A critical engagement with BJ van der Walt's reformational approach towards African culture and world view

IN Mutua

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Supervisor: Prof MF Heyns

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NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
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Declaration

I declare that "**A critical engagement with BJ van der Walt's Reformational approach towards African culture and world view"** to be my own work, that it has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination purposes at this or any other university, and that all the sources used or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged.

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Dedication

I dedicate this research to my late father, Pastor Ibrahim Mutua Ruga, who was confident that I was going to represent him in the scholarly field where he was limited.

Abstract

This research interrogates Bennie van der Walt's third way as a solution for the "divided soul" of the African people - a divided soul that creates a false dilemma. This division is the creation of political colonialism and neo-colonialism, which impacts negatively on the African socio-economic and political structure. The myth of the superiority of Western culture propagates this vice.

Van der Walt's clarification of the concepts of a world view and culture are depicted in chapter 1. He wrestles with the complexity of culture and world view; showing that a world view is deeply religious and pre-scientific and shapes culture. He also shows how religion, world view and culture relate to one another.

In chapter 2 Van der Walt's comparison and evaluation of the African and Western cultures and their world views is reconstructed. It is pointed out that Van der Walt notices fundamental differences between the two cultures, and that he warns of difficulties in the reconstruction endeavour. He then identifies the underlying presuppositions of both the African and Western cultures.

Chapter 3 discusses Van der Walt's articulation of the impact of the world view clash between African and Western cultures on African society. This impact is felt in the socio-economic-political and educational environment. He considers the Western derogatory approach towards African culture and African reactions towards it. Van der Walt rejects especially ethnocentric approaches to African culture and also the African ethnocentric reaction.

In chapter 4, the fundamentals of Van der Walt's third way is enunciated. He notes that his views are founded on Scripture, acknowledgement of sin and redemption through Christ, the sustaining nature of God's grace and the recognition of trans-cultural dialogue and non-reductionists ontology.

Chapter 5 critically analyses Van der Walt third way. Major strengths and weaknesses of Van der Walt third way are identified. Solutions to Van der Walt's weak points are recommended for his consideration.

Finally, chapter 6 articulates that Van der Walt's third way aimed to prevent any future damage to African culture as it counters a reductionist ontology prevalent in shaping Africa by propagating a non-reductionist ontology. This ensures that Africa's problem of a false dilemma, divided soul, and negative ethnocentrism is resolved.

Key words: World view, African culture, Western culture, Reformational world view/philosophy, BJ van der Walt

Opsomming

Hierdie navorsing ondersoek Bennie van der Walt se derde weg as die oplossing vir die "verdeelde siel" van die Afrikaan – 'n verdeelde sien wat 'n valse dilemma veroorsaak. Hierdie verdeling is die gevolg van politieke kolonialisme en neo-kolonialisme, wat 'n negatiewe impak op die sosio-ekonomiese en politiese strukture in Afrika gehad het. Die mite van die superioriteit van die Westerse kultuur het hierdie swakheid gepropageer.

Van der Walt se verheldering van die konsepte van 'n wêreldbeskouing en kultuur word in hoofstuk 1 aangespreek. Hy stoei met die kompleksiteit van kultuur en wêreldbeskouing en toon aan dat wêreldbeskouing diep religieus en voorwetenskaplik is en kultuur vorm. Hy wys ook hoe geloof, wêreldbeskouing en kultuur met mekaar verbind is.

In hoofstuk 2 word Van der Walt se vergelyking en evaluering van die Afrikaan en Westerse kulture en hulle wêreldbeskouinge geherkonstrueer. Die bespreking wys uit dat Van der Walt fundamentele verskille tussen die twee kulture raaksien, en dat hy waarsku dat daar probleme kan opduik met die herkonstruksieproses. Hy identifiseer gevolglik die onderliggende voorveronderstellings van beide die Afrikaan en Westerse kulture.

Hoofstuk 3 bespreek Van der Walt se verwoording van die impak wat die botsing tussen die wêreldbeskouinge van die Afrikaan en Westerse kulture het op die Afrika samelewing. Die impak daarvan is voelbaar in die sosio-ekonomiese, politiese en onderwysomgewings. Hy oorweeg die Westerse neerhalende benadering tot Afrikakultuur en die Afrikaan-reaksie daarop. Van der Walt verwerp veral etnosentriese benaderings tot Afrikaankultuur en die Afrikaan etnosentriese reaksie.

In hoofstuk 4 word die basiese beginsels van Van der Walt se derde weg uitgespel. Hy stel dat sy sieninge gefundeer is op die Skrif, die erkenning van sonde en verlossing deur Christus, die ondersteunende aard van God se genade en die erkenning van trans-kulturele dialoog en nie-reduksionistiese ontologie.

Hoofstuk 5 bied 'n kritiese analise van Van der Walt se derde weg. Die belangrikste sterkpunte en swakpunte van Van der Walt se derde weg word geïdentifiseer. Oplossings word aangebied om hierdie swakpunte aan te spreek vir Van der Walt se oorweging.

Ten slotte bewoord hoofstuk 6 die feit dat Van der Walt se derde weg gepoog het om enige toekomstige skade aan Afrikakultuur te verhoed, aangesien dit 'n reduksionistiese ontologie wat betrokke is by die vorming van Afrika teenstaan deur 'n nie-reduksionistiese ontologie aan te bied. Dit verseker dat Afrika se probleem van 'n valse dilemma, 'n verdeelde siel, en negatiewe etnosentrisme opgelos word.

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Introduction

1. Orientation and background

Postcolonial Africa still lives with the reality of political colonialism and neo-colonialism. The destruction of the political, social, economic and educational structures of the African people with their deep roots in African history and culture[1] by the forcible imposition of alien structures rooted in an alien culture, is as much a reality in Africa as the air we breathe (Fowler, 1995:12–23; Bediako, 1995:6).

The functioning institutions of today's Africa, namely state, church, school, university, news media and commerce are all modelled on Western culture with the associated world views[2], and are controlled by a small group who have adopted Western cultural patterns of life with only remnants of African culture (Fowler, 1995:42–48). In the urban areas especially, the trend to adopt Western cultural patterns of life is accelerating as younger generations see this as the pattern of a developed society and the key to the good life.

On the one hand, at the grassroots level, people retain much of their traditional African cultural values and world view, but they lack relevant functional social structures to support these. On the other hand, they at the same time tend to adopt Western cultural patterns seen as the pattern of a developed society and the key to a good life (Van der Walt, 2006:6-8; Fowler, 1995:42–48). The result is what might aptly be called a "divided soul", which represents what is most probably a false dichotomy, which leads one to consider the possible existence of a third alternative.

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[1] Reference to African culture and world view in singular rather than plural: Though it is absurd to generalise about Africans and even African cultures, some common religio-cultural motifs in Africa still remain that warrants us to think of the African culture and world view (Rajuili, 2008:78-79). The research is more about those common religio-cultural motifs than specific African cultures and world views.
Van der Walt and many of the other thinkers that I quote do generalise, and I think this is probably a dangerous thing to do in an academic environment. However, regarding my reference to African or Western culture and world view, what I have in mind is the general world view that can be discerned among ordinary Africans and Europeans, as well as the way in which these world views are manifested in popular and academic writing.

[2] World view as used in this research is the same as worldview or world-view.

What propagates Westernisation in Africa is the notion that Western culture, with its associated world views, is superior in every respect to African culture and world view. Being part of the modern, "developed" world means abandoning African cultural values in favour of Western cultural values (Van der Walt, 2006:6-9). According to this view, Africans have only two choices, and these are the two horns of the false dilemma:

- Retain a unique African cultural identity to develop a society that can only be a primitive backwater in today's world.
- Abandon all traces of African culture, other than some distinctive forms of art, music and styles of dress, to embrace wholeheartedly the cultural values of modern Western societies so as to remain in the mainstream of today's global society.

BJ van der Walt, in his numerous publications provides an important alternative (he calls it a third way), which he has refined over the years. Van der Walt's account is chosen because he has a prominent position within reformational philosophy worldwide, especially as an expert on African thinking and as someone with deep roots in Africa. This alternative is based on a Christian "reformational" approach. Other than secular alternatives or a dualistic synthesis between Christian and secular approaches, the reformational approach tries to give an integral Christian perspective on reality. This means that all of reality is seen as being in need of salvation and a turn towards what God intends it to be. At the core of this alternative is a challenge, on the one hand, of the Western belief in an autonomous human rationality that shapes human life for good and, on the other hand, of the African belief in an immanent spirit world, likewise shaping human life. Van der Walt aims to offer a critical analysis of both cultures in the light of the Word of God as it is revealed in creation, in Christ and testified to in Scripture (Van der Walt, 2008:1-48, 60; Fowler, 1985:1-12). He articulates this alternative by using the views of man, society and culture developed in reformational thinking to evaluate African culture and the African world view (Dooyeweerd, 1957:157-190; Van der Walt, 2010:9-16). The aim of this research is to critically evaluate B.J. van der Walt's works, taking into account the development of his thinking as expounded in his publications.

2. Research question

The main problem that this study deals with is the question whether B.J. van der Walt's third way provides an effective basis for reuniting the "divided soul" of the African people. This problem centres on the possibility of reforming the traditional African cultural values and world view to give an idea-framework that supports functional and authentic African social structures for Africans in the Africa of today. If this reform is possible, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this third way and how might it be further developed for greater effectiveness? If not, what is the way forward?

3. Fundamental approach

The study is based on what is commonly known as a reformational approach. While there are variations on this approach in practice, the fundamental characteristic is the claim that all of life is religious, whether expressed in terms of a formal religion, or implicit in the patterns of living. In itself, this is not uniquely Christian (e.g. Wentz, 1987; Nord & Haynes, 1998) but as a framework for Christian theoretical endeavour, a reformational approach recognises that the expression of the Christian religion cannot be confined to a "religious area" of human life, but should shape every area of human activity.

As applied to this study, it recognises the validity of cultural diversity while subjecting every culture to critical analysis in light of the Word of God, revealed in all creation, in Scripture as the normative revelation for human living, and supremely in the person of Christ, the living Word who became one of us (Dooyeweerd, 1953:52-68, Wolters, 1985:10-31, Naugle, 2002:4-42).

4. Sub-problems

The following sub-questions are investigated in an attempt to answer the overarching question:

- What is Van der Walt's definition and view of the relationship between "world view" and "culture" and the impact of these concepts on daily life? The

examination of this question will include a reconnaissance of and comparison between Van der Walt and other thinkers on the concepts of "world view" and "culture".

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the work of BJ van der Walt as evidenced in his most recent works in relation to:
  - o His view of the relationship between world view and culture and their impact on society?
  - o His view of the fundamental differences between the traditional African world view and culture and Western world view and culture?
  - o His view of the impact of the clash of African and Western cultures with their divergent world views on all areas of African societies?
  - o What is needed for the further development of the approach developed by BJ van der Walt, or alternatively, to develop another approach to the main problem addressed in this study?
- How does Van der Walt develop his third way alternative in his recent publications?
- How is the contribution made by Van der Walt's third way critically evaluated to provide what is needed for the development of an authentic African society in today's global context?
- In light of the critical evaluation of Van der Walt's third way, how will reference to other sources help to strengthen it and where appropriate help him to modify it?

5. Research objectives

The following research objectives result from the sub-questions:

- To clarify and evaluate Van der Walt's concepts of "world view" and "culture", the relationship between the two and their importance in today's world;
- To analyse Van der Walt's view of the fundamental differences between the traditional African world view and culture, and Western world view and culture;
- To consider Van der Walt's view of the contemporary impact on all areas of African societies of the clash between African and Western cultures with their associated/divergent world views;

- To trace the development of the alternative "third way" presented by BJ van der Walt as evidenced in his publications;
- To critically evaluate the contribution that BJ van der Walt's "third way" makes to the development of an authentic African society in today's global context, with special attention to his most recent works;
- In light of this evaluation, reference to other sources are provided to strengthen BJ van der Walt's third way by incorporating modifications where appropriate to strengthen it.

6. Method of investigation

This is a comparative study between BJ van der Walt's writings and those of other reformational scholars such as Donovan, Dooyeweerd, Kuyper, Naugle, Plantinga, Skillen, Wolters, as well as leading African scholars on the subject. The African scholars include Bediako, Mbiti, Turaki, Mugambi, Masolo and Dalfovo. As a philosophical study the argument concentrates on the underlying or transcendental ideas about the structure of culture and society. This includes issues of unity and diversity; the world that is experienced with the senses, the spiritual world and the relationship between the two.

