries in which case the weak have to submit to the strong. In colonial contexts characterised by the non-recognition of threatening others, this ontological outlook has only unleashed untold suffering and violence as it aided processes aimed at turning people and life into commodities that could be bought and sold in markets.

5. Conclusion

This paper has tried to explore the Africanity that is presupposed by the turn, under conditions of the outbreak of Covid-19, to the religion of the family and the clan (i.e., indigenous African religion). It has argued that this turn, evident in renewed and intensifying use of herbal remedies aimed at treating Covid-19, should not be seen purely in instrumental terms but must be seen also as a symbolic gesture expressing desire for a more equitable expression of relationality. Drawing from the classical African story of Seila-Tsatsi, it deliberated on the conceptual significance of this turn. It made the claim that this turn expresses dissatisfaction with the world as it is. This is because the world as it is assumes the primacy of a primordial model of relationality that conceives of reality in terms of origins and desire for purity. It has argued that this model has historically functioned to normalise pandemics that are currently being exposed by the outbreak of Covid-19. The turn to the religion of the family and the clan expresses a yearning to overcome this model and replace it with a model

of relationality that sees in alienation resource for constituting a fair, equitable and just world. Alienation, it continued, can only become creative resource when subjected to the work of remembering that demands repair. The paper has also claimed that both models of relationality must be seen as key moments in a broader continuum that is commandment. Commandment, of course, is an attitude towards truth – an attitude that sees in the intimacy of alienation and remembering - the final destiny of human experience. The paper has explored the Africinity that the turn to the religion of the family and the clan presupposes in order to offer a critique of a politics of health that it clams the WHO advances.

4. References

- Bentzen, Jeanet. 2020. "In crisis we pray: religiosity and the Covid-19 pandemic." *Covid Economics* 20: 52-108.
- Fanon, Frantz. 1990. *The wretched of the earth*. Translated by Constance Parrington. New York: Grove Weidenfeld.
- Isiko, Alexander. 2020. "Religious construction of disease: an exploratory appraisal of religious responses to the Covid-19 pandemic in Uganda." *Journal of African Studies and Development* 12(3): 77-96. <https://doi.org/10.5897/JASD2020.0573>
- Jackson, Steven. 2014. "Rethinking repair." In *Media technologies: essays on communication, materiality and society*, edited by Tarleton Gilliespie, Pablo J. Boczkowski, and Kirten A. Foot, 221-39. Cambridge & London: The MIT Press
- Jacottet, Edouard. 1985. *Litsomo tsa Basotho*. Morija: Morija Sesuto Book Depot.
- Kaiser, Birgit and Thiele, Kathryn. 2017. "What is species memory? Or, humanism, memory and the afterlives of '1492.'" *Parallax* 23(4): 403-15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2017.1374510>
- Mauss, Marcel. 1954. *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies*. Translated by Ian Cunnison. London & New York: Routledge.
- Mbembe, Achille. 2002. "The power of the archive and its limits." In *Refiguring the archive*, edited by Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid, Razia Saleh and Jane Taylor, 19-27. Dordrecht / Boston / London: Kluwer Academic Publishers
- McLaren, Duncan. 2018. "In a broken world: towards an ethics of repair in the Anthropocene." *The Anthropocene Review* 5: 136-54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053019618767211>

- Molapo, Sepetla. 2019. "Cast as written: Protestant Christian missionaries and their translation of molimo as the Christian God in 19th century Southern Africa." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 32(1): 1-16. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2413-3027/2019/v32n1a4>
- Pickstock, Catherine. 1988. *After-writing: on the liturgical consummation of philosophy*. Oxford and Malden: Blackwell Publishers.
- Roman, Nicolette, Mthembu Thuli and Hoosen Mujeeb. 2020. "Spiritual care – 'A deeper immunity' – A response to Covid-19 pandemic." *African Journal of primary health care and family medicine* 12(1): 2456. <https://doi.org/10.4102/phcfm.v12i1.2456>
- Sayers, Sean. 2011. *Marx and alienation: essays on Hegelian themes*. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan