To what extent did some Christians work with and to what extent work against movements for social change in Africa or Asia?

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2017

On the 20th of July 1985, President Botha declared a state of emergency across South Africa. Civil unrest was growing, and his right-wing government, the National Party, were beginning to lose their political grip. It seemed that the apartheid regime was coming to an end. In this essay, I will explore how and why so many Christians in South Africa clung to their pro-apartheid stance during the state of emergency. The inward nationalist ideals of the *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk* (Dutch Reformed Church) had become so deeply intertwined with their faith that it seemed almost impossible for them to separate their politics from their religion. By contrast, a great deal of South African Christians viewed God as the liberator of the oppressed, and used their faith as a driving mechanism towards the creation of a new South Africa. Some examples include, but are not limited to, the South African Council of Churches, the anonymous authors of the *Kairos Document* of the Soweto Church, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Professor Johan Heyns. It is indeed remarkable that different branches of the same faith held such opposing views; I will outline a potential explanation for this by exploring a brief history and the ideological driving forces behind each movement. Once the ideologies are understood, we can analyse and assess what this means within the broader question regarding religious involvement in politics, and more specifically, different branches of nationalism.

Often regarded as legalised racism, the apartheid regime was reputed across the world as a totalitarian state that interfered with the private lives of all South Africans. Race was the determining factor of whom one could marry, where one could live or own property, where one could be educated, which jobs one could apply for, which beach one could visit, which train one could travel on, which bench one could sit on, which ambulances to call for the sick, which church services one could attend, and whether or not one could vote.[1] The literal translation in English is 'apartness', and the philosophies of hierarchy and segregation – ruled and dominated by a white minority – are commonly remembered as the backbone of the entire administration.

[1] van der Vyver, J. (1999). Constitutional Perspective of Church-State Relations in South Africa. *Brigham Young University Law Review* (2), p. 635.

The 1985 state of emergency was a strong reaction from the National Party to the growing internal resistance across the country. In 1983, there had been 395 incidents of bombings, armed attacks and other violent actions against the government.[2] Protests on the streets – many of them were initially peaceful – lead to more than 700 deaths. There was also a workers resistance, and the Department of Manpower reported 336 strikes, involving 64,469 workers.[3] Thousands of students were boycotting classes in schools and universities.[4] Moreover, although the African National Congress (hereafter ANC) promoted peaceful protest wherever possible, their military wing, *Mkonte We Sizwe,*[5] was becoming increasingly violent. Their planned military operations included bombings and landmine campaigns, as well as multiple tortures and executions of 'enemies' and 'defectors.'[6] The earlier banning of these political activists and raiding of their homes and headquarters was evidently not enough for containing the resistance. South Africa was heading fast towards civil war. In addition, foreign pressures were increasing. The United States began placing heavy sanctions and other nations including the United Kingdom were actively withdrawing resources.

As we shall see, the Christians of South Africa were spread across the spectrum with regards to their views and actions towards the ever-increasing demand for social change. Here we shall examine two streams: one oppressive, the other liberationist. It must be noted here that we are not discussing a religious conflict, but a political crisis

[2] Ngcokovane, C. (1989). *Demons of Apartheid: A Moral and Ethical Analysis of the NGK, NP, and Broederbond's Justification of Apartheid.* Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers, p. 132.

[3] ibid, p. 133.

[4] ibid.

[5] The literal translation from Xhosa is: 'The Spear of the Nation'

[6] Minyuku, Biki *et al.* (29 October 1998). *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report* Vol II. Retrieved 4 May 2017 from Justice.Gov: http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%202.pdf, pp. 327-335.

that churches were involved in on either side. However, in case studies such as this one, the lines between religion and politics are often blurred.

First, we shall examine the reaction of the *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk* (hereafter NGK). It is perhaps not surprising that they resisted social change during the internal struggle; they had in fact given the regime divine sanction from the offset.[7] Prior to the Nationalist party taking power in 1948, the NGK held a meeting in Johannesburg called the 'People's Congress.'[8] The proceedings were published in a booklet called 'Church and City,'[9] which laid down the guidelines towards a policy for the NGK towards other racial groups:[10]

1. '…Whites and non-whites be separated from each other, territorially, economically and politically.'
2. '…Whites and non-whites should be enlightened about the significance of our racial problem, and especially about the aim that is being pursued by a policy of racial apartheid.'
3. 'Congress expressed its conviction that the Church must take the lead to draft a definite racial policy for her people.'

The NGK continued to make similar declarations in 1950, 1952 and 1974,[11] each time laying down guidelines for the government. Informally, the NGK became known as 'The National Party at Prayer' – in fact, more than 90% of the government cabinet ministers, most of whom were passionately defending the regime, belonged to the church.[12] Naturally, this raises the question, why? How is it possible for a faith group

7 ibid, p. 145.

8 My translation from Afrikaans, *Volkskongres.*

9 My translation from Afrikaans, *Kerk en stad.*

10 My translation from Afrikaans, the original was found in:
Hofmeyr, J. & Pillay, G. J. (1994). *A History of Christianity in South Africa.* Pretoria: HUAM Tertiary, p. 254.

11 Ngcokovane, C. (1989), p. 145.

12 Schiller, B. (1988, December 18). News: Apartheid issue deeply divides Afrikaners. *Tornonto Star* , p. H.1.

that bases its conduct on the Golden Rule to support and defend a regime of violent segregation?

A potential trajectory could be to explore the themes of nationalism and protectionism in NGK history. Some members found meaning in their remembrance of the *Voortrekkers:* from 1835-1840, 15,000 Afrikaans speaking people emigrated from the eastern parts of the Cape Colony to the interior. This was often depicted as an escape from the British colonials; some NGK services remembered their ancestors as an oppressed and marginalised minority.[13] By the beginning of the 20th Century, the NGK held two different social tendencies with regards to the British. The older one, which began at the founding of the settlement, promoted an insular communal identity based on issues of language.[14] The Afrikaans language movement had been founded in the 1870s as a reaction to the British attempt to anglicise the Dutch Cape.[15] The dominant tradition of the NGK, however, initially stressed that the church ought to remain loyal to the secular authorities. Nevertheless, after the Anglo-Boer War, those in leadership were actively accusing the British of inhumane injustices against members of their churches. By 1905, the NGK congregations of South Africa forged a federal partnership across four provinces; the first attempt to unify Afrikaners throughout South Africa.[16] It is perhaps unsurprising that the NGK built barricades to protect its identity. Humans have a tendency to preserve the identity that they feel is most under attack, and in this case, it led to heavy protectionism in religious dialogue.

Within the NGK arose an all-male cultural society called the *Broederbond*,[17] which quickly gained political traction. Initially, the group sought to propagate the Afrikaner language, but it gradually became associated with political extremism, fighting

13 Hofmeyr, J. & Pillay, G. J. (1994), p. 93.

14 Giliomee, Hermann (2003) *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*. London: C. Hurst & Co, p. 384.

15 ibid.

16 ibid.

17 'Brotherhood', my translation.

heavily for the right-wing Afrikaner nationalist ideal.[18] In 1944, their General Secretary declared, 'the *Broederbond* is born from a deep conviction that the Afrikaner nation has been placed in this country by God's hand.'[19] In 1946, the NGK synod investigated the group and found that membership was not in any conflict with Christian Scripture and/or Christian principles. Due to their deep connections with the Nationalist Party, it is speculated that the *Broederbond* effectively controlled the South African government throughout the apartheid era.[20]

Aira Kemiläinen, a historian of European ideas who wrote on the origins of nationalism, argues that nationalism is linked to territory and sovereignty, and is not unusual. She distinguishes two types from the 20th Century onwards: one is often associated with democracy; the nation is viewed as a state where a group of people bind themselves together in the form of a social contract. The second refers to a group of people – *volk*[21] – who define themselves based on similarities, usually regarding language or common origin. The crucial difference between the two is that the first is directed *outward* and the second is directed *inward*.[22] It may be argued that the origins of the NGK and *Broederbond* have very strong connections to Kemiläinen's *inward* definition of nationalism. Karen Armstrong, a historian of religion, speaks more specifically on religious nationalism. She highlights the importance for humans to create a 'we' regarding a homeland, and how this is often tied with religious language and practise. Armstrong argues that in modern dialogue, religion is often

[18] Hofmeyr, J. & Pillay, G. J. (1994), p. 254.

[19] ibid.

[20] Butler, A. (1998). *Democracy and Apartheid Political Theory: Comparative Politics and the Modern South African State.* UK: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 70.

[21] This term has strong ideal connotations, relating back to the ideal of the 'pure' race, thus preserving nationalist tendencies.

[22] Kemiläinen, A. (1964). *Nationalism: Problems concerning the word, the concept and classification.* Jyväskyläensia: Studia Historica, Chapter VI

attributed to protectionism-related violence, when usually the roots are not religious at all, but are rather found in deeper issues of identity.[23]

As we have seen, the roots of Afrikaner nationalism within the NGK arose out of social distrust; conditions where people burrowed down further and wanted to associate only with those whom they shared something with. In this case, ethnic identity was under attack, which ended up having deep resonance in religious rhetoric. The ideological 'building blocks' can be seen in the following key features of mid-late 20th century NGK discourse: [24]

a) Promotion of common language
b) Emphasis on common history
c) Unity of common religion

More specifically, we find a curious narrative reading of scripture used to justify the promotion of segregation, the origins of apartheid, and measures used during the 1985 state of emergency. One example is the Exodus narrative. This was often read in light of Afrikaner history, where the descendants of Dutch traders were forced to flee the British and take over their own 'promised land flowing with milk and honey'. Before fully taking over the Promised Land, the God-elected Dutch settlers would have to defeat the native people who were already occupying those territories, with references to the Israelites defeating the Canaanites.[25] Furthermore, there was a strong emphasis of particular readings of the Torah, where God insists that Israel separate herself from surrounding nations. This fuelled the belief that God made some ethnic groups to be superior to others, which led to a racially fuelled election theology.[26] The story of Babel, found in Genesis 11 was also a crucial Scripture for justifying apartheid as a whole. J.A. Loubser, a theologian in the NGK referred to this narrative as the 'first

[23] Armstrong, K. (5 February, 2017). Keynote Speaker. *Borderlines Conference: Religion, Nationalism and Identity.* Cambridge: St Johns College.

[24] Hofmeyr, J. & Pillay, G. J. (1994), p. 195

[25] Nichols, J. & McCarty III, J. (2011). When the State is Evil: Biblical Civil (Dis)obedience in South Africa. *St John's Law Review , 85*, p. 608

[26] ibid.

passage in the Apartheid Bible'.[27] The official Report of the Scriptural Grounds for Race Segregation stated, 'God not only wanted, but established the existence of separate people.'[28]

This scriptural justification was foundational to The Population Registration Act of 1950, which required all South African residents to be racially classified as 'White,' 'Coloured,'[29] or 'Native', later called 'Bantu'. The Act was later amended to include an 'Asian' category in order to accommodate for the large Indian population. Due to the crude style of racial testing, many families were separated and not permitted to live in the same neighbourhoods.[30] Under the new policy, many historically black or coloured areas were declared for 'Whites Only', leading to multiple forced removals, such as the 60,000 people who were removed from District 6 in Cape Town under the Group Areas Act of 1941.[31] Similarly, Nehemiah 13:23-27 was used to justify the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act 55 in 1949.[32] While many modern Christians would interpret this Scripture as a ban on inter-*religious* marriage, the NGK interpreted it as a ban on inter-*racial* marriage, since they had already established that God created races to be separate. Lastly, there was a strong emphasis on Romans 13, 'read through a peculiar kind of Calvinistic lens'.[33] Referring to St Paul's insistence on total obedience to the ruling authorities, the usage of this passage was an attempt to effectively veto any kind of resistance to apartheid within the church community.

[27] ibid, p. 608.

[28] Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church. (1951). *Rapport oor die Skriftuurlike gronde van rasse-apartheid* Act 1951, p. 161, my translation.

[29] In the South African context, the term 'coloured' is used to describe those who whose ethnic origin is racially mixed. The term 'mixed race' is considered taboo, since this group prefer to establish their own racial identity.

[30] For a description of the typical 'pencil hair test', see:
Samuel, A. P. (2009). *The Ubuntu God: Desconstructing A South African Narrative of Oppression.* Oregon: Pickwick Publications, p. 32.

[31] ibid.

[32] Nichols, J. & McCarty III, J. (2011), p. 607.

[33] ibid, p. 607.

After exploring the NGK as a case study, it would be tempting to align oneself with the general discourse of today and conclude that religion should never be involved in politics. Or perhaps more specifically, that religious rhetoric ought to stay clear from nationalistic tendencies. This view has largely been influenced by the works of John Locke, a 17th Century philosopher whose works on religious and political theory concluded that the state can never be involved in religious truth claims.[34] However when we examine other Christian groups and individuals, especially during the national state of emergency, we soon realise that their religious convictions, combined with a genuine passion for their nation, is enormously significant for the broader narrative of South African politics. In fact, these Christians played an active role in the struggle against apartheid and in reconciliation afterwards. It is arguable that if Christianity had remained a private and passive religion in South Africa, apartheid would have ended in an even larger-scale bloodbath.

From the early years of the apartheid era, the South African Council of Churches made their anti-apartheid stance known. Linked with the World Council of Churches,[35] they were regarded as the 'foremost ecumenical agency grouping the "anti-apartheid" churches'.[36] The council prized itself for being one of the few organisations in South Africa where white and non-white people could talk openly with one another without fear of discrimination. In 1968, the council published a booklet called, *A Message to the People of South Africa*, highlighting that the Christian gospel is incompatible with apartheid.[37] The document drew from the story of Pentecost in the book of Acts to illustrate how it is the Holy Spirit's desire to unite men of all tongues and tribes. The segregation Acts of the apartheid regime were

[34] A. Gottlieb (2016). 'Philosophy for the British: Locke'. In, *The Dream of Enlightenment: The Rise of Modern Philosophy*. London: Penguin, pp. 113-162.

[35] The NGK had separated itself from the World Council of Churches in 1960 after being condemned for racist acts. See the 'Cottesloe Declaration' in Hofmeyr, J, Millard, J, & Froneman, C. (1991). *History of the Church in South Africa: A Document and Source Book.* Pretoria: University of South Africa, p. 230.

[36] Hope, M., & Young, J. (1983). *The South African Churches in a Revolutionary Situation.* New York: Orbis Books, p. 86.

[37] Hofmeyr, J, Millard, J, & Froneman, C. (1991), pp. 245-246.

alleged to be inconsistent with God's plan to unite and draw all people to himself through the death and resurrection power of the Christ. It concludes with a call to the Christians of South Africa to obey God rather than men. This strongly worded stance was enormously provocative, which inevitably led to on-going clashes with the Nationalist Party. Individual staff members of the council were often banned, harassed and imprisoned by government officials.[38]

In 1985, at the height of the state of emergency, an equally damning report arose from another group of Christians: *The Kairos Document*. The authors themselves remained anonymous, but they did reveal that they were theologians from the Soweto Church, a black township based in Johannesburg. The document was circulated throughout the churches of South Africa and the rest of the world, gaining an enormous volume of support and traction. Peter Walshe writes, '*The Kairos Document* stirred the churches as nothing before.'[39] It is now historically remembered as a theological statement comparable with the 1934 'Barmen Declaration' by Karl Barth in Nazi Germany.[40] The term *Kairos* is a Greek word used in New Testament, designated for a specific moment of history when God offers his people an opportunity to repent, convert, and/or change their actions.[41] Examples of its use can be found in, Mark 1:15; 13:33; Luke 8:13;19:44; Romans 13:11-13; 1 Corinthians 7:29; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Titus 1:3; Revelation 1:3; 22:10. The main emphasis throughout the document is that *Kairos* moments are crucial calls from God, and must not be missed.

Referring to the 'Black' and 'White' churches of South Africa, the document stated, 'Both oppressor and oppressed claim loyalty to the same church.'[42] It provided a heavy critique of 'State Theology,' 'the theological justification for the status quo'

[38] ibid.

[39] Walshe, P. (1987). The Evolution of Liberation Theology in South Africa. *5 J.L. & Religion* , p. 299.

[40] Nichols, J. & McCarty III, J. (2011), p. 610.

[41] *The Kairos Document* (2nd ed.). (1985). London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, p. 1.

[42] ibid, p. 2.

condemning the NGK, *Broedebond,* and the Nationalist Party of racism and totalitarianism. It also provided a response to NGK interpretations of Romans 13. First, such a text must be interpreted in its context; otherwise the true meaning of God's word would be distorted. Second, there are many times in the Bible where God does not command obedience to a totalitarian state. Such examples of tyrannical regimes include Pharaoh, Pilate, the Babylonians, etc. The said oppressors were not believed to have any right in persecuting the Jews and/or Christians. Third, the kind of State that needs to be obeyed is the one that '*is there to serve God for your benefit'.*[43] Strong language was used throughout. 'State Theology' was accused of blasphemy, idolatry, and was even condemned for being the anti-Christ. It called upon the Christians of South Africa to take courage, appealing to Acts 5:29, 'We must obey God rather than man.'[44]

The *Kairos* theologians also provided a critique of what they called 'Church Theology'. They accused Christian leaders of appealing for reconciliation without defining what it is, and without promising any kind of justice for the oppressed. This was decidedly an issue between justice and injustice; God and the devil. Christians cannot reconcile with the devil, and justice cannot be defined by the oppressor. Moreover, negotiations could only take place if the church first *repented*.[45] The document argued that the churches of South Africa had gone too far in trying separate themselves from worldly affairs. This lead to an officially 'neutral' standpoint, which ultimately sided with the oppressors. They claimed that the Bible does not separate an individual's spiritual life from their public life; God redeems the whole person and whole of creation (c.f. Romans 8:18-24).[46]

Lastly, the document called for the church to develop a 'Prophetic Theology' solely grounded on the Bible. This differed from academic theology: [47]

[43] ibid, pp. 4-5.
[44] ibid.
[45] ibid, p. 10-12.
[46] ibid, p. 16.
[47] ibid, p. 17.

> *'Whereas academic theology deals with all biblical themes in a systematic manner and formulate general Christian principles and doctrines, prophetic theology concentrates on those aspects of the Word of God that have an immediate bearing upon the critical situation in which we find ourselves.*'

This would therefore be specific to the time and place; the moment of *Kairos*. A prophetic theology was required to read the signs of the times and interpret the *Kairos* (c.f. Matthew 16:3; Luke 12:56). Referring to Prophetic Theology as a 'call to action', the authors called for the church to analyse the social structure: who are the oppressors and who are the oppressed? [48] There were also comments on tyrannical rulers: by being tyrannical, such rulers or regimes forfeited their moral right to govern. A tyrant is defined as an enemy of the common good, and the NGK were officially warned that violence would inevitably increase. The apartheid regime was accused of being a 'reign of terror', making it irreformable. Therefore, the entire establishment had to be completely replaced.[49] They declared liberation and hope to be common themes throughout the Bible (c.f. Psalm 12:5; 103:6). Oppression was described as sinful and wicked, and an offence to God. [50] Thus, for the *Kairos* theologians, the theology of South African Christians in that point of time was inadequate on two grounds. Either it provided an out-of-context Biblical justification for apartheid, rendering it inhumane, or, it overemphasised the individualistic side of evangelical theology, which reduced the role of the church in the political sphere.

One of the many paradigmatic figures who fought for social change was Archbishop Desmond Tutu; his reputation has now become a western icon for the struggle against apartheid. He won Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his work in non-violent protest of the regime,[51] and held a very similar stance to the authors of the *Kairos* Document in his sermons, speeches and open letters to politicians. In a letter to President Botha in

[48] ibid, pp. 20-22.

[49] ibid, p. 24.

[50] ibid, pp. 25-26.

[51] *Nobel Peace Prize 1984: Desmond Tutu*. Retrieved April 19, 2017, from The Official Website of the Nobel Prize: https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1984/

1988, he accused politicians of quoting Romans 13 while ignoring Revelation 13.[52] He drew on the broader context of Romans 13, arguing that politicians are expected to act as God's servants, and that when they fail to do so, they forfeit their right to command Christian obedience. He argued that there are multiple times in Scripture where civil disobedience – including from Jesus – was seen as faithfulness towards God.[53] He repeatedly declared apartheid to be unbiblical and heretical. Thus, Christians had a *duty* to resist an unjust government, as seen in Acts 4:19-20.[54] Tutu often regarded disunity and separation – the fundamental framework of apartheid theology – as a result of sin entering the world. He drew examples from the Fall and Babel to demonstrate that sin and segregation are synonymous. The narratives of Jesus and Paul's ministries were grounded in God's demonstration of reaching across boundaries and seeking reconciliation with mankind.[55] Moreover, the theology of Genesis 1:27, where humans are believed to be created in the image of God is of fundamental importance for Tutu. If all people stem from God's image, then all people are viewed equally in the eyes of the divine.[56] Since the results of apartheid led to extreme poverty, sickness, violence and human rights violations for people who are created in God's image, for Tutu, apartheid could easily be defined as evil and therefore sinful.[57]

Tutu provided practical solutions for Christians across the globe to fight apartheid, and drew from the examples of the apostles in Acts 5:29, 'We must obey God rather than men!'[58] He did not believe that the regime could be softened. 'Of course apartheid cannot be reformed. It must be dismantled. You don't reform a Frankenstein