Since this study in total consists of a literary study it constitutes what is described in some circles as a qualitative study with no ethical consequences for the people studied, since everything that is evaluated is traceable to some form of publication.

7. Contribution of the study

- The study attempts to identify the idea-contribution of BJ van der Walt to the prevention of future damage to African culture.
- The study also stimulates the need for a critical look at all structures of today's African societies to encourage an effective participation by Christians that will promote development appropriate for today's world, while countering the secularisation due to Western influence.

8. Research chapters

Chapter 1.   Clarifying the conceptions of "world view" and "culture" and the relation between them in the thinking of BJ van der Walt.

Chapter 2.   BJ van der Walt's comparison and evaluation of African and Western cultures.

Chapter 3.   Van der Walt's account of the world view clash between African and Western cultures.

Chapter 4.   The development and exposition of B.J. van der Walt's alternative.

Chapter 5.   A critical look at B.J. van der Walt's alternative.

Chapter 6.   A look at the future.

Chapter 1: "World view" and "culture": Concept clarification in the thinking of BJ van der Walt

This section includes three broad sections namely: world view, culture and the relationship between them as identified in section 5 (1) of the research objectives. The world view sub-section looks at how Van der Walt views the nature, definitions and historical survey of world view, and this is compared with other relevant scholarly contributions to establish what may be lacking in Van der Walt's contribution. The culture sub-section looks at Van der Walt's appreciation of the complexity of the concept culture, his complete analysis of culture and the attempted philosophy of culture. The final sub-section deals with how he relates religion, world view and culture. We begin with an overview of his understanding of the concept world view.

1.1 An overview of Van der Walt's understanding of the concept world view

1.1.1 Definition of world view

Van der Walt (2008:58-60) defines a world view as "the network/framework of confessional convictions which determines how one understands and experiences reality". He asserts that a world view is seen as real and of great importance by its exponent. For instance, a traditional African person views the spiritual as real and very important, and for the secular naturalist, the material (which is real) is very important.

As will be seen later, Van der Walt's usage of confessional convictions in defining world view may pose a challenge when a distinction is sought between a confessional and real world view.
A few examples of how other scholars define world view may be compared with Van der Walt:

Al Wolters (1985:2) sees a world view as "the comprehensive framework of one's basic beliefs about things" or "the comprehensive framework of one's basic convictions on matters".

Sire (1988:17), in turn, sees it as "a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or unconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of the world".

Colson and Pearcey (1999:14) define it as "a sum total of our beliefs about the world, the big picture that directs our daily decisions and actions".

Van der Walt concurs with Al Wolters that a world view is a framework. Al Wolters adds that this framework is comprehensive. While Van der Walt looks at a world view as confessional convictions, Sire looks at it as "a set of presuppositions" and Colson and Pearcey as "a sum total of our beliefs". We gather that these beliefs could be confessed or remain unconfessed, but nevertheless, they impact one's life.

Finally, Naugle's more technical definition as compared to Van der Walt, looks at a world view "as a semiotic phenomenon, especially as a system of narrative signs that establishes a powerful framework within which people think (reason), interpret (hermeneutics) and know (epistemology)". Naugle interestingly connects a world view with signs that aid reality interpretation by providing an over-arching framework for life. He sees it as an inescapable function of the human heart and the core of the human identity (Naugle, 2002:xix).

From what is stated above by Van der Walt and other scholars, certain terms and phrases guide us in developing a working definition of a world view. These include comprehensive framework, basic/fundamental, beliefs/convictions, set of presuppositions, world/reality, interpretation and knowledge. We may therefore look at a world view as a comprehensive framework of basic beliefs, convictions or presuppositions through which reality is perceived, understood and interpreted.

With this definition of the concept world view in mind, we can now look at how Van der Walt considers its nature and characteristics.

1.1.2 The nature and characteristics of a world view

Van der Walt looks at a world view as something religious. In this regard he observes that "a worldview takes possession of one's heart – the centre of one's existence," and this deeply religious source of a person's life, namely to obey either God or an idol, directs everything that the person does. Proverbs 4:23 refers to this as the wellspring of life (Van der Walt, 2008:10). We may need to ask whether Van der Walt does not reverse the order of reality by asserting that a world view takes possession of the heart. Does a world view take possession of a person's heart, or does the heart, the centre of one's existence, take the possession of a world view? Does Van der Walt not relegate religion a sub-part of a world view by making this assertion? What is the relationship between religion and world view? The discussion will for now not delve into this until we see how Van der Walt relates world view, religion and culture. This issue will be revisited in chapter five, where a fair criticism of Van der Walt will be attempted

Having said that, it may not be premature to acknowledge the crucial matter Van der Walt notes here. He asserts that every human being serves God or an idol, treats nature in the way the worship of God or the idol influences or guides, and looks like the God or the idol served. He also notes that a world view usually contains a specific opinion on time — the past, present and future. In each society a specific idea of time is respected, for instance, a conservative society turns its gaze to the past, a status quo society to the present and the progressive society to the future (Van der Walt, 2008:64-65).

In expounding the powerful nature of a world view that is echoed by Van der Walt (2008:10, 61-63), Abraham Kuyper notes that just as the root that supports a tree is underground, "so truly does a principle hide under every manifestation of life". He goes on to say that "these principles are interconnected, and have their common root in a fundamental principle". From this principle is "developed logically and systematically the whole complex of ruling ideas and conceptions" that make up "our life and world view" (Kuyper, 2007:189-190).

In addition to this Van der Walt (2008:43-44) points to the undetected nature of a world view. He sees a world view as tainted glasses through which reality is interpreted. For instance, he asserts that in reading and hearing from Scriptures people rarely notice that they read and hear it from the perspective of their world view. For this reason he calls on Christians to first of all allow the Scriptures to criticise and clean their world view before this same world view attempts to understand Scriptures. He brings our attention to what some scholars refer to as the dialogical process of hermeneutics — a hermeneutic spiral between the interpreter and the text. Van der Walt asserts that our keenness to understand our pre-understanding — fore-beliefs and fore-conceptions — is a way of transforming our world views. He goes on to explain that the more we become aware of our world views, the more we are unlikely to force them uncritically in the interpretation of reality.

Fowler (2007) also observes the undetected nature of world views. He states that a world view is the "unseen factor in human life" and the "unstated implicit beliefs about the world in which we live". These beliefs provide an unseen framework for the way the world really is (Fowler, 2007:1). Bartholomew and Goheen (2008: 25) and Roy Clouser (1991) agrees with Fowler's emphasis that our fundamental beliefs about the world and human life that underlie and shape all of our lives often remain below the level of consciousness, unarticulated and assumed. Roy Clouser puts it plain that they function like tectonic plates that lie beneath the surface, unseen and yet powerful in their effect.

He puts it this way:

> *"The enormous influence of beliefs remains, however hidden from casual view; its relation to the rest of life is like that of the great geological plates of the earth's surface to the continents and oceans. The movement of the plates is not apparent to a casual inspection of any particular landscape and can only be detected with great difficulty. Nevertheless, so vast are these plates, so stupendous their power, that their visible effects — mountain ranges, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions — are but tiny surface blemishes compared with the force of the mighty plates themselves" (Clouser, 1991:1).*

This agrees also with what James Osterhaus calls mental "maps" in "our unconscious storehouse", which are unconsciously consulted without us realising, and they condition our "perceptions, impressions, deductions and conclusions" about

reality. These, as Osterhause observes, are confused for reality itself (Osterhaus, 1996:75).

It can be argued that because of the undetected nature of world views, one can deduce that each person has a world view, hence denying that world views are a preserve for the academics (Van der Walt, 2008:10).

After establishing the basic nature of a world view, Van der Walt (2008:61-64) identifies what he sees as its most important characteristics. These characteristics help us to comprehend his perspective of a world view. They include the following considerations:

- Firstly, the comprehensiveness of a world view is implied in his definition. World views include among other things the idea of God (or idol), a view of creation, and the guidelines for human conduct in the world, as well as humanity, society and time.

- Secondly, a world view is foundational in nature. World views attempt to answer basic questions such as: Who am I? Where am I? What is wrong in reality? What is the remedy for it? Other concerns include: What happens at death? What is the significance of history? How does one know the right and the wrong? How is reliable knowledge attainable?

- Thirdly, a world view has illuminating power. This is a way of seeing/looking at the total reality, guiding and orienting one in understanding the world. Van der Walt asserts that a world view does not create the world, but helps one to understand the world and live in it.

- Fourthly, there is unity in a world view. This has to do with maintaining unity and harmony, and not accommodating a random selection of ideas. As a framework it coordinates interrelationship, seeks coherence and consistency.

- Fifthly, a world view is descriptive and prescriptive. A world view does not merely state what the world is like (descriptive), but points to what it should be like (what it ought to be – prescriptive). It is not just a picture of the world, but a guideline for life in the world. It has both a factual and a normative side. It is a standard according to which a judgement can be made to determine its goodness or

badness, rightness or wrongness, ugliness or beauty, orderliness or disorderliness.

- Sixthly, there is a human aspect to a world view. A world view is typically human. It is found in people and does not matter whether they are conscious or unconscious of it. It is adhered to individually, as well as collectively. Being a purely human product, it succumbs to all human weakness and therefore needs transformation.

As explained by Van der Walt, all humans have beliefs that are conditioned by their world views. This equally applies even to those who seemingly have little place for it, as shown by the statement of faith of American atheists:

> *"An atheist loves his fellow man instead of god. An atheist believes that heaven is something for which we should work now – here on earth for all men together to enjoy.*
> *An atheist believes that he can get no help through prayer but that he must find in himself the inner conviction and strength to meet life, to grapple with it, to subdue it, and enjoy it.*
> *An atheist believes that only in a knowledge of himself and a knowledge of his fellow man can he find the understanding that will help to a life of fulfillment.*
> *He seeks to know himself and his fellow man rather than to know a god.*
> *An atheist believes that a hospital should be built instead of a church. An atheist believes that a deed must be done instead of a prayer said. An atheist strives for involvement in life and not escape into death. He wants disease conquered, poverty vanquished, war eliminated. He wants man to understand and love man. He wants an ethical way of life.*
> *He believes that we cannot rely on a god or channel action into prayer nor hope for an end of troubles in a hereafter.*
> *He believes that we are our brother's keepers and are keepers of our own lives; that we are responsible persons and the job is here and the time is now" (www.atheists.org/atheism, 2011).*

Other characteristics include for instance the demanding nature of a world view. Whether adherents are conscious or not, a world view requires devotion and in most cases it arouses intense emotions. Some people will even fight for its survival, for it provides great stability and gives a sense of security, satisfaction, inner joy and peace (Walt, 2008:61-63).

A world view is pre-scientific in nature. It should not be confused with sciences like philosophy or theology and so on. It is pre-scientific or pre-theoretic. Van der Walt cautions that pre-scientific does not mean unscientific — a world view and science are two distinct ways of knowing and each exists in its own right. This means that its falsity, validity, goodness and so on cannot be proved by reasonable argument, because a world view influences one's reasonable arguments — one argues from a

world view and not towards it. Van der Walt cautions that even if the case is as above, scientific developments can also influence a world view. For this reason he alludes to the fact that the pre-scientific nature of a world view is concerned with the knowledge of the individual matters, while the scientific knowledge focuses especially on the general/universal (Van der Walt, 2008:61-63).

The effective power of a world view is yet another characteristic. A world view is a deep-rooted source for conduct. It contains a perspective on how the world should be changed. It has a transforming power, emphasising our calling in the world and our responsibility. Though it provides a definite image of reality, it is still fallible. However, in spite of this, for its adherent it is the truth and a matter of life and death. Finally, a world view is symbolic in nature. This usually takes the form of symbols that have a motivating, inspiring and limiting force for a certain group or community (Walt, 2008:63-64).

Building on what Van der Walt identifies with respect to the pre-scientific nature of a world view and its comprehensiveness, Al Wolters distinguishes theology, philosophy and world view and notes that theology and philosophy as academic disciplines are scientific and theoretical, whereas a world view is pre-scientific and non-theoretical. A world view is a matter of the shared everyday human experience, and "an inescapable component of all human knowing. It belongs to the order of cognition more basic than science and theory". A world view, theology and philosophy are alike in that they are all comprehensive in scope, but they are not alike since a world view is pre-scientific, whereas theology and philosophy are scientific (Wolters, 1985:8-9).

