Khoisan Identity: A Contribution towards Reconciliation in Post-Apartheid South Africa

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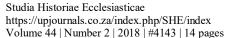jsklaasen@uwc.ac.za

Abstract

This article seeks to explore the identity of the Khoisan as symbolic for reconciliation in South Africa. What contributions can the narrative of a marginalised people such as the Khoisan make to reconciling a divided nation such as South Africa? The Khoisan have been victims of continuous dispossession since the arrival of Bartholomew Diaz at the Cape in 1488. However, it was the taking of land in 1657 from the Khoisan for the free burgers that marked a significant period for the current discourse on land and for identity and reconciliation within post-apartheid South Africa. Notwithstanding the attempts by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to use narratives for healing, restoration, and continuing engagement with the meta-narratives of the past, my own use of narrative is open-ended with space for dialogue through interaction. The past or history does not have fixed boundaries, but rather blurred boundaries that function as spaces of transcendence. The narrative approach has four interactionist variables which are personhood, communication, power as reflected experience, and fluid community. I point out weaknesses of the use of narrative by the TRC as well as the interaction between experience and theory by practical theologians to construct an open-ended narrative of the Khoisan for reconciliation in South Africa.
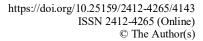
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Introduction

Reconciliation remains one of the most pressing issues amongst South Africans, despite the relatively violence-free transition from segregation to democracy. On the one hand, post-apartheid South Africa has been characterised by hope, expectation, and possibility; while on the other hand there is an increasing divide between rich and poor, racism and inequality. While much has been done by both religious affiliated institutions and documents (like the Ecumenical Foundation of Southern Africa, the South African Council of Churches, the Belhar Confession, and the Kairos Document) as well as government-initiated and funded

processes (like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission[1]) towards the smooth transition from segregation to equality, the events and trends of the last decade indicate that new forms of division threaten the cohesiveness of the different cultural, linguistic, religious and racial groups that make up the South African nation.

The outline of this article is as follows. Following an overview of the TRC, I will give a brief description of reconciliation. This will be followed by a discussion of the relationship between experience/practice and theory as the theoretical framework, and narrative as the methodology. A description of the Khoisan will be followed by the application of the Khoisan to the four interactionist variables of my framework of narrative.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The TRC, once regarded as the single most significant contributor to the reconciliation of the South African nation, had serious shortcomings. "The one flaw in the TRC is that it didn't hold enough of the political leadership accountable … So I think I have to accept that it was flawed and that reconciliation does not mean injustice is forgotten or overcome, because the biggest injustice in this country is poverty and inequality" (Akpome 2014, 174). Vellem (2013, 108) puts it differently and states that "it is the minimalist and calculable measures that are accorded primacy in assessing the logic of justice in the reparatory discourse of the TRC." More than two decades after the first TRC hearings were held, there is growing scepticism about the effects on national reconciliation (Conradie 2013, 15). Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the TRC, it was able to work with different types of truth within a creative tension. For instance, there was variable truth or forensic evidence, "healing and restorative truth," "social truth," and "personal and narrative truth" (Van der Vlies 2008, 950). "But for all its shortcomings … the TRC's self-consciousness about the importance of narrative, and its staging of (select, selected) narratives as partial enactment of, and as encouragement for a national catharsis of sorts, positively invited ongoing excavation of narratives of individual and community experiences under apartheid" (Van der Vlies 2008, 950–951).

Poverty, especially the connection between poverty and inequality, has become a new feature of identity. South Africa is classified as one of the most unequal societies in the world. As poverty increases, so does the gap between the rich and the poor. Violent crimes have increased dramatically. There is an unexpected rise in high-profile cases of racism; service delivery protests have escalated to an all-time high; we have witnessed the worst xenophobic attacks with mainly black-on-black violence; and the cultural and linguistic suppression of population groups such as the Khoisan still makes headlines.

These are signs of a divided nation that differs from what South Africans who cast their votes in the first democratic election, could ever have imagined. It is my contention that any effort to keep the hope of a free, equal and democratic South Africa real is to reconcile people with self, the other, with ecology, and with God. There ought to be reconciliation efforts directed

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1   Hereafter referred to as TRC.

at keeping the tension between who we are and what we do. This tension is typically found within theology and ethics. This tension has to do with identity of personhood as understood in the Orthodox tradition and not necessarily from a Catholic position of a rigidly fixed created order. Fixity, while providing normativity and absoluteness, dominates relativity, context and becoming.