[52] Tutu, D. (1994). *The Rainbow People of God* . London: Doubleday, pp. 145, 152.
[53] ibid, p.169, 171.
[54] Nichols, J. & McCarty III, J. (2011). p. 619
[55] ibid, p. 620.
[56] Tutu, D. (1994), pp. 60-64.
[57] ibid, p. 141.
[58] NIV translation

– you destroy it.'[59] His dialogues with the international community became increasingly poignant during the 1985 state of emergency. In a speech to the Political Committee of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, October 1985, he stated, 'I am a Bishop in the Church of God. I am fifty-four years old. I am a Nobel laureate. Many would say I was reasonably responsible. In the land of my birth I cannot vote. An eighteen year old, because he or she is white, can.'[60] He concluded the speech by calling on the UN to apply punitive economic sanctions on his own country if apartheid was not dismantled within 6 months.[61] Since apartheid was not dismantled within six months, in April 1986, Tutu made his position clear, again urging the international community to impose sanctions. He and his family were not immune to the affects of the regime. His wife and daughters were often stopped and strip-searched at road blockades, and he lost his passport to the authorities on a number of occasions.[62] Later in 1986, he was elected as Archbishop of Cape Town.

Throughout the intense cultural struggle of 1985-1986, the international community were being made increasingly aware of key figures such as Tutu who were fighting strongly for the rights of their people. Perhaps less well known was the internal struggle within the white NGK community. The Nationalist Party, whom they largely controlled, was losing their political grip. Pressures to repeal apartheid were growing. Indeed, sanctions from the rest of the world played an enormous role in the political sphere, however, since theology was at the root of the regime, it seemed that a change of theology from inside the NGK was necessary.

[59] Tutu, D. (1994), p 97.
[60] ibid, p. 97.
[61] ibid, p. 100.
[62] ibid, pp. 102, 106.

Professor Johan Heyns, who is described as 'one of the most influential theologians of the Dutch Reformed Church in the twentieth century,'[63] played a crucial role in the NGK's theological reversal. This was a man with tremendous influence over both the church and the state. A popular newspaper, *The Star* commented on Heyns' privileged position: he sometimes met with President Botha up to twice a week.[64] However, not long after being elected as moderator for the NGK in 1986, he became a controversial figure, as he took a public anti-apartheid stance. Soon after his election, he led the Synod to declare apartheid as a sin, and required the NGK to repent.[65] This sharp turnaround had radical implications: the NGK not only lost its theological footing to uphold apartheid, but was also required to play an active role in dismantling it. In 1987, Heyns held his ground firmly, stating that the church and the government were on their way towards a 'collision course' if apartheid was not dismantled quickly.[66] Further, in 1988, he publically declared, 'we as whites should accept the blacks as human beings created in the image of God . . . and not just as labour units.'[67] His anti-apartheid declarations and actions were received by many as an act of treason.

In 1989, the new President of South Africa, F. W. de Klerk was able to draw from previously secret negotiations with Nelson Mandela, who was still imprisoned at that time. Official negotiations began in 1990, when de Klerk formally announced the unbanning of the ANC and the release of Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison. This eventually led to the first *Convention for a Democratic South Africa,* (CODSA I) which took place in December 1991, and the second (CODESA II) in May 1992.

[63] My translation from: Hofmeyer, H. (2006). *PHD Thesis: J A HEYNS EN DIE NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK EN APARTHEID.* Bloemfontein: University of the Free State, p. 160 .

[64] Schiller, B. (1988, December 18). News: Apartheid issue deeply divides Afrikaners. *Tornonto Star* , p. H.1.

[65] van der Vyver, J. D. (1996). Religious fundamentalism and human rights. *Journal of International Affairs , 50* (1), p. 21.

[66] Goodspeed, P. (1987, February 9). South African opposition parties looking to '89. *Toronto Star* , p. A.16.

[67] Schiller, B. (1988, December 18).