Fowler acknowledges that it is possible to formulate statements about one's world view, but that these may not necessarily match our real world view. Our real world view is only revealed in our every-day life (Fowler, 2007:1). Van der Walt acknowledges what is established by Fowler, but does not seem to expand on the fact that we can formulate ideas about world views that do not match with our real world view. Fowler introduces what I think is a necessary distinction between a confessed world view and lived world view. His aptly warns that if we do not make

this distinction we will always be puzzled by why people make seemingly virtuous confessions but act contrary to them (Fowler, 2007:3).

For him many Christians see world views in terms of a "conceptual systems of beliefs" that govern our patterns of living in the world. He cautions that we should guard against this "serious world view distortion" and acknowledge that "the reality is much more complex" (Fowler, 2007:3).

The elusive nature of a world view indicated by Fowler as he distinguishes between the real and the confessed world view could strengthen Van der Walt's argument if he were to give it serious thought, as will be stipulated in chapter five. What still needs further investigation is whether Van der Walt notices the problem of viewing a world view as a conceptual system of beliefs, as opposed to being a condition of belief. This too will be revisited in chapter five. For now, let us focus our attention on how he views the complexity of a world view.

1.1.3 The complexity of a world view

Van der Walt affirms that a world view does not only originate in confessional convictions, many factors play a role in its formation. At this point one wonders whether he contradicts his own definition of world view as outlined above. He goes on to note that a world view is shaped by both internal factors such as "emotional life, personality type, intellectual development, gender" and so on, and external factors such as "certain tradition, education (by parents, school, college), the influence of friends and soul-mates, the current-social, political, economic and cultural circumstances and many more". In other words, he sees the origin of a world view as "a multi-dimensional network of influences" (Van der Walt, 2008:60-61). Van der Walt's view seems to agree with Kuyper's acknowledgement of the logical and systematic complexity of ruling ideas and conceptions that make up our world views (Kuyper, 2007:189-190). Moreover, Bartholomew and Goheen (2008:12-13) look at a world view as a complexity of ideas and sentiments, comprising beliefs and convictions about the nature of life and the world. They think that the emotional habits and tendencies based on these, together with a system of purposes, preferences, and principles that govern action, add up to give unity and meaning.

Van der Walt seems to view a world view from two different perspectives, from its core and from its surface. He leads us to view the core as that which conditions and its surface as what is conditioned. The core is the heart, the religious root of human existence (though as cautioned above, Van der Walt's own explanation tends to place a world view in the heart's position). To fully appreciate the complexity at the core of a world view, Van der Walt needs to consider what Fowler (2007) and Dooyeweerd (1984) stipulates. Dooyeweerd's attempt to shed light on what happens at the core is discussed later.

To conclude this section it may be good to note an issue that Van der Walt needs to be interrogated on: How does he relate a world view to the heart, to a conceptual belief system arising from cognitive activity, to concrete reality and to what is confessed and what is lived (confessed world view and real or lived world view)? The purpose of a later investigation will be to see what may be lacking in his understanding and to establish whether there is some incoherence in his analysis of their relations. This interrogation is included in chapter five. Let us consider Van der Walt's brief survey of the history of a world view.

1.1.4 A brief history of the concept world view

Van der Walt commends Naugle (2002), Al Wolters (1989:14-25) and Coletto (2007) for their invaluable contribution to our understanding of the origin and the development of the concept world view (Van der Walt, 2008:53). He refers his readers to these scholars for the history of the world view concept because his interest is not on the biography of the concept, but on the understanding of the concept itself. We may need to question Van der Walt's wisdom on this, because the concept is best appreciated if it is placed in its proper historical context.

He begins his survey by acknowledging that the concept world view is not of a Christian or biblical origin, but a product of Western secular philosophy (Van der Walt, 2008:53), thereby agreeing with Naugle (2002:58-59) that it originated from Immanuel Kant. Van der Walt acknowledges the coinage of *Weltanschauung* by Immanuel Kant and notes that with this Kant accentuates the power of the

perception of the human mind. From its coinage by Kant the word spread to the rest of Europe and the English world (Van der Walt, 2008:53).

Naugle (2002:55-66), unlike Van der Walt, not only looks at the philosophical survey of the concept world view, he also considers its philological history. He celebrates its dominance in German scholarship and laments its neglect in the English-speaking world, particularly in the discipline of philosophy. He notes that it is not purely neglected in the French and Latin scholarship. About the German *Weltanshauung* scholarship, Naugle details the seven influential scholars chronologically, noting the intensity of its scholarship ranging from the history of the word, the history and the theory of the concept (its problems, usage in the context of German idealism and romanticism, its relationship to ideology, philosophy and religion, its place in the German dictionaries, and so on).

Since Van der Walt only points to Kant's coinage of the term, but does not follow up on it, it is good to follow Naugle a little bit. Naugle points to Kant's argument that the human mind is capable of infinite thought because it has super-sensible power. This is because the idea of the *noumenon* that cannot be intuited underlies what is merely the appearance. By means of this power and idea Kant thinks that we can by pure intellectual estimation comprehend the infinite in the world of sense experience entirely (Naugle, 2002:58-59).

Naugle further states that Kant's usage of the term was not so significant. However, the Copernican revolution in philosophy emphasizes "the knowing and willing self as the cognitive and moral centre of the universe, created the conceptual space in which the notion of worldview could flourish" (Naugle, 2002:59).

Van der Walt notes that though other philosophers of the nineteenth century, such as Hegel and Kierkegaard, are important with respect to the development of the world view concept, he credits Dilthey as the father of the concept because Dilthey developed it into a complete doctrine (*Weltanshauungslehre).*

Commenting on Kierkegaard, who is mentioned by Van der Walt, Bartholomew and Goheen, Van der Walt observes the fundamental distinction the Danish Christian

philosopher Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) makes between the concept of world view in its new form and the ancient discipline of philosophy. He looked at philosophy as an objective discipline and world view as a pure set of beliefs (Bartholomew & Goheen, 2008:12). This transition to relativism is confirmed by Van der Walt. Commenting on the overview of *Weltanshauung* development, Van der Walt observes Naugle's remark that Dilthey perceives world views as "culturally and time-bound phenomena" and that "his historicism made him look at world views as totally relative phenomena". Van der Walt further hints at Naugle's observation that Dilthey's perspective of world views unsuccessfully attempts a mid-ground "between metaphysical absolutism (that world views are universally and timelessly applicable) and historicist relativism and scepticism" (Van der Walt, 2008:54). For this reason Van der Walt is of the idea that Naugle's overview brings into focus the transition from modernism (rationalism) to postmodernism (irrationalism), resulting "in a total transformation of the nature, character and concept of a world view" (Van der Walt, 2008:56).

From the above survey it is appropriate to note that both Naugle, as well as Bartholomew and Goheen, agree with Van der Walt in their general observations that there are some associations with the concept of world view that should be affirmed and others that should be rejected. For instance, they seem to assert that it is good to agree with Schelling that a world view is "a comprehensive and cohesive understanding of the world and one's place in it". It is also in order to affirm Dilthey's insight that one's fundamental beliefs about the world give shape into thoughts and actions and thus provide a sense of life's unity and meaning. They also affirm Kierkegaard's insistence that a world view is intimate and experiential, and that it transforms one's life.

However, in search of a biblical understanding of a world view, they affirm that Kant's rationalist notion that a world view has its foundation in autonomous human reason should be rejected. They also caution against "Dilthey's relativism and historicism", which imply that world views arise from time to time and place to place as a product of historical factors. For this reason we should emphasise that though historical circumstances undoubtedly shape a world view, we live under the radical claim of

the gospel that is true for all times and peoples (Bartholomew & Goheen, 2008:13-14; Van der Walt, 2008:53-56; Naugle, 2002:55-67).

So far, in an attempt to clarify the concept world view, we have established how Van der Walt views its definition, nature and historical survey. The focus at this stage is to place his work in the context of other works to offer a fair criticism of his thought.

1.2   World view impact: Justification of Van der Walt's assertions

1.2.1   Examples from secular Western philosophy

Two observations about world views by Van der Walt should be justified by a few examples from Western philosophy. These are, firstly, Van der Walt's assertion of the tendency to think of certain things as real and of great importance. For instance, the traditional African thinks of spiritualism as real and important, just like materialism for the secular naturalists (Van der Walt, 2008:58-60). Secondly, Van der Walt's (2008:43-44) assertion that a world view can be seen as tinted glasses through which reality is interpreted.

From Van der Walt's observations (and what is cited from other scholars) we can infer that the world view concept is not something new, it has existed from the time of the creation of human life on earth. Possibly the only thing that is new is the interest in it in recent times by philosophers and other scholars, resulting in its appearance in dictionaries. We should caution that the world view concept is not something outside there for those who have an interest in it, it is — as Van der Walt observes — a fact of life for all. Besides, we should not handle it as though it is all that is analysed and articulated. It is good to appreciate that what is articulated may be the product of the unarticulated, perhaps undetected.

Plato for instance grounds all his works in what can now be viewed as a world view perspective that takes for granted that the world of appearance is somehow defective and full of error. Plato's world view sees a more real and perfect realm as that which exists in the eternal, changeless forms that are paradigmatic for the

structure and character of our world that exists (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2014**)**.

Going by Van der Walt's view that our world view presents certain things as real and of great importance, we have established what Plato regarded not only as real and of great importance, but also as true and perfect expression of reality. We wonder whether he noticed that he came to this as a result of his world view (what Van der Walt pictures as tinted glasses). What Plato presented as the true and perfect expression of reality has drastically shaped Western philosophy, education, and by extension Western Christianity. Van der Walt thinks that this has also shaped Africa because it has been imported to Africa (Van der Walt, 2001:93-125; 2002:526-603; 2006:47-118).

We need to contrast Plato's world view with the world view of Aristotle his student (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2014). Plato's philosophy, anchored in his unarticulated and possibly undetected world view, conceives the world of our senses as intrinsically unreliable. Aristotle, in sharp contrast to Plato, sees the world of our senses as most important and makes it the basis for his philosophy. Aristotle was convinced that "our perceptual and cognitive faculties are basically dependable". These for the most part place us "into direct contact with the features and divisions" of our world of sense and should not be treated with suspicion as we engage in philosophy.

Taking a leap forward to the modern world, we see what is regarded as important by Positivism as championed by the French philosopher, August Comte (1975:21-22). Comte regards as "a grand basic law" that "each branch of our knowledge, passed successfully through three distinct theoretical stages: the theological, or fictitious stage; the metaphysical, or abstract stage; the scientific, or positive stage". Comte believed that it was in the positive stage that the human spirit recognised the impossibility and the uselessness of obtaining absolute notions. The human spirit devotes itself solely to discover by the use of combined reasoning and observation. He regards these as the actual laws, that is, the invariable relations of succession and similarity.

Jean Piaget and Rolando Garcia's (2011:281) contrast of the Aristotelian and Chinese Physics (in roughly the same era as Aristotle) help to illustrate Van der Walt's observation that world views are sometimes undetected, but affect the way we view reality. Piaget and Garcia make important observations with regard to Aristotle and Chinese physics. They claim the design of the Aristotelian world was completely static. "Rest" was conceived of the "natural state" of the objects of the world of senses. Any motion was considered as a violence that was exerted on the object. Movement for that matter was a consequence of a force exerted on an object, and as soon as the force was not operational, the object would return to its natural state of rest. It is natural from this perception that, "the principle of inertia becomes inconceivable".

But, even in the same era the case was different for the Chinese. For them the world was in constant movement. "Movement, the continuous flow, was the natural state of all things in the universe" and therefore needed not to be explained. It was only the change in movement, and in particular rest, that needed explanation. "If there is no force exerted on an object, the latter continues its movement without change" (Piaget & Garcia, 2011:281).

How then would two different world views emanating from the same era lead to two different physics outlooks? Van der Walt would agree with Piaget and Garcia that this may not be merely a matter of methodological difference or difference in the design of science, but rather a matter of ideological difference (Piaget & Garcia 2011:281). Even when we apply this to the Newtonian revolution in science, Piaget and Garcia would argue that it was not just a matter of the employment of more empirical data, but a change in world view (Piaget & Garcia 2011:278-279).