When addressing South African identity, Snyman (2005, 325) asserts:

> Ten years after the advent of democracy in 1994, race and racism continue to dominate public discourse as twenty-five years ago. It affects how people relate to each other as persons. But what are the chances to transcend racialised discourse if the African body remains a black body out there and the white body is always already infused with racist ideology? Has this perception something to do with the way we see identities, fixed and immutable?

Snyman's question directly relates to the question of who we are amidst the divisive nature of the contemporary South African society. Within South African and African anthropology the notion of identity lies not so much in absolute autonomy or individual self-determination. The self is not fixed, traditionless, or exclusively characterised by abstract reason. The self is forming, reforming, and transforming. The self is more than individuality; it is personhood who is formed in relationships and reciprocal agency. It is within this notion of identity that reconciliation remains an ongoing process of formation. This article seeks to explore the identity of the Khoisan as a historically marginalised community for reconciliation in South Africa. What contributions can the narrative of a marginalised people such as the Khoisan make to reconciling a divided nation such as South Africa? The Khoisan have been victims of continuous dispossession since the arrival of Bartholomew Diaz at the Cape in 1488. However, it was the taking of land in 1657 from the Khoisan for the free burgers that marked a significant period for the current discourse on land and for identity and reconciliation within post-apartheid South Africa. This contribution will refer to specific historical events and periods that are designated to the Khoisan encounter with the colonisers from Europe.

Notwithstanding attempts by the TRC to use narratives for healing, restoration, and continuing engagement with the meta-narratives of the past, my own use of narrative is open-ended with space for dialogue through interaction. The past or history does not have fixed boundaries, but rather blurred boundaries that function as spaces of transcendence.

Reconciliation

Conradie (2013) provides an extensive outline of reconciliation in order to add to the conceptual analysis and clarification of the discourse of reconciliation within South Africa. He raises the urgent need for conceptual clarification of the term "reconciliation." In his attempt to do so, he gives an impressive overview of what reconciliation means, the ways it has manifested over the years, and also indicates some of its fundamental aspects such as reparation, guilt, forgiveness, and restitution. As much as this remains one of the most important analyses of the notion of reconciliation, its aim is "conceptual clarification for the sake of theological reflection and therefore remains at a high level of abstraction" (Conradie 2013, 17). Vellem (2013) responds to Conradie by questioning his abstraction of

reconciliation and neglect of the lived experience of the persons affected. For Vellem, theological reflection on reconciliation is about both knowledge and experience. His theological framework is liberation theology of experience, theory and hermeneutics. Vellem (2013, 117) asserts that "The concept of reconciliation also implies very clearly that to God this was meant not only as a verbal message … but that it had to become incarnate; an audible word that had to become a visible deed."

My own use of the concept of reconciliation is theological and includes restoring relationships with self, community, other, the rest of creation, and God. It is inductive and moves from self to relationships with others and God. Reconciliation is broadly accepted as the attempt to restore some or other kind of connection with self, other selves, community, the rest of creation, and God. Relationships presuppose information/knowledge about the agents involved. Knowledge includes perceptions of identity or perceived identity of the selves. Reconciliation also includes critical engagement or interchange between those affected by distorted relationships. This raises important questions about the kind of relationship and knowledge. These are important questions to be considered in the process of truthful reconciliation. Restoring relationships places the responsibility on both parties to commit to a process. Reconciliation is open and is not restricted to closed systems. It is a journey to which both parties are committed and of which the outcomes are accepted and agency required. In addition to the two questions mentioned above, the questions of whose experience and who has power, demand equal attention. The process has four interlinking independent variables in the form of personhood, communication, power as reflected experience, and fluid community. My contention is that it is within an open-ended narrative that the different variables are kept in creative tension.