These were attended by a variety of ethnic groups from 20 different political parties.[68] Negotiations continued until November 1993, when the *Transitional Executive Council* oversaw South Africa's first democratic election on 27 April 1994.[69]

Nelson Mandela was elected as President of South Africa in 1994, and Desmond Tutu was shortly after appointed the position of chairman for the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Hereafter TRC).[70] Tutu is also known for his leading work in the Black Consciousness movement, and more specifically, Black Liberation Theology, alongside key figures such as Allan Boesak and Chris Hani.[71] Heyns, however, was assassinated by an unknown white supremacist on 5 November 1994. The assassin fired a single bullet through the window of his home while he was playing cards with his wife and three grandchildren. He died instantly at the scene.[72] Heyns was praised by Nelson Mandela as a 'soldier of peace.'[73]

As we have seen, the public nature of theology highlights the ambiguity of the line that separates religion from politics. Not only has theology shaped policy, but attitudes toward the nation state has shaped theology. The roots of the NGK and the *Broedebond* are steeped with protectionism. This is a classic instance where groups try to preserve their identity within a broader society, with a deep fear of the overwhelming majority. Although one would never want to provide an excuse for the horrors of apartheid, it is hugely important that we try to understand why and how this took place. The need for a unified identity is a very human one, and religions across

68 Mandela, N. (1994). *Long Walk to Freedom.* London: Little Brown Book Group, pp. 712-717.

69 ibid, p. 732.

70 ibid, p. 618.

71 Walshe, P. (1987). The Evolution of Liberation Theology in South Africa. *5 J.L. & Religion* , 299-309.

72 New York Times. (1994, November 7). *World News Briefs; Anti-Apartheid Minister Shot Dead in Pretoria*. Retrieved April 13, 2017, from NYT: World: http://www.nytimes.com/1994/11/07/world/world-news-briefs-anti-apartheid-minister-shot-dead-in-pretoria.html

73 ibid.

the globe must take the case of the NGK seriously if we are to prevent similar regimes taking power in the present and future.

The NGK and *Broedebond* were evidently linked with Kemiläinen's definition of *inward* nationalism. By contrast, those who fought strongly against apartheid tied their faith with a more *outward* kind of nationalism. I argue that the Christians who worked for social change were just as nationalistic as those who worked against it. The difference is their theological views on the role of the nation state. The NGK drew their theology mostly from a narrative reading of the Old Testament, resulting in a victimised rhetoric that dramatically escalated to a totalitarian regime. Those who fought against apartheid, however, defined their nationalism by a love for the *people* within their country. They strove for an egalitarian state based on the New Covenant outlined by Paul in the New Testament. Archbishop Tutu's voice in Black Liberation Theology was remarkably inclusive, insisting that Black rights ought not be at the expense of White rights. The *Kairos* theologians' call for a 'Prophetic Theology' was a practical call to action, governed by the message of hope. It was unambiguous, confrontational and unafraid, yet also grounded in the belief that God loves his entire creation.

In case studies such as this one, we can clearly see the Christian dilemma of whether religion should remain in the public or private sphere. As the *Kairos* theologians wrote so prominently, those who benefit from inequality and remain inactive are ultimately supporting the tyrannical regime that benefits from their silence. Religion, like politics, governs the sphere of people's everyday lives. Therefore, in the context of apartheid, we can see how keeping the two separate is both illogical and damaging.

By examining certain Christians who have worked for and against social change during the final years of the apartheid era, two questions have arisen. First, should religion and politics be allowed to mix? Second, is it theologically justifiable for Christianity to be associated with nationalism? In the first instance, we have outlined the roots, the scriptural groundings, and the actions of the NGK. We have also

examined the reactions of prominent Christians who fought effectively to bring the regime to an end. On both ends of the spectrum, religion was the driving force behind political action. If Christians of any race had remained private or passive in their worship, then the apartheid regime would have ended in further violence and a catastrophic civil war. Moreover, as Tutu urges from a theological standpoint, segregation is synonymous with sin. To separate two spheres that govern society would render both ineffective. In the second instance, we have seen how nationalism can be both beneficial and detrimental to the Christian faith. In the case of Afrikaner nationalism, we have seen how the focus on common language, common history and common brand of theology directed their views *inwards*. While a need for identity is a very basic human one, we have seen how in this case, the roots of fear and protectionism drove the NGK into what many would call a distorted perversion of the Christian faith. By contrast, Tutu, the *Kairos* theologians, and others had a more *outward* focus in their nationalism. Like their faith, their attitudes towards the nation-state were dominated by a love for all who were created in the image of God. The story of apartheid is complex. For the purposes of this essay, I have highlighted specific examples of Christians in a specific period of time, in order to combat the commonly held post-Lockean view that religion and politics ought never be involved with one another.

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