The insights presented by Van der Walt and developed by other cited scholars lead us to conclude that world view is complex and that due attention is needed to help us uncover what drives our assumptions. Indeed, we may wonder whether the German philosophers who liberally use the term *Weltanschauungen* would acknowledge the world views (Van der Walt's tinted glasses) that provided the foundation of their own work. Van der Walt's assertions on world view must inspire us to ask how this also affects Christian thinking or assumptions, let us explore this.

1.2.2 Examples from Christian thinking

If we agree with Van der Walt that the establishment of a foundation for philosophy, education, or even a particular Christian tradition, is important, we then have to investigate the works of Christian scholars and philosophers in this regard. To help us in this, we can observe the interrogation of Naugle and Bartholomew, and Goheen of James Orr (1844-1913) and Abraham Kuyper. Orr and Kuyper established that it is the post-Enlightenment culture that dominated what the West offered. They felt that a mere piecemeal response "to a worldview inimical to Christianity was not good enough". Christians are supposed to articulate a "Christ-centred worldview implicit in the biblical story" to combat the anti-supernatural bases of the modernist world views. What was important to the Modernists (as Van der Walt would suggest) was naturalism, hence their anti-supernaturalism. On the basis of what is important to both Christians and Modernists, Orr and Kuyper saw "two life systems (modernism and Christianity)" as wrestling with one another in mortal combat. In this power struggle they thought that it was the comprehensive biblical world view that would stand against its opponent. Modernism was an all-embracing life system/world view that assailed Christianity, and this called for a life system of equal "comprehensive and far-reaching power" (Bartholomew & Goheen, 2008: 14-15; Naugle, 2002:5-24).

Batholomew and Goheen present the contemporary Catholic philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre's view that thinking is affected by some traditions, or is "traditioned". In doing this they concur with Van der Walt that thinking is affected or "traditioned" by what may be viewed as important and even real. Alternatively, Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff asserts the "legitimacy of a Christian starting point in theorising", as observed by Naugle, as well as Bartholomew and Goheen. This assert what Van der Walt establishes as real and most important for Christians (Bartholomew & Goheen, 2008:15-16). Van der Walt (2008:99-124) concurs with Bartholomew and Goheen that the Kuyperian "Neo-Calvinism" world view provides three main aspects as starting point that is vital for Christians. This is stipulated as follows:

- In and through God's redemption in Christ, grace restores nature. Grace is like

- ° medicine that restores health to a sick body. Christ's work of salvation is
- ° aimed at the creation as a whole to renew it to the goal that God
- ° always has in mind for it.
- God is sovereign and orders all of reality by his law and word.
- The cultural mandate given in Genesis 1:26-28 (to exercise royal stewardship
  - ° over creation) has ongoing relevance: God calls humankind to develop his
  - ° creation through history, to his glory (Bartholomew & Goheen , 2008:16).

Now that Van der Walt's concept of world view is clarified in view of its nature, definition, history and impact/appropriation, it is good to turn our attention to his view of culture and see how it relates to world view.

1.3   Van der Walt's overview of the concept of culture

1.3.1 The complexity of the concept

The word "culture" originally referred to the cultivation of land for the growing of crops and nurturing animals. More recently, it has been included the definition "the ideas, customs and social behaviour of a particular people or society" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011).

Van der Walt observes the unfortunate, but popular way of understanding culture: He notes that it is mistaken as something apart and separate from life, as something people do or an event attended to by people. It is also mistaken as a commodity that people can import, export or imprison in "museums, art galleries and opera houses". He poses an important question: Is an African drum just there for mere gazing? Isn't it for dancing and celebrating religious beliefs - a philosophy of life? Culture for him is something living and dynamic (Van der Walt, 1997:7).

Van der Walt sees culture as not only living, but rich and complex. "It includes habits, customs, social organisations, techniques, language, values, norms, ideas, beliefs and much more". He sees culture as a secondary environment that the human person creates out of God's original creation (Van der Walt, 1997:8). He briefly defines culture "as the way in which human beings shape their natural and human

environment". Similarly, Hiebert (1985:30) sees systems of ideas, feelings, values and their associated behaviour as components of culture. Van der Walt acknowledges that these components are shared by a group of people and they regulate what they think, feel and do.

Lundin confirms what Van der Walt notes, namely that a culture is a complex concept, when he says it "is one of the most complicated words in the English language" (Lundin, 1993:3). He further notes that it is used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and incompatible systems of thought. The complicated history of the modern usage of the word *culture* gives evidence of "a complex argument about the relations between general human development and a particular way of life, and between both the works and practices of art and intelligence" (Lundin, 1993:76-77).

In underscoring the complexity of culture, Dolfovo refers to A.L. Lowell and Johann Gottfried von Herder to amplify what Van der Walt says. Dalfovo asserts that nothing is more evasive, emotive and indeterminate than culture, especially when it comes to defining it and understanding its nature. Culture cannot be effectively analysed because its components are numberless, and it cannot be properly described because it is changeable. Trying to grasp the significance of culture "is like trying to seize the air in the hand, when one finds that it is everywhere except within one's grasp" (Dalfovo, 2005:94).

Though the situation is as stipulated above, Dalfovo strongly asserts that there is a need for a clarification of the concept culture as part of the initial "supposition of terms" basic to any philosophical endeavour. Philosophy cannot proceed to any elaboration on culture — ontological, epistemological, ethical or otherwise, until it has clarified the meaning of the concept it intends to elaborate upon. The evasiveness and unclarity of such an important term as culture that co-extends to cover, practically, the entire span of human existence, poses a unique problem to philosophy. Scholars have to take this up as philosophy cannot exclude any aspect of existence from its critical consideration (Dalfovo, 2005:94-95).

Could anthropological insights be helpful in understanding culture?

1.3.2 Anthropological insights

To fully boost Van der Walt's perspective on culture, it is good to ask whether anthropological gains could aid his philosophy to resolve issues of cultural dilemma. Since this will feature prominently in chapter two's consideration of Van der Walt's evaluation of the African and Western cultures, it may be appropriate to give it some attention at this stage. We note that Van der Walt (2006:190-195) has consulted Hiebert on anthropological insights and it is therefore important to look at Hiebert's views to better understand Van der Walt.

Hiebert (1985) notes that anthropologists have wrestled with the complexity of the concept of culture. The birth of cultural anthropology, within which culture is given considerable attention, has taken a complex journey. To begin with, theories of cultural evolution dominated the field of anthropology, where the meaning of human experience was sought in terms of history and explained in purely naturalistic terms. Culture in this sense was seen as a single human creation in various stages of development in different contexts. Societies were thought to develop from "simple to complex organizations, from irrational to rational, and from magic to religion and finally to science" (Hiebert, 1985:20).

This theory of cultural evolution was questioned in the wake of World War I because the optimism about human progress was shattered by the horrors of the war. Besides, it became clear from research that the so-called primitive cultures are as rational and complex as the modern ones (Hiebert, 1985:20).

Further development was seen in the 1930s. Hiebert shares that cultural evolution was during this time largely replaced by structural functional theories that focused on the diversity in human societies, seeing them as "self-contained integrated, systems". These were thought to have had "many cultural traits, all of which contributed to the survival of the society as whole". Such insights led to our appreciation of social structures and the dynamics of sociological change, but the extreme of this led to determinism, leading to a tendency to overlook the human person as a thinking and acting being. In doing this, human thought was explained in

terms of social organisation, hence relativizing all systems of belief, religions and the body of science (Hiebert, 1985:20).

The rejection of theories of cultural evolution saw the birth of cultural anthropology, which focused its attention "upon systems of ideas and symbols". Culture was seen now not as "merely the aggregates of human thought and behaviour, but as both the systems of beliefs that lie behind specific ideas and actions and the symbols by which those ideas and actions are expressed" (Hiebert, 1985:21).

In this regard anthropologists have in the recent past focussed their attention on the fundamental assumptions that underlie cultural beliefs. Each culture is seen to have an underlying world view, meaning that a culture cannot be understood if its world view has not been clearly established. It is not only the explicit symbols in a culture that should receive attention, but the implicit beliefs as well (Hiebert, 1985:21).

Irrespective of the complexity of culture, we appreciate the fact that we have a place to begin to somehow understand culture. We acknowledge, as Hiebert notes, the contributions from anthropologists in the sense that we can now utilize their different theories to deal with specific aspects of human life. In addition we may be aided by linguistics to examine the structure of language and psychology for a study of human personalities and their relationships to cultures and change, and so on (Hiebert, 1985:21).

As much as that may be, Van der Walt warns of the limitations of anthropological studies. For instance, in the case of resolving the cultural dilemma he insists that these studies focus on the "so-called rationality of the 'primitive' thought." He alludes that this thinking ascribes to Western thought a different rationality to that of the primal thought, thus justifying the superiority of the Western thought. Since this will be re-visited in chapter two and three, it is enough to just mention it here. The next section shows the cultural interest in the field of philosophy, a field that is also the distinctive interest of Van der Walt.

1.3.3 Philosophy of culture

As stated above, the study of culture has traditionally been the province of cultural anthropology. However, in recent years there has been an increasing interest in culture by philosophers for "a culture is the way of life of a society", as Van der Walt reminds us (Van der Walt, 1997:7-8). Having said this, it is clear that there is no such thing as a universal culture. This may be demonstrated by Donovan's learning experience of the African cultural values, foreign in what would be thought of as standard culture — the Western culture (Donovan 1978, 142-143). It is also well illustrated in Reynolds' account of a cultural clash between Europeans and the Australian Aborigines (Reynolds, 2006:73–75). The two have demonstrated that cultures different from our own may not be appreciated unless we make a deliberate effort to live *within* them.

Richard Rorty (1991:13-14) says that acculturation makes "certain options live, or momentous, or forced, while leaving others dead, or trivial, or optional" and that the attempt to transcend our acculturation if our culture contains "splits which supply toeholds for new initiatives", without which there is no such hope. If we succeed in this, we overcome the monolithic tendencies and appreciate a plurality of cultures, thus becoming more willing to listen to neighbouring cultures. This makes the task of both anthropologists and philosophers difficult if they are to do justice to the diversity of world cultures. For this reason, this section introduces two scholars, A.T. Dalfovo and D. L. Roper, to help integrate what Van der Walt discusses on culture.

1.3.3.1   A.T. Dalfovo

Dalfovo maintains that philosophy cannot proceed to any elaboration of a term until it has clarified the meaning of the concept it intends to elaborate upon (Dalfovo, 2005:94). Understanding the concept of culture is crucial to proceeding with any philosophical reasoning, and yet there are difficulties involved due to the evasive nature of the cultural concept.

Dalfovo is clear that in a philosophical exercise, the term culture ought to be "accepted as the echo of human life both past and present". This calls for openness,

sensitivity and understanding of the rise of the multicultural situations of contemporary society. In an attempt to clarify one's understanding of culture, it is good to bear in mind that others may have a different understanding of it, for it is not understood in the same way everywhere (Dalfovo, 2005:94–95).

Dalfovo perceives culture as having both external and internal aspects. The external or outer aspect or "body" of culture refers to a community's heritage that is outwardly and easily perceived. "This consists of the entire set of material artefacts and distinct forms of behaviour related to fundamental aspects in life (birth, marriage, death)". It also consists of "family relationships, the exercise of government, contracts, work, hunting, fishing, war and to other organized aspects developed by a society" that is transmitted from generation to generation (Dalfovo, 2005:101).

He sees the inner aspect as the "mind" or "soul" of a culture. It is the collective mental and spiritual heritage, bearing "systems of symbols, ideas, beliefs, aesthetic perceptions, values, and the like". Like the outer aspect, a community generates the inner aspect as it engages the life-condition. It is likewise transmitted from generation to generation. Dalfovo describes the inner aspect as "a mentality or world-view" or "the essential nucleus of ideas and values" as he notes from Kluckhohn and Kroeber (Dalfovo, 2005:101).

 The cultural ethos is anchored in this "soul" of a culture understood as the integral principle present in a culture by which "the cultural material is collected and transferred into coherent models according to definite inner needs developed together with the group". It is no wonder that Dalfovo maintains that a good number of people "see a link between the inner aspect of culture and the weltanschauung" meaning that the inner aspect is concretely fulfilled in the external aspect of culture (Dalfovo, 2005:101).