Practice and Theory

The theoretical framework of my approach lies within the creative tension of praxis (Vellem 2013) and theory (Conradie 2013). Reconciliation is not limited to conceptual analysis or theoretical clarifications. The practical aspect of reconciliation is part of the substance of reconciliation and the effectiveness of reconciling persons or communities. Theory and praxis need some kind of interaction. Within practical theology there has been a resurgence of experience as a serious dialogue partner for theory. Browning (1991) has provided some of the most comprehensive engagements about the tension between theory and practice. Browning draws on two influential practical theologians—Tillich (1951) and Tracy (1998)— when he formulates his fundamental practical theology. Browning (1991, 43) places Tillich (1951) in the theory-practice dichotomy approach. Tracy (1998), on the other hand, makes the distinction between theory and praxis. Browning himself clearly moves away from Tillich's approach and seeks a closer interaction between theory and practice. Browning's approach can be presented as practice-theory-practice. This implies that the emphasis is on practice rather than theory. In building on Tracy's mutual/critical correlational approach, Browning (1991) suggests that all practical theology must start and end with practice. Also, whereas Tracy uses the subdivisions of theology as being fundamental, systematic, and practical theology (Tracy 1983, 62), Browning (1991) speaks of descriptive, historical,

systematic, and strategic practical theology. These sub-disciplines constitute fundamental practical theology, which is "the most inclusive understanding of theology" (Browning 1991, 47). For the past 30 years or so, most practical theologians have emphasised practice over theory in response to the modern project's attempt to replace tradition, context, transcendence and community with the abstract, universal, autonomy and individual.

Miller-McLemore (2016) is more critical of the shift from the dominance of theory over experience to the other extreme. She asserts that she "tried to foster Tracy's 'recovery,' most recently (2016) by arguing that the hegemony of theory over practice has functioned in theological studies like other binaries—to assign positions of inferiority and superiority that disadvantage those closer to material life and practice … Most practical theologians have been so busy moderating, mediating and overcoming the split that we devote little time to comprehending the necessary and useful differences" (Miller-McLemore 2016, 1). In a rather bold and provocative way Miller-McLemore asserts that the theory-practice discourse is firstly about different kinds of knowledge. Theory is abstract or technical knowledge that requires the theologian to be distant from the context, experience or ministry. Practical knowledge, on the other hand, develops in practice. Whilst influential practical theologians have resorted to the latter, practical knowledge is generally placed within the "soft sciences" and subsequently in an inferior position to the "hard sciences" (Miller-McLemore 2016, 3–4).

Although Miller-McLemore (2016) does not settle the debate about the distinctiveness of theory and practice, she sheds some light on the inseparableness of theory and practice. She identifies six ways how theory operates. First, theory emerges from both thinking and doing. Second, the more accurate engagement in theory includes living realities. Third, theory considers both intellectual and emotional engagements. Fourth, theoretical knowledge needs interpretation and "enactment" that are best produced through "experiential modes of learning." Fifth, "Theory is sought for wider purposes, usually not as an end in itself, and since it changes what we see and know, it also create responsibilities, often convicting and committing us to certain goods and unexpected transformations that run beyond anything theory alone might suggest." Sixth, practice "eludes" and "trumps" theory (Miller-McLemore 2016, 5–7).

Miller-McLemore (2016) aligns herself with Tracy (1983; 1998) by emphasising the distinctiveness of theory and practice without separating theory from practice. She goes against the grain of the many practical theologians who seek to give practice (ministerial and proclamation) a dominant or at least more superior position than theory. She seems to revive theory amongst practical theologians. One can question whether her attempt to revive theory within the theory-practice debate is an unintentional attempt to place practical theology within the hard sciences. On the other hand, one can ask whether she gives a position of preference to practice by implying that practice both eludes and trumps theory.