There is a sense in which Dalfovo's analysis of the external and internal aspects of culture agree with Van der Walt's five layers of culture. In addition, Van der Walt's understanding of a world view as the soul of a culture ties in with Dalfovo's perspective of the "soul" of a culture (cf. Van der Walt, 2001:ii, 50-51).

Dalfovo sees the need for a philosophy of culture that recognises an understanding that cultures include more than the world of the senses. Nyasani is perhaps strongest in this when he says: "when culture is stripped of its moral and spiritual base, it is difficult to say whether there is any justification for designating it as culture anymore" (Nyasani, 1988:33).

Finally, Dalfovo and Nyasani (1988:37) see an integration of religion, world view, culture and philosophy. As will be seen later, Van der Walt attempts to describe their integration and relationship. But, it may be good to pay attention to Roper's philosophy of culture before addressing this matter.

1.3.3.2 *Roper*

D.L. Roper himself is not a philosopher, but a mathematician who interacts with different fields and who attempted to develop a philosophy of culture. He noted that we need to pay attention to why we have different cultural totalities and whether differences in cultural totalities imply cultural relativism. He also sought to know what characterizes differences of various cultural spheres and why some cultural totalities change and others not (Roper, 1979:9).

Roper observed that the current philosophy of culture is a development of modern philosophy. He observed that from the Renaissance the history of modern philosophy generates two major tendencies, one that is centred around the concern of understanding the laws of nature and the other on understanding man. He thinks that differences in perspectives of culture may be generated by these two major tendencies. Roper noted that the scientific development of Galileo and Newton that influenced Machiaveli, Grotius, Hobbes and Locke, did so on the strength of the laws of nature. This of course is contrary to G.B. Vico (1668- 1744), whose starting point was the creative freedom of the human person (Roper, 1979:9).

In the explanation of cultural plurality Roper sees two options, the first one (that can be identified with Kant, Hegel, Comte and Spencer) explains plurality in terms of historical movement towards a goal. The second one can be identified with the nineteenth century Historical School of Spengler, Dilthey, Toynbee and Levi-Strauss,

which sees cultural plurality and change in terms of different forms of life (Roper, 1979:9-10).

Both movements subscribe to modern historicism. Hegel, for instance, rejected eternal ideas, seeing "the whole of reality as a process of the unfolding of Absolute Spirit in a schema of Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis, moving toward a goal of self-unification". For Marx it was this "dialectical movement" in the economic basis of society that created a culture of the haves and the have-nots. The solution for Marx was a movement towards the state of a classless society. For Comte the law of three stages, the religious phase, the metaphysical phase and the scientific phase, accounts for the development of humanity from the most primitive stage to the developed humanity respectively (Roper, 1979:10).

Finally Roper observes that Comte's law of three stages and Spencer's law of growth and decay strongly influenced the development of "ethnology and cultural anthropology" toward the end of the nineteenth century (Roper, 1979:10). These must have influenced Frazer's systematic exploration of the mythology of the people of the world, together with "Levy-Bruhl's thesis of non-rationality of the primitive person". Van der Walt and other African Scholars argue that Levy-Bruhl's concept of non-rationality of the primitive persons became the basis for the Western view of the African culture, as will be seen later (Roper, 1979:10-11).

Having noted Roper's analysis of cultural philosophy, it is proper to turn our attention to how Van der Walt looks at culture. Some critical comments on Roper, and later Van der Walt, on the philosophy of culture, will follow at a later stage. After examining Van der Walt's discussion on culture, Roper's analysis of culture is employed to interrogate Van der Walt.

1.3.4 The concept of culture from Van der Walt's perspective

In the development of the relationship between culture and world view Van der Walt first distinguishes between religion, world view and culture. He deals with this mainly in his books *Afrocentric or Eurocentric: Our task in multicultural South Africa* (Van der Walt, 1997:7-10), *Transformed by the renewal of your mind: Shaping a biblical*

worldview and *A Christian perspective on scholarship* (Van der Walt, 2001:43-62), and *Understanding and rebuilding Africa: From desperation today to expectation for tomorrow* (Van der Walt, 2003:93-105). He points out that in philosophy, a crucial issue is how to approach "religion, world view and culture" and to give this substance in concrete reality (Van der Walt, 2001:43; 1997:9-10). As shown and supported by the extensive research by Van der Walt, it is appropriate to note what he points out regarding the relations between religion, world view and culture, namely that these are complex issues.

Van der Walt admits that the Reformational tradition has paid much attention to religion and world view, and not so much to culture and world view. However, he is glad that the younger generation is paying attention to the relation between worldview and culture (Van der Walt, 2001:48-49). Dalfovo and other sources mentioned above help to support Van der Walt's concern that with the multiplicity of approaches offered in anthropology, the philosopher needs to carefully choose the terms in defining culture for philosophical purposes.

Van der Walt argues for cultural diversity and the need for cultural integration, instead of ethnocentrism. He establishes our place in creation as determined by four basic relationships, that is, the relationship toward God/god, nature, fellow human beings and ourselves. He warns of tendencies that absolutise any of those relations and the dire consequences. He acknowledges that philosophers need to tune into the anthropological gains attained through its diversity of research strategies to maintain cultural diversity and integration. However, even then we need to be aware of the religious presuppositions underpinning those research strategies (Van der Walt, 2006:1-10; 2001:54-55).

Acknowledging the many definitions of culture, Van der Walt opts to elaborate on two issues he identifies as "the *segmental* and the *comprehensive*" (Van der Walt, 2001:49). The segmental regards culture "as something that bestows lustre upon life, a 'higher' level of existence, the 'icing' on the cake. It can therefore only be acquired by and is reserved for the wealthier and more leisured members of society" (Van der Walt, 2001:49). The comprehensive regards "human *life in its totality* as culture, not merely the intellectual and artistic aspects. It is not something 'sublime' or

disconnected from, but includes our ordinary attitudes, customs, behaviour, values, beliefs, institutions, and, so on. Like world views it is not necessarily acquired by (formal) education, and reserved for a section of the population. In this sense every human person is a cultural being. Culture then is a 'frame of reference' for human thought and conduct. We may be hardly aware of it but we are 'programmed' by it. We become conscious of our culture (just as world view) when something goes amiss or when people from other cultures are encountered" (Van der Walt, 2001:49: 2003:93).

He acknowledges different facets of culture, noting that we need to make a distinction between "different facets of a culture", for instance art is the aesthetic aspect of culture and commerce an economic aspect of culture. Even development is an aspect of culture, and we should not speak of development and culture as though they were totally separate and opposite or independent entities, because any development is the "product" of a specific culture. It is for this reason that we can talk of religious, political or economic development (Van der Walt, 2001:49; 2003:94).

He distinguishes five layers or dimensions of culture: Firstly, he identifies *the religious dimension* as the "directional dimension of culture because religion is the central directedness of all of human life towards the real or presumed ultimate source of meaning and authority". He also correctly distinguishes the "central religious commitment" from the "dimension of faith (usually indicated as the pistic aspect or modality)". This is to prohibit identifying an "all-encompassing religion with only one life aspect (the faith aspect)". We serve God or an idol in all other aspects of reality, and not only in our faith. He further stresses that religion and world view are both influenced by culture and have a cultural side. He therefore wonders whether it is correct to subsume religion and world view under one concept of "culture", hence regarding them as cultural phenomena (Van der Walt, 2001:49-50).

It is good to appreciate Van der Walt's concern in this argument, but it is hard to fully agree with him on the position of religion and culture. How can religion be all-encompassing and yet at the same time have a cultural side? This matter is further addressed in chapter five where, the five layers will be analysed in more detail.

Secondly, what he regards as *the worldviewish dimension* provides a perspective on the interrelated character of the cosmic reality and our place in it. On the distinction and interrelatedness between religion, world view and culture, Van der Walt thinks religion relates one to God or an idol, a world view describes one's relationship to the world, and a culture is our task or calling to subdue and rule the earth. Van der Walt sees culture as "the historical manifestation of our religiously directed response to all God's mandates for life, as expressed in our understanding of creation and our place in it" (Van der Walt, 2001:51).

Thirdly, Van der Walt sees the 'social' dimension as relating to morals, arts, politics, economics, language and styles of thinking. The 'social' dimension includes the way our emotions are expressed, as well as the different societal relationships, like marriage, family, the state, business, and other institutions (Van der Walt, 2001:51). Fourthly, the material or technical dimension includes food, clothes, tools machines, buildings and so on (Van der Walt, 2001:51). Finally, the behavioural dimension includes our habits, customs, and behaviour—our lifestyle (Van der Walt, 2001:51). This explanation (of five layers of culture) is also developed in some of the other works by Van der Walt (1997:8-9; 2003:94-96).

Having distinguished the five layers of culture, Van der Walt maintains that a culture is integrated and holistic. Though the layers are abstracted, they are never separated; they are "interrelated and have mutual influence on each other". He goes on to claim that certain aspects of culture are visible and describable, but that religion and world view are more difficult to discern. Cultural change is therefore easier to observe on the outer layer than on the inner layer. He concludes from this that the determining role of the core should be comprehended (Van der Walt, 2001:52; 2003:96-97).

Though Van der Walt uses what we could comfortably call the "Five Layers Theory" (others have called it the "Onion Theory") as seen above, he recognises its limitation. In this theory or presentation, a world view and religion are seen as aspects of a culture. However, he admits that they are not cultural phenomena. He even seems to counter his own argument by asking "whether religion (and worldview)" are parts of culture as envisioned in his five layer analysis. He gets to these self-searching

questions because he recognises that in reformational philosophy "the whole of our lives is religion, service to God or a substitute god" (Van der Walt, 2001:50-51).

1.3.5 Van der Walt's view of the relation between religion, world view and culture

Van der Walt regards a world view, seen as the "soul" of any culture, as consisting of six basic components: view of God, of law or norm, of being human, of society, of nature and of time" (Van der Walt, 2001:ii). It is our perspective on created reality and an indication of our place in the world, which is provided by the will (laws) of something or someone regarded as our absolute authority in life. A world view functions like a map, providing *orientation*; like a compass, giving *direction* from "a deep religious commitment" calling for action (Van der Walt, 2001:58; 2003:100-101).

Van der Walt cautions that a world view can degenerate into an ideology, especially when an aspect of reality is absolutised. He thinks of an ideology as our "absolutised, hardened, closed, dogmatic, orientation about the world, our place and cultural calling". In essence, an ideology does not see the world as it is, instead it "forces reality into its own preconceived mould and changes it accordingly". It fails to see our place and task in a right way because it (partly or totally) rejects the direction provided by God in his central love commandment. An ideology provides its own norms. For Van der Walt, a world view and ideology have the same structure, but different *directions*. A world view is something normal and healthy, while an ideology is dangerous (Van der Walt, 2001:58; 2003:101).

In respect to his analysis of culture, Van der Walt sees religion, world view and other aspects of culture as dynamic. "All cultures change, some slowly and others more rapidly". They change through inheritance, innovation, free borrowing or adoption from others or forced by foreign imposition. "A culture is usually a hybrid or mixture—especially in our contemporary, multi-cultural world" (Van der Walt, 2001:52; 2003:97). We cannot physically see either a religion or a world view, but we are able to derive "their more visible, concrete manifestations in the other aspects of a culture" (Van der Walt, 2001:53; 2003:97).

Since in his analogy is that religion and world view are different layers of culture, it follows that religion and world view influence other aspects of culture, and in turn those other aspects (or in his term the remainder of culture) influence religion and world view too (Van der Walt, 2001:53; 2003:97).

Van der Walt surprisingly adds that we should reckon a single religious core with respect to primitive cultures and more than one religious centre (core) in the contemporary, "open", multicultural world, of which one of them gradually becomes dominant. He asserts that this is noticeable in the case of secularism, which marginalises other religions so that they start functioning "outside" the core. Religions are not relevant to the entire culture, but their influence is limited to a small part, for example, in the case of Christians their "spiritual" or ecclesiastical life" (Van der Walt, 2001:53; 2003:98).

He looks at religion **"**as the central directedness of all human life towards the real or presumed ultimate source (God/god) of meaning and authority". For this reason, religion is not disconnected from, but part of culture. Van der Walt goes on to note that the rest of culture is "coloured" by its religious core, and likewise the "other cultural facets may influence the religious core" as explained above (Van der Walt, 2001:59; 2003:99).

Van der Walt observes that "religion is not an *addition* to life, but its *essence*; it is not a *complement* to existence, but its *character*, it is not *higher* than 'ordinary' life, it is its *central thrust*". Religion is as broad as life itself, it is a way of life, it is not improper then to allude that "life is religion" (Van der Walt, 2001:35; 2003:99-101).
Van der Walt sees faith as just one of the modes or ways of being religious, one in which the intrinsic spirituality of all of life is fully expressed. It is:

> *"one kind of function belonging to the created order next to other human functions, like sensitivity (the psychical), justice (the juridical), clarity (the logical), beauty (the aesthetical), morality (the ethical) and so on. It is in faith that the central dynamic of religion is expressed in a focused and explicit way. So faith, therefore, is both distinct from religion and expressive of religion" (Van der Walt, 2001:35).*

Regarding religion as the nature of all of life implies that all of life is a spiritual response to God (or idol). This perception prevents the downgrading of any human

aspect as "second-rate or natural or even the locus of evil and sin. Our eating, sleeping, sexuality, emotions, and politics are as actually spiritual as our thoughts, morals and beliefs". Secondly, this perspective avoids "reducing religion to one sphere of life" (Van der Walt, 2001:35).

On the relationship between religion, world view and culture, Van der Walt shows that religion provides our direction towards or away from God (or idol), a world view provides a view of our place in the world and culture provides our calling in creation. A culture is seen as:

> *"our task of answering to the real God or presumed god according to a specific world view that describes our place in the world. Our place in creation is determined by four basic relationships toward God/god, nature, fellow human beings and ourselves. However, when considering these relationships, different world views tend to overemphasise one relationship. Consequently they interpret the other three relationships in the light of the one they absolutise" (Van der Walt, 2001:53-54).*

For instance, guided by a traditional African world view, Africans tend to absolutise community, and guided by Western secular world view, the West tend to absolutise individuality.

1.4   Van der Walt's fundamental realities scrutinised

1.4.1 Roper's scrutiny as a guide

Roper concurs with Van der Walt (2001:35; 2003:99-101; 2006:10) that all positions that have shaped the philosophy of culture are not religiously neutral. They all betray certain convictions that are of a religious nature. From a Christian standpoint they need to be subjected to the critical scrutiny of the Scriptures (Roper, 1979:11).

Roper, like Van der Walt (2008:20-25; 100-124), points to the recognition of the fact that we live in a creation that is everywhere upheld, ordered and structured by the Word of God. Our place within creation is a call to be God's covenant partners and to exercise stewardship and dominion over creation. Roper and Fowler (1985:27) strengthen Van der Walt's view on this fact by ascertaining that the Word of God, as the declared will of God for creation in Christ, sustains all creatures within creation under the law for their existence. This being true of creation in its natural aspects is

also true of human society and the law relating to man's stewardship. "The ordering of creation is therefore not to be construed in terms of 'Reason' not even the Stoic view 'Cosmic Reason'" (Roper, 1979:12, 34).

Roper may further help us to acknowledge what Van der Walt has not attempted to caution that in the past the concept of culture was strongly influenced by the view that the mind of man *creates* culture. This contradicts the concept of eternal ideas that had been posited earlier on. If it was true that these ideas were eternal, the idea of culture as the creation of the human mind is untenable. Roper shows that either of those earlier claims stand opposed to the Word of God. He further agrees with Van der Walt (2008:8-9) about the astonishing thing that with the vanishing of these beliefs, the human person's activity has become directed by "unprincipled relativism". As a result this has become a dilemma for the current cultural development (Roper, 1979:12). Roper's solution for this dilemma is what Van der Walt (2008:9-11) attempts in his third way, which is articulated later. In a nutshell, Roper proposes the rediscovery of the Word of God to which all our traditions should be subjected.

Roper and Fowler see the Word of God as one and indivisible and something that must be understood to come to man in several ways: in the structure of creation, in Scripture, in the incarnation and (Roper adds) biblical proclamation (Roper, 1979:13; cf. Fowler, 1985:25-34). These are also emphasised by Van der Walt (2006: 1-16; 2008:15-19) in his scrutiny of world view and culture. Fowler (2007:11-20) gives a survey of the foundation of Western culture that generated the view that Roper alludes to, the view that culture was the creation of the mind.

Roper confirms what Van der Walt (2008:41-45) asserts, namely that our *response* to the Scriptures is always *culturally* formed and that the Scriptures give us guidance on how to respond in obedience to the Word of God in *particular* circumstances. The Scriptures do not give us a set of eternal ideas that may be formulated to give a supra-cultural validity (Roper, 1979:13; cf. Van der Walt, 2008:13-44; also Fowler, 1985:1-23).

By clarifying that cultures are not a completely free creation of the human mind and by pointing to the Word ordered creation, Roper confirms Van der Walt's (1994:340-

399; 2001:43-92;) warning against the falsifying idolatry of the modern mind. This mind, according to Roper, generates the idea that the meaning of nature is inherent in nature and is accessed by human reason. To counter this, Roper confirms Van der Walt's (2001:78-90) call to stress that man's place within creation is to be God's covenant partner, called as His steward to exercise dominion over creation. The human being's effect on creation is that of "*fashioning, moulding, shaping cultivating, caring for, developing, and unfolding*" (Roper, 1979:13-14; cf. Fowler, 1985:25-26, 32-33).

Roper helps to boost Van der Walt's view that creation, just as culture, is dynamic. For this reason the call is made to the human community, as managers of God's creation, to develop the cosmos by the Creator's laws. The human community's effect on creation is therefore limited by the possibilities of the creation as it functions by the Word of God, simply unfolding the potential of creation either in obedience or disobedience to the Word of God (Roper, 1979:14).

Roper's question as to whether it may be wise to use the adjective *cultural* instead of the noun *culture* (which is subject to misconceptions) also helps us to appreciate Van der Walt's (2001:49-50) call for respecting the distinction between different facets of a culture. Roper ascertains that a culture is a modal *how* of creation, rather than a concrete *what*. He points out that the "term *cultural* means nothing but a particular mode of formation or moulding that is fundamentally different from all the modes of formation found in nature, be they physico-chemical, biotic, or physical". He also states that what characterises *cultural* formation is the exercise of *control* by the human person in freely elaborated projects (Roper, 1979:15). He battles here with a tough issue that Van der Walt fails to accord serious attention, even though he recognises it.

Finally, Roper acknowledges Van der Walt's (2001:86-90) recognition that human cultural formation differs fundamentally from the non-human creation in that non-human creations are led by instinct developing into a "fixed and uniform pattern", while the creations of humans are led by free will (Roper, 1979:15). Roper notes that the natural mode of formation expressed in instinct lacks the free control over the materials on which is worked upon. The *cultural* mode of formation on the other

hand, has its specific modal qualification through the freedom of *control, dominion, or power*, hence the great cultural commandment to "Subdue the earth and have dominion over it" (Roper, 1979:15).

1.4.2 Critical comments on Roper's cultural philosophy and scrutiny

An assessment of Roper may seem not to be in line with this project, but that is not the case. Since his input on the philosophy of culture has been used to interrogate Van der Walt, it is fair for that reason to subject his work to some brief criticism. It was actually on the strength of his reformational argument on culture that he was selected over and above others. Let us consider his weak points:

- While he clearly uses the framework of Dooyeweerd (1953) he seems to overlook the fact that this framework includes a "modal aspect" of "social intercourse". Therefore, although a culture also participates (in anticipatory sense) in the social aspect, the appropriate place for a philosophy of culture is the historical aspect.

- He does not make clear in what sense his philosophy of culture is Christian. He clearly presents features of a Christian *world view*, but that is not in my perspective a Christian philosophy of *culture.* He faults attempts by Justin Martyr to justify the eternal ideas of Plato and the Stoics, but we do not clearly see what he presents as an alternative. I think Roper should be categorical that there can be cultures with more or less Christian influence, but there can never and has never been since the Fall what can be thought of as a Christian culture. Christians are called to live in the world and its cultures, but not being of this world. Christ says: "They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" John 17:16,18. This is the way the Apostles trod. The Roman culture endorsed slavery and it was taken for granted as a way of life. The Apostles did not campaign against this practice or even forbid Christians to have slaves (something that would be appalling today). What they did teach was a radically different way of treating slaves, as illustrated by the epistles to Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians, as well as other New Testament passages: "Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven" (Col 4.1). Just and fair treatment of slaves would be unheard of in the

Roman culture; they were chattels to be used or abused, bought and sold, like any other merchandise at the will of the master.

- If there is to be a philosophy of culture written by Christians, it can only be a critique of the relevant culture in which we live. While I do not doubt Roper's Christian integrity, he does not seem to make it clear that this is the sort of philosophy he is presenting, since his work seems to point to the conclusion of a possibility of Christian culture or something close to that.

- Finally, he assumes that all in the Christian circle are in agreement that the Scripture is the "written Word of God". He does not investigate to the effect that there are those who claim that there is nothing in Scripture to support that claim. Such people come to this position on the strength of what Jesus himself said to the Pharisees: "You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. Yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (Jn 5.39,40). Such proponents view Scripture is the inspired testimony to the Word of God, but is not itself the Word of God. Only the Word who "became flesh and lived among us" (Jn 1.14) is the Word of God. This does not in any way suggest that Roper is wrong in looking at the Scriptures as the written Word of God. It is a caution that others may dispute that phrase and he needed to use the phrase with caution.

1.5   Chapter summary

In reconnoitring Van der Walt's view of the African culture and world view, this chapter has sought to firstly clarify the concepts "world view" and "culture" in Van der Walt's thinking. Philosophy cannot proceed to any elaboration of a term until it has clarified the meaning of the concept it intends to elaborate upon. In the clarification of a world view therefore, the chapter has considered how Van der Walt has defined it. He considers it a comprehensive framework of basic beliefs, convictions or presuppositions through which reality is perceived, understood and interpreted.

The chapter has described how Van der Walt looks at the nature and characteristics of world views, noting that it is deeply religious, directed to or away from God or an idol. This is because religion is the central directedness of all of human life towards the real or presumed ultimate source of meaning and authority. A world view is

unseen and sometimes undetected, but has powerful influence on what is thought and done. It is also pre-scientific. Van der Walt elaborates on the complexity, history and impact on both Christians and non-Christians of world views. It has been shown that a world view that is confessed is not always a world view that is lived. A world view is transformed once the heart, the religious root of existence, connects with the Ultimate. It is warped if the heart is directed to an idol. If a world view is directed to an idol, it absolutises an aspect of concrete experience, usually resulting in ideological thinking.

The chapter also acknowledges that a number of scholars support Van der Walt's views on world views. It is especially noted that what guides and directs differences in the interpretation of reality may not be merely a matter of methodological differences or differences in the design of sciences, but rather a matter of differences in world view.

After clarifying the concept of world view, the chapter investigated Van der Walt's clarification of the concept of culture. Van der Walt points out the complexity and elusiveness in defining culture. He considers the helpful insights from anthropology and philosophy in the understanding of culture. In tackling the difficult part of cultural diversity as envisioned by Van der Walt, two scholars, namely A.T. Dalfovo and D.L. Roper, are consulted in the attempt to confirm this part of Van der Walt's vision.

Van der Walt's five layers of cultural analysis have been examined. It has been noted that this attempt to simplify culture by an analogy has led to some difficulties. The major difficulty being that of seemingly compromising the "all-encompassing" nature of religion, which is very much part of the reformational framework that he advocates.

The chapter has established how Van der Walt relates culture and world view and by extension religion. He shows that religion provides our direction towards or away from God (or idol). A world view provides a view of our place in the world, and culture provides our calling in creation. Van der Walt attempts to understand culture and world view, since he is working for a better alternative in tackling the clash between African and Western cultures.

In the next chapter we consider how Van der Walt compares and evaluates the African and Western cultures.

Chapter 2: B.J. van der Walt's comparison and evaluation of the African and Western cultures

Now that the concepts "world view" and "culture" have been clarified, we can explore how BJ van der Walt evaluates the differences between the Western and African cultures as envisioned in 5 (2) of the research objectives.

The discussion begins with what Van der Walt thinks is the problem of evaluating diversity, and then turns to his comparison of the two cultures. The section will be concluded by a look at the underlying factors of the two cultures that prompt the differences.