My own contribution to the theory-practice debate follows on Browning's (1991) correlation approach. Instead of the three-stage practice-theory-practice approach, I added another stage to make it practice, theory, practice and theory (Klaasen 2017, 156–158). In order to counter

the dominance of practice over theory, I conclude that practice is the starting point and that transformed action (the second kind of practice in the third stage) also needs critical reflection. This approach differs from the approaches of Tillich's (1951) dichotomy, Tracy (1983; 1998) and Miller-McLemore's (2016) sharp distinction, and Browning's (1991) preference for experience. "A critical engaged practical reasoning approach assumes that the four elements relate in an 'in-ter-dependent' way in which none of the four stages can function effectively without the other, and none of the stages are more superior than the other" (Klaasen 2014, 4). The four stages are characterised by four questions. The first stage asks: What is currently going on or what are the particular practices and experiences? Fowler and Osmer[2] name this the descriptive-empirical task, which seeks to describe actual experiences (in Osmer and Schweitzer 2003, 2). The second stage asks: How do we make sense of these experiences? Put differently, it refers to the tools and skills needed to translate these experiences. The third stage is about these transformed experiences. It asks the question: What ought these experiences to be? It evaluates the experiences and sets certain norms. In the fourth stage we ask the question: How do we make sense of these transformed experiences (Klaasen 2017, 158)?

Vellem (2013) addresses the normativity of experience for reconciliation by criticising reparation and the notion of deficit. While he agrees with Conradie (2013) that reparation is plausible when it is measurable and that which is not measurable is best taken as deficit within the process of reconciliation, he questions the immeasurability of the effects of the colonial, imperial and apartheid rule of South Africa. Vellem also questions the criteria of measurability used for maximum reparation and how it is employed in a situation such as South Africa with centuries of colonial and imperial rule (Vellem 2013, 105–106).

Vellem, although his approach is from a black liberation theology perspective, remains with experience as the hermeneutical key for effective reconciliation (Vellem 2013, 110). He concludes that "the purpose of seeking conceptual clarity is limited only to the abstract verification of the concept of reconciliation and thus may not assist in discovering or recovering what reconciliation is in the experience of the non-person" (Vellem 2013, 111). "Reconciliation thus cannot be taught in theory, but must be found in practice—it is praxiological" (Vellem 2013, 112).

Like most of the practical theologians mentioned above, Vellem (2013) opts for experience. He goes even further in this respect and chooses a particular experience; that of the non-person. Vellem's use of experience for the very least borders on the inferiority/superiority divisions found in binaries that elevate certain experience. What about the experiences of the perpetrators in the process of reconciliation? With regard to reparation, the question of symbolic reparation in the case of maximum calculable loss to achieve maximum reconciliation is another issue that Vellem's (2013) hypothesis raises, but which he does not address.

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2   Osmer (2011) refers to this question in "Practical Theology: A Current International Perspective." *HTS Theological Studies* 67 (2): 2.

It is my contention that experience is normative for reconciliation without discarding knowledge. Importantly, knowledge is produced by the experience of the victim of the abuse of power. Knowledge is not abstract but embedded in experience. The fundamental question is not *whether* experience and theory are related, but *how* theory and experience are related so that authentic reconciliation restores broken relationships. It is my contention that a narrative that addresses the shortcomings of antagonism, dualism, binaries and separation provides the space for authentic reconciliation. A narrative approach is defined as open-ended and "invites critical engagement and dialogue on the experience of the affected people in relation to Transcendence or God. Identity, from the perspective of an open-ended narrative, is more than the sum of my story. It includes other stories in which I am one of the characters, yet not an irrelevant one" (Klaasen 2016, 3). Within theology the story of Jesus is not limited to any one interpretation or multiple interpretations; it is about the experiences of the Israelites and their encounters with God and creation, but also about the death, ministry, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that is embodied in the church. It is about the past, present, and future (Klaasen 2017, 40). There are four interactionist independent variables to this notion of narrative.

The four variables include: who is the narrator; the activity of telling the story; who has power; and how the episodes are connected. Narrative is the re-enacting of the content (knowledge and experience) that makes up the causes of the distorted relationship. The substance of the narrative is episodes that interlink in an open-ended process. The identity of the person who has been wronged is not determined by outside forces such as the researcher, the one with professional technical skills or the "non-person." The identity of the one telling the story has direct bearing on the structure of the process of reconciliation and the determinants of the validity of the process. The person who has been wronged is the narrator. How does the narrator relate to "the other(s)"? This relationship can be antagonistic or in proximity. The kind of relationship might result in domination, negation, alienation, or reconciliation.

Khoikhoi

South Africa has many different cultural groups and at least 11 official languages. Among the cultural groups, the Khoikhoi are regarded as the original inhabitants of South Africa, with the oldest DNA on earth (Brits 2006, cited by Boesak 2017, 253). The Khoikhoi were not a homogeneous group. Although "Khoikhoi" is the general name, the group consisted of a number of smaller groupings such as Hottentots, San, Bushmen, and Griekwa. Khoikhoi is translated "real people" and is derived from *khoib* (a man) or *khoii* (a person) (Boonzaier, Malherbe, Smith and Berens 2000, 1–2). It is also commonly interpreted as *mens-mens* (person-person). Hottentots, Bushmen and possibly Griekwa were names initiated by Westerners; however, with the dawn of democracy, some of these have become derogatory terms (Boesak 2017, 257).

This group were of the first South Africans to experience the brutality of colonial oppression by the Portuguese under the leadership of Bartholomew Diaz in 1488. This encounter was

followed by more than a decade of occasional trade and in 1657 the first farms were taken from the Khoikhoi by the colonisers and given to the free burgers (Dutch citizens) (Boesak 2017, 252). Unlike the treatment of land as a commodity by the colonisers, land was an integral part of the Khoikhoi's identity. The land was not the possession of any one person, not even the chief, for the sake of trade. Instead, land was the commonality that kept the Khoikhoi of a particular territory together. Land was for the use of all those living on it, even if one did not belong to the original group within that particular territory. Land was also a religious symbol—a gift from God—that connected the tribe to the Supreme Being. This integration (or disintegration) of identity, land and religion was held by the colonisers who thought of the Khoikhoi as a people without religion, and therefore, they were labelled "Blemmyae" (people with faces to their chest), "Scopapods" (one-legged people), and "anthropophagus" (cannibals) (Boonzaier et al. 2000, 8–9). Chidester (1996, 14) asserts that "In many cases the diagnoses of an alien society without religion was delivered bluntly in the assertion that such people were brutes and beasts. As animals by comparison to Europeans, therefore indigenous people who lacked religion also lacked any recognisable human right or entitlement to the land in which they lived."

The land issue and identity of the Khoikhoi remained a point of contention right through the colonial and apartheid eras. The controversial Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994 left out the Khoikhoi because redress of land was only for those who were dispossessed after 1913. The Khoikhoi's extended period of oppression excluded them from land claims, and as a result, the Knoikhoi were excluded from the reconciliation process post-apartheid. The Khoikhoi were notably absent during the watershed Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) talks spearheaded by Nelson Mandela after his release from prison. These talks led to the famous liberal Constitution of 1996. Nowhere in the Constitution was any space for the reclaim of dispossessed land for groups like the Khoikhoi. Over the next two decades various peaceful and sporadic protests by the Khoikhoi took place. Some ancestral land has since been returned (Boesak 2017, 254). Boesak rightly notes that "The Khoisan regard land as Mother Earth, the God-given space where they have practiced their culture for millennia. It is inextricably linked to their heritage in all its forms and without it the aboriginal people will not be able to reclaim their rightful place and dignity" (Boesak 2017, 256).

Another distinction of the Khoikhoi is the language, with common words used amongst the indigenous tribes such as the Bushmen, English, and Afrikaans languages. The common words include geographical connotations such as Outeniqua, Karoo, Gamka, Namakwaland and Kieskamma as well as animal names such as *gogga* (insect), *koedoe* (antelope), *kwagga* (zebra) and *geitjie* (gecko). It also includes names of plants such as *dagga* (cannabis) and objects such as *karos* (cloak) and *kierie* (stick) (Boonzaier et al. 2000, 11). The language has a distinctive click, which provides commonality among the different groupings, but within the regional dialects there was an overlap which connected the cultural and linguistic distinctiveness. Today, for example, Khoikhoi is a dialect used by groups such as the Bushmen of northern Botswana and Namibia (Boonzaier et al. 2000, 16–17).

Two points derive from the language usage. First, the click sound is a common feature among the dialects of most of the groups, which provides commonality. This commonality is by no means a boundary as found in closed systems. For European ears, the clicking sound was foreign and represented animal rather than human characteristics. John Millward reported in 1614 that "their speech [is] a chattering rather than language" (Millward quoted by Chidester 1996, 37). Edward Terry who reported his conversation with Coree, claimed that "their speech it seemed to us inarticulate noise, rather than language, like the clucking of hens, or gabbling of turkeys" (Terry quoted by Chidester 1996, 37). The dialect does not keep others out, but it indicates how the different groups moved between each other with innovative communication processes. The second derivation is the cross-cultural contact that happened through sharing of land and intermarriages. Language is a unifying factor and not a tool of alienation and marginalisation.