2.1 Problems of evaluating diversity

In evaluating the African and Western cultures, Van der Walt is aware of the diversity of and differences between cultures. For instance, the Western culture is characterised by dualisms such as natural/supernatural, faith/reason, spiritual/material, nature/grace, sacred/secular and so on. The African culture is characterised by holism, dynamism, superstition, spiritualism and so on.

Hiebert (1985:115-12) also observes that the West lays emphasis on science, reason, material things and the natural as opposed to religion, faith, the spiritual and supernatural. Individualism, rationalism, scientism, secular-materialism, and naturalism have bred an analytical approach to study and a mechanistic-technological approach to reality, as well as a priority on time. Given this fact, the Western preoccupation with the right of ownership, progress, epistemology, either-or thinking, planning, schedules and procedures, pragmatism, production and profit, quantification, self-identity and reliance, contractual groups, equality, competition and free enterprise, direct confrontation, linear time, future orientation and so on, is quite understandable (Hiebert, 1985:115-120).

Van der Walt cites different challenges he (and any other person) is likely to face in an attempt to evaluate diversity. There could be many, but the discussion is limited to the four that he elaborates on.

2.1.1   The challenge of ethnocentrism

Van der Walt (2006:6-7) argues that the concept of cultural evolutionism puts all cultures into single lane of development, beginning with a primitive sphere to modern complex cultures, where the modern person emerges in the later phases leading towards the goal of a new humanity. Van der Walt in this agrees with Roper's assertion that Comte's law of three stages, the religious phase, the metaphysical phase and the scientific phase, may also have propagated this concept (Roper, 1979:10). Van der Walt further adds that this concept of cultural evolutionism was nested in the theory of biological evolution propagated by Charles Darwin in "On the Origin of Species" (1859).

Van der Walt goes on to suggest that the proponents of this viewpoint speak of "culture" (in singular sense), which is not influenced by differences in place and time, but has to climb the developmental "ladder". The resultant feature of this is viewing the Western culture as superior to other cultures because it is believed to be the most highly developed civilization (Van der Walt, 2006:6-7).

When it comes to Christianity, Van der Walt thinks that this evolutionistic viewpoint has come to regard Christianity as the highest religion. Earlier Christian missionaries therefore found it appropriate to export the Western form of Christianity to the "uncivilised" non-Western world. The implication was a one-sided effect that Van der Walt calls the "Eurocentric way of evaluating cultures", with Western culture becoming the norm against which every other culture is judged (Van der Walt, 2006:7). Mugambi (2002:8) agrees with Van der Walt in noting that it used to be taken for granted that Europe was a "Christian" continent, in contrast with others that were viewed as "pagan". This assumption was based on the evidence of ecclesiastical influence on the European institutions and academia.

Against the above background, the missionary enterprise was directed at "pagan" Africa and other areas that had not been influenced by Europe. Evangelisation then meant disorienting their objects of mission from "pagan, heathen, savage, primitive and barbaric traditions", turning them into replicas of the missionary (Mugambi, 2002:8). It was believed that the "Africans were incapable of self-perception and self

description" and needed to be "civilised" by "Europeans who had supposedly attained a "higher" level of cultural consciousness" (Mugambi, 1998:552-553).

Van der Walt suggests that another viewpoint developed as well, a "romantic" one, that viewed the so-called primitive cultures positively because they idealised a presumed original beginning in these cultures. According to this viewpoint the ideal thing for the West is to return to the state of the "noble barbarian or savage". This romantic viewpoint tends to reverse ethnocentrism, because in this sense the Western culture is evaluated according to the norm of "primitive" culture (Van der Walt, 2006:7). But does this equate the Western culture to African culture, or it is another journey towards the superiority of the Western culture? Van der Walt continues to warn that all forms of ethnocentrism are unacceptable, whether Eurocentric or Afrocentric, or any other cultural "ism" (Van der Walt, 2006:7).

He observes Griffioen's distinction of positive and negative ethnocentrism, noting that according to Griffioen negative ethnocentrism occurs when universal meaning is attached to a specific culture, thus regarding it as the norm for other cultures. Positive ethnocentrism, on the other hand, is "the natural fact that one takes pride in one's own culture" (Van der Walt, 2006:7). D.A. Masolo (1994:68-69) attempts such a positive ethnocentrism by developing a systematic ethnophilosophy in which he celebrates the work of Marcel Griaule in his affirmation that Blacks have a system of thought revealing "a system of philosophy, religion, and cosmology similar to that of the Europeans". Manus (2003:1) supports the fact that Masolo encourages Africans not to tackle Africa's problems from foreign approaches and methodologies, but from Africa's cultural and religious heritage.

Van der Walt notes that typical cases of negative ethnocentrism are witnessed when Westerners come into contact with African traditional cultures (Van der Walt 2006:6-7). He agrees with Mbiti's assertion that the earlier descriptions and studies of African traditional cultures and religions introduced terms that were inadequate, derogatory and prejudicial. Mbiti, just like Van der Walt, blames this attitude partly on the misrepresentations and misinterpretations of the African culture by the English anthropologist, E. B. Taylor, in his book *Primitive Culture*, 1871 (Mbiti, 1969:7).

Hiebert seems to agree with Van der Walt on ethnocentrism. He first identifies three dimensions of culture, namely the cognitive dimension dealing with the existential assumptions to provide fundamental cognitive structures people use to explain reality, the affective dimension dealing with their feelings, and the evaluative dimension dealing with the values by which judgement is made (Hiebert, 1985: 30-47). He then describes different cross-cultural confusions occurring at the three dimensions of culture. The cross-cultural confusion at the cognitive level leads to misunderstanding. When this misunderstanding is not resolved at the cognitive level, it degenerates to ethnocentrism at the affective level and completely degenerates into premature judgement at the evaluative level (Hiebert, 1985:91-99). In evaluating other cultures, Hiebert proposes a clear understanding of such cultures at the cognitive level to check ethnocentrism at the affective level and pre-mature judgement at the evaluative level (Hiebert, 1985:91-99).

Hiebert observes that the negative emotional response that emerges when one is confronted by other cultures for the first time is normal, because the other culture is misunderstood at the cognitive level. In this case one tends to think of ones culture as superior or as better than the other culture with which one is confronted. This response, he says, has to do with attitude and not understanding. If things are checked at the cognitive level, positive results may be experienced, such as understanding, appreciation and informed judgement (Hiebert, 1985:97-99). Van der Walt (2006) anticipates this if one goes by the title of one of his books, "When African and Western cultures meet: From confrontation to appreciation" (Van der Walt, 2006).

Mugambi (2002:8-9) supports Van der Walt in warning against our negative ethnocentric attitude towards any culture. He asserts that a paternalistic attitude guided by negative ethnocentrism (from the West) has not succeeded in rooting out the purported "heathen" or "savage" image of African people. In fact, it has only generated unexpected reactions, such as Afrocentrism and unreasonable adoption of Western practices into the African culture. In choosing to adopt what they like from Western culture, Africans technically and deliberately by-pass the Westerners themselves. Applied to missionary fields in Africa for instance, the African independent churches have adopted the Western practices they cherish, but have

by-passed or ignored the missionaries. They have also adopted the Gospel (though in syncretised ways) as part of their culture, yet again ignoring the Westerners. They do this with total disregard of what the Westerners may feel, think or say about them. This unfortunately results in a serious Gospel distortion, and no sincere missionary or genuine Christian may desire this. Mugambi warns that the ethnocentric practice and some reactions against it are equally disastrous to those who propel it and those to whom this practice is propelled. The result is even worse when Western culture engages African culture with the purpose of Christianisation. A solution for negative ethnocentrism must be sought, and Van der Walt attempts this, as will be seen later.

2.1.2 The challenge of relativism

Van der Walt, in agreement with Hiebert (1985:20), observes that cultural relativism was an understandable reaction against cultural evolutionism. Cultural anthropologists became aware of the great variety of cultures, enabling them to think not of " culture" (singular), but of "cultures"(plural). They rejected the notion of sorting various cultures into a hierarchy, that is, from lower to higher. They observed that cultures exist alongside each other and are equal in spite of their great differences. This viewpoint of each culture being "true" on its own terms, generated the idea that no one culture has the right to evaluate or judge another. Cultural habits are acceptable as long as they are condoned by a particular culture (Van der Walt, 2006:8; Hiebert, 1985:101-102).

Hiebert shows that cultural relativism seems attractive not just because it respected other people's cultures and avoided ethnocentrism and premature judgement, but it also dealt with the difficult philosophical questions of truth and morality. It did this by withholding judgement and affirming the right of each culture to establish its own answers (Hiebert, 1985:101-102).

Van der Walt rightly observes that the implication of this viewpoint is that all cultures are above criticism. People end up being captives of their own cultures. Rejecting the cultural evolutionism that bred negative ethnocentrism resulted on the other hand in adopting cultural relativism, which led to the disappearance of clear norms for evaluating different cultural customs (Van der Walt, 2006:8). Hiebert notes that the

price paid for adopting cultural relativism is the loss of truth and righteousness (Hiebert, 1985:102). For this reason Van der Walt thinks it is difficult or impossible to maintain such a "neutral" point of view, and this explains why cultural relativism, at least in its radical form, does not have many adherents (Van der Walt, 2006:8). Emphasis today is on the dynamic, heterogeneous nature of a culture and creative ways in which people adapt to different situations. "Culture is not regarded as 'a thing' (the so-called reification of culture), but as a way of life" (Van der Walt, 2006:8). But does this solve the problem of relativism?

The answer to this question is very important, because Van der Walt maintains that the "relativist viewpoint is clearly unacceptable to Christians who believe that God's revelation contains supra-cultural norms". The rejection of cultural evolution by the proponents of cultural relativism on the grounds of no standard for judgement is not satisfactory. We are still left with the question of the grounds on which cultural relativists stand to be right. Without such grounds there is no sense in a relativist to asserting that cultural evolutionism is wrong. It only leads to the ridiculous conclusion that one is wrong because the other one is not right. Cultural diversity can be better appreciated to the effect that God's norms and his goal for creation should be respected, but because of sin this is seldom the case. In this regard, establishing God's norms and his goal for creation entails a serious task. Van der Walt warns that the labelling of a conduct as "Christian" is no guarantee that it can be accepted on that merit (Van der Walt, 2006:8-9).

Hiebert (1985:102) supports Van der Walt's observation that there is no consistent relativist in practice by affirming the growing appreciation of the fact that human thought cannot be neutral and hence free from value judgement. Human thought is always betrayed by certain presuppositions. He maintains that Christians have to establish the basis on which to evaluate cultures without being ethnocentric or relativist.

Hiebert is nevertheless not blind to the positive side of relativism. He acknowledges its demand for the equality of all cultures and a rejection of any culture's claim to have the absolute authority to judge others. He affirms biblical norms as the Christian basis for cultural evaluation. These biblical norms stand alone in judgement

of all cultures because they emanate from the cultural Designer and they affirm the good and condemn the evil in human creativity (Hiebert, 1985:102).

Hiebert (1985:102-103), just like Van der Walt (2008:13-44), is fully conscious that our biblical interpretation is culturally influenced and we must guard against imposing such influences on other cultures with the pretext of the biblical imperatives. He then proposes the need to work on our own biases, allowing the Holy Spirit who speaks to us through our cultures to also speak to others through their cultures. He encourages us to develop a discipline of studying both the values of our cultures and those of others and to not tire to critically evaluate them.

In order to achieve, this Van der Walt (1997:17-27) and Hiebert (1985:102) pose a case for a metacultural framework, a critical hermeneutics involving Christians from different cultures, to enable us compare and evaluate our cultures. It enables us to develop at least a filter to check our cultural presuppositions in the understanding of God's norms and will for our cultures. This metacultural framework liberates us from mono-culturalism and heads us towards a multicultural state where we affirm cultures and establish the trans-cultural norms of Scripture.

Van der Walt has made it clear that both cultural ethnocentrism and relativism are unacceptable. We need to come up with what is acceptable. We need to evaluate African and Western cultures within acceptable parameters. Van der Walt then seeks to evaluate both African and Western cultures from a Christian point of view. This then raises the question of methodology. The next section assists to address the challenge of the method to attain what is acceptable in evaluating the two cultures.