Four Interactionist Variables

Personhood

Inac and Unal (2013) draw on Derrida's distinction between difference and différance as identity of "sameness from identity as equivalence." Différance refers to the distinction, inequality and discernment between two or more phenomena on the one hand, and the delay or space that hides until later what is possible. On the other hand, difference refers to separation, opposites with little in common (Inac and Unal 2013, 223). Tracy (1983; 1998) adopted this distinction and asserts that experience and theory are different but in the context of practical theology, they are not separated. I have demonstrated above that this has become the dominant approach to practical theology in the last 30 years.

Cochrane (2009) rightly claims that the human person is mystery, and goes beyond the limits of analysis and logical frameworks. Within Christian theology the identity of human beings is rooted in their identity as God's creatures, being made in the image of God. The logical analysis as the figured but not yet exhausted (logos) and the prefigured but not captured (myth) are part of the Christian understanding of what it means to be created in God's image (Cochrane 2009, 16–17).

The Khoikhoi are not a collection of individuals tilling the fields for a common purpose. Their identity is characterised by personhood. The land that is free of individual commercial owners is not just a commodity. The land had both a material and spiritual significance. It is within this duality that the identity of the Khoikhoi must be viewed. The name Khoikhoi points to communitarianism rather than individualism. A person always relates with other person(s) in the formation process.

The other is not a stranger or foreigner that is excluded by strict and visible boundaries. The other is not to be used as lifeless objects (beast, animal, savage or cannibal) but as organisms; the other forms and is formed by the interplay of agency. In this sense, the other is the constructing other who forms an integral part of identity formation. The boundaries become blurred; there is overlap without overthrow, location without domination.

In post-apartheid South Africa with its many cultures, races, and languages, South Africans retrieve to identities with fixed boundaries. The one cultural group left out of the CODESA negotiations during the early 1990s and the Land Claims Act of 1996 becomes a symbol of truthful reconciliation. Its identity is intertwined with creative tension of formed and formation.

Communication

Language did not separate the different groupings within the Khoikhoi tribe. On the contrary, language was a means of building bridges. Even when the colonisers used the indigenous people as interpreters for their own enslavement, the Khoikhoi interpreters were in-betweens on the frontiers. There are common language segments that transcend fixed boundaries. Language is not disembodied parts, but meaning lies within the context. Embodied language communicates that which is obvious, calculative, logical, and visibly perceivable. More importantly, language is about what constitutes the invisible, the deeper conscious level (*liebenstemming*), what is not verbalised but meaning-making. The clicking sound was taken as animal-like utterances by the colonisers, but for the Khoikhoi it serves as commonality to transcend the divides of the different dialects. Communication is more narrative than abstract words. Communication invites the constructing other to enter into conversation rather than differences. It is first about relating experiences.

The post-structuralists refer to language as both that which is in the text and that which is between and in the margins of what is written or said.

> This means a text is never stable or fixed, but always open to endless interpretation and reinterpretation that stretches to a receding horizon within which meaning is endlessly deferred. This combination of what is not said, but which echoes around the text, and deferral of meaning, is termed différance by Derrida. (Goodlief 1998, 44)

With regard to reconciliation, language strips the all-knowing expert—whether it is the European or any other cultural or population group—of its perceived dominants and disempowers atomistic self-centredness. The oppressor depends on the oppressed for effective and mutual healing. The Khoikhoi serves as symbolic reconciliation because of their openness to share the space that occupies interaction. Language becomes the medium that draws into conversation rather than points to differences that separate.

Embodied language also makes it possible for persons to move between the different cultures without coercion or enclavement. To move from one culture to another, even temporarily, presupposes new epistemology. Disembodied language "reveals something of an asymmetrical communication, of a messianic role instead of a partnership role. It consists of a movement initiated from here to there, while the narrative approach wants to experience the sensation of being drawn into the other's world, of being drawn over the threshold of a cultural difference" (Muller 2015, 31).

Power as Reflected Experience

Referring to the shift in emphasis towards human experience, McClure (2012, 273) rightly asserts that the shift "has had significant effect on other, more traditional forms of theological reflection that often have privileged ideational or doctrinal approaches to the exclusion of human experience …" The knowledge of the Khoikhoi has been ignored by the colonisers and those who initiated the transition from apartheid to democracy. At the very start of CODESA "Khoisan leaders were not invited to the round table and even though the Paramount Chief of the Griqua (Griekwa) National Conference made his wish known to be part of the talks, his request was turned down" (Boesak 2017, 254).

Truthful reconciliation will have to include concrete experience of the dispossessed from a position of power. This kind of experience is closer to the liberation theology model of social analysis, hermeneutical analysis and praxis orientation. Experience is not only an addition but also an integral part of the process of reconciliation and healing. This raises the fundamental question of the relationship between reason and experience. It is not my intention to engage in the different debates on the relationship between theory and practice represented by scholars such as David Tracy (distinction but not separation), Forrester (integrally related), Heitink (circular) and Browning (interpenetrate). Miller-McLemore (2016, 5), former president of the International Society for Practical Theology, who is a proponent of the distinction of reason and practice, claims that "intellectuals as divergent as Karl Marx, William James, and pastoral theology forerunner Seward Hiltner all suggest, in contrast with antiquity's hierarchy of theoria over praxis, that practice produces valuable knowledge of a distinct order and kind."

Fluid Community

Louw (2012, 4) asserts that "The basic presupposition is that the manner in which we view human beings will determine how we treat human beings. One can argue that anthropology provides the paradigms … that determine the attitudes of people (*habitus*) and their position within the realm of human relationships."

The Khoisan is a composition of different groups that form a cohesive unit. It constitutes different groups such as the San, Griekwas, and Nama. It also transcends geographical areas, languages, and religion. The absence of strict boundaries makes the Khoisan a symbol of authentic reconciliation. The Khoisan do not only transcend the limitations of individualism, but their identity is intertwined with the constructed other. The other is not a disconnected stranger but a forming other who shares a common space of formation and forming.

Lartey (2003) makes the claim that human beings are fully understood within the complex interaction amongst culture, individuality and human characteristics. He uses the noun "other" to draw the continuum among the three, despite some definite particularities. With regard to culture, he means that "we are like others" in the sense of valuing the world through worldviews, values, prejudices, frames of reference, language, and customs. The individual, like no other, refers to personal characteristics like fingerprints and dental parts that are

unique to each person. Human characteristics refer to such phenomena as physiological, psychological and cognitive abilities, which are part of all human beings (Lartey 2003, 171–172).

The potential to move beyond the current distortions and disfigurations forms an integral part of community. The other is not external but becomes the constructive other because it influences the potential of being in the image of God.

Conclusion

The notion of reconciliation used in my conception of the narrative approach is inductive and starts with the experience or the conflict and controversial relationships, as they exist in reality. This is in line with a liberationist theology approach. Solomons (2018, 218) asserts that the "inductive logic" is "where the situations of conflict are rooted in human alienation from God and where social conflict forms the starting point for the ministry of reconciliation." The Khoisan community and their experience of centuries of alienation and domination within the history of South Africa are proposed as a symbol of reconciliation. The Khoisan community, unlike the dominant colonial history that depicts them as religionless, is a deeply religious community that perceives their material possessions (like land) as a gift from God. Like the stories narrated at the TRC, the story of the Khoisan people has the potential to bring about national unity. The Khoisan's notions of personhood, communication, power and community—when comprehended within the narrative approach—provides a space to transcend divisions and boundaries. The Khoisan, as a symbol of reconciliation, does not relegate religion to self-secularisation, but the inextricable link between the social and political and the religious.

As conventionalised over the years, I do not conceptualise reconciliation in terms such as penitence, forgiveness, restitution, reparation, and healing. These terms have been used extensively by the research and academic community, and in particular, in the TRC. They are also typical within the "deductive approach," as found in the use of reconciliation in the Belhar Confession. Using the Khoisan as a symbol of reconciliation presupposes that social justice is a prerequisite for national unity.

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