2.1.3 The challenge of methodology

BJ van der Walt envisages a challenge of perspective through which cultural evaluation can be approached. He asks: Through which theoretical "window" could we look at two cultures to clearly see their differences and understand them? Is the scientific-comparative approach to the African and the Western cultures appropriate? If that was granted, should the perspective be anthropological, theological, sociological, philosophical or psychological? (Van der Walt, 2006:162-167). He

observes that over the past 50 years the African and the Western cultures have been studied from different angles. He then proposes that a better way of approaching the two cultures would be through scrutinising their perspectives of different ideas about God, different world views, different views of society, different views and ways of experiencing time, different ways of thinking, different forms of communication, and different views of life (Van der Walt, 2006:162-165).

Looking at all the listed issues, it is not inappropriate to conclude that Van der Walt is recommending a world view approach in scrutinising the African and the Western cultures. This is owing to the fact all the listed issues and others (not listed) fall within the scope of world view. However, the world view approach by itself does not solve all of our problems. It is good to underscore that Van der Walt evaluates African and Western cultures (and in fact all cultures) from a Christian point of view that does not accommodate a dualistic view of reality, but one that respects the all-encompassing nature of life. This then leads to the next challenge.

2.1.4 The challenge of a holistic approach

One first has to look at Van der Walt's concern about establishing a Christian approach. As stipulated above this has to be a life-encompassing approach. Secondly, Van der Walt also establishes that in the evaluation of cultural diversity, we must guard against a too easy generalisation of the (traditional) African and Western cultures. We have to guard against separating the ideal framework of culture and the socio-political realities. Thirdly, we have to sufficiently consider the numerous religions, languages, political systems and other types of variants that play a critical role in cultural development. Fourthly, we must avoid treating cultures as static or unchangeable, and prevent reification of cultures. When that is not prevented, it is like forcing a culture into becoming a "thing", something outside of the human persons, thus treating it as not controlled or manipulated by human persons (Van der Walt, 2006:167).

Having alerted readers to the challenges of ethnocentrism, relativism, methodology and the challenge of a holistic view, Van der Walt continues to compare the African and the Western cultures.

2.2   Comparison of African and Western cultures

BJ van der Walt tackles the comparison of Western and African cultures in two books: "When African and Western cultures meet: From confrontation to appreciation" (2006) and "Afrocentric or Eurocentric?: Our task in multicultural South Africa" (2001). In these books he finds himself with so many issues to handle that he overstretches himself. He also wishes to get to that ordinary non-technical level where daily practical undertakings could be observed. Van der Walt's project is not only to wrestle with the comparison of Western and African cultures, but to discover what may assist the two cultures to appreciate, understand, accept and respect each other and to come closer to each other (Van der Walt, 1997:75).

Van der Walt includes the Eastern and Oriental cultures to make the project more inclusive, but even then it lacks a bird's-eye view of the key foundational issues that underlie the two cultures that could be compared to clearly detect the concrete underlying philosophies that cause the issues he identifies. Because of stretching so much he does not delve into transcendental ideas about what he compares, and this somehow robs his work of the philosophical appeal that he intends. In distinction, Hiebert (1985:111-137), in the development of his anthropological insights for missionaries (mainly of the Western orientation) directs our attention to the underlying issues of the cultural assumptions of the Western missionaries, what lies behind their assumptions and not just the assumptions themselves. This study attempts to point out what has been missed or not seriously dealt with, not because Van der Walt is unaware of them, but to challenge him to improve his otherwise profitable undertaking.

Since he is aware of some of the criticism that may be directed at his attempt, Van der Walt points readers to some of the problems he struggled with in his attempt of the comparison of the two cultures. These include:

The problem of generalisation: He asks, within the context of multiple ethnic groups and languages/dialects in Africa, how do we get uniformity? In response to his question he ascertains that to achieve the comparison of the two cultures we can only generalise, otherwise we end up producing monographs about the individual

tribes or groups (Van der Walt, 1997:74-75). Regarding the African context, Rajuili agrees with Van der Walt, noting that irrespective of the multiplicity of ethnic communities, there is still some common religio-cultural motifs in the region and by extension, the whole of Africa, that warrants us to think of an African culture and world view (Rajuili, 2008:77-79). The same could be said of the Western culture.

The problem of being accused of looking at other cultures from our cultural angle: Van der Walt has dealt with the problem of negative ethnocentrism and remains cautious of this criticism. On this he argues that we should appreciate that we are not imprisoned or enveloped in our cultures so as to be totally unable to understand other cultures. However, he cautions that a paternalistic attitude of superiority must be avoided in this effort (Van der Walt, 1997:75).

The problem of emphasising differences rather than similarities: Van der Walt is aware that differences have set us apart and we should rather look at what brings us together. However, he is emphatic that indeed we need to emphasise similarities, but we must not be blind of fundamental differences in the two cultures that have set us apart. It is only then that the two cultures can appreciate, understand, accept and respect each other and come closer to each other (Van der Walt, 1997:75).

> *As observed, Van der Walt's recognition that the difference between African and Western thinking is not watertight is evidence of a weakness of strong generalisation that may comprise genuine evaluation of culture. It seems problematic to simply assume that one can generalise about cultures by equating them to others. A more careful formulation is needed, although the overall comparison may still have some validity. Nevertheless, his distinction takes him a long way, which can be appreciated and which can be a good starting point for a more careful formulation.*

Having laid bare his fears in his attempt of the comparison of the African and, Western cultures, Van der Walt begins the comparison, but not without an assumption. He assumes all the items of comparison must be understood from the African communalistic sense on the one hand, and an individualistic tendency of Westerners on the other hand (Van der Walt, 1997:80-81).

2.2.1 Shame and guilt

Van der Walt observes that the shame and guilt model he uses to understand the differences between the Western and the Africans cultures was first employed by Benedict (1946). Benedict did this as he sought an understanding of the difference between Western and non-Western cultures. He particularly employed it in the comparison of the American and Japanese cultures. In this model Benedict observed that a person in a shame/honour-oriented culture feels shame when communal norms are transgressed. In the guilt/justice-oriented cultures a person feels guilty when communal norms are transgressed as well. A solution in the shame/honour-oriented culture is only when honour is restored by the community, and in the latter case when justice is done (Van der Walt, 2006:168).

Van der Walt employs this model because in this particular instance he sees a similarity in that Africans compare well with shame/honour-oriented cultures and the Western cultures with justice/guilt-oriented cultures.

Van der Walt argues that the individual's conscience shapes his/her well-being, as well as his/her culture. From a Christian standpoint the underlying issue is what we regard as fundamental in forming the individual's conscience, is it the acceptance of God's authority or something within the human person or society? The surroundings and/or cultures also shape one's conscience (Van der Walt, 2006:168-169). Van der Walt calls the African conscience a "shame-oriented conscience" and the Western conscience a "guilt-oriented conscience." The shame-oriented conscience is linked to honour and status in the community, while the guilt-oriented culture is linked to binding norms, the offence is as a result of transgression of norms that the individual accepts as binding (Van der Walt, 2006:169).

Van der Walt acknowledges that there is no watertight distinction between shame-oriented conscience and the guilt-oriented conscience that warrants two watertight categories. He correctly points out that there is a measure of guilt and shame in every culture (Van der Walt, 2006:169). He further observes that these two kinds of consciences could be understood well against the background of communalism versus individualism. In communalism a "face-to-face" encounter and interpersonal

relationship is paramount. The community sets the norm and ideals for human existence in such societies. Furthermore, the "in-group" is much more important than the "out-group", even to the extent that harm to the "out-group" is not regarded as evil or wrong. He notes that in an individualistic culture living rightly leads to a good conscience and transgressing this norm enhances a feeling of guilt (Van der Walt, 2006:170).

An offender in a communalistic culture is never called to account directly or publicly, especially when he/she is of high status. To demand this is thought of as tarnishing his/her good reputation and as barbaric. Such an insult is more serious than murder. Sanction by a community is indirect and involves gossip, stories, proverbs, parables, drama, and other symbolic actions (Van der Walt, 2006:170).

In contrast to these external sanctions, an individualistic culture works more with internalised sanctions. The individual in the individualistic culture may feel guilty even if the offence is unknown by other people. In a communalistic culture this is not the case, a person feels dishonoured only when other people know the offence. Attempts may be made to cover it, especially if such a person is highly esteemed. Shame is experienced when members of the community discover the offence and that is why the individual fears the community knowing about it (Van der Walt, 2006:170).

In summary, in the individualistic culture the transgression of norms leads to a feeling of guilt and fear of punishment. In communalistic cultures failing to meet the ideals of a society leads to fear of rejection and when this is discovered, a feeling of disgrace and shame ensues (Van der Walt, 2006:171).

As a result of the difference between the two cultures, misunderstanding is a given. On account of the more direct expression of criticism in guilt cultures people from shame cultures think that critics (from guilt cultures) show no respect or reverence to others. Guilt-oriented Westerner's preoccupation with time is interpreted negatively by shame-oriented cultures (especially Africans). They accuse them of a lack of respect due to their direct demand for accountability. The tendency of covering up an

offence to guard honour in shame-oriented cultures is interpreted by the guilt-oriented as unscrupulous and corrupt (Van der Walt, 2006:171-172).

The problem is complicated by the fact that regaining a good conscience is far more intricate in shame-oriented cultures than in guilt-oriented cultures. In guilt-oriented cultures good conscience is gained by payment of a fine and/or compensation, plus admission of responsibility. This path seems straight. This is difficult in the shame-oriented cultures. It is far more complicated, because both repentance and forgiveness are problematic. While the offender may be willing to do the above, he/she fears the communal reaction and attitude (Van der Walt, 2006:172).

Acknowledging guilt and repenting (confession) is difficult in shame-oriented cultures, since it further disgraces a person and aggravates the situation. Even if the guilty is forced to acknowledge the offence to gain forgiveness, he/she does not easily accept the forgiveness. This is simply because if the offended forgives the guilty, it is indirectly understood that the guilty person is an evil person. For the reason that the process of reconciliation is so laborious in shame cultures, it is easier to cover up or to overlook an offence, ignore it or (try and) forget it. Reconciliation is only possible if the offended is compensated without injuring the honour of the offender. This reconciliation ensures the offender is restored and taken up into his community. This honour and inclusion in the community also checks revenge from the guilty, since it does not lead to shame and exclusion from the group (Van der Walt, 2006:173).

2.2.2 Communalism versus individualism

Van der Walt considers communalism and individualism within the context of four relationships. These relations are within the self, with other human beings, God and nature. He explains that when all emphasis is placed on one of them, individualism, communalism, naturalism, or pantheism respectively ensues. So, individualism is the result of all emphasis on the individual person and is the typical characteristic of the Western culture, while communalism is the result of all the emphasis on community and is typical of the African culture (Van der Walt, 1997:15, 29).

Van der Walt goes on to show that for African communalism the self is realised within the community, which enhances interdependence for the survival and preservation of the community. On the contrary, for Western individualism the self is realised in the individual that enhances independence for the survival and realisation of the individual. Alongside this he notes that African communalism enhances group assurance, calls for cooperation and harmony, necessitating affiliations and sharing of duties. Contrary to this, Western individualism enhances personal gratification. It calls for competition and conflict, necessitating ownership and individual rights (Van der Walt, 1997:29).

He further notes that the law for African communalism is sought to restore social harmony, where restitution is most vital. For Western individualism it is sought to determine which individual is guilty/innocent and where punishment of the guilty party is vital (Van der Walt, 1997: 32).

Van der Walt (1997:32-40) gives a list of differences between African communalism and Western individualism. He clarifies that African communalism as opposed to Western individualism is closely related to the Oriental and Hebrew cultures. According to him the African culture enhances the following realities:

- People matter more than products and things — interpersonal relations are primary.
- Privacy is not condoned (as in the West) but group identity is promoted.
- Individual rights are not primary (as in the West), but responsibility and loyalty towards the group.
- Individual achievement is not so much a glorified, but rather a joint achievement – – no competition (as in the West). Teamwork is deemed more important.
- Oral undertakings and agreement are more binding than negotiated, written, legal contracts.
- Decisions are not taken on majority votes (as in the West), but by consensus.
- A good leader is not seen as a strong individual (as in the West) who can put his stamp on his followers in an autocratic manner, but one who has the ability to listen carefully and patiently to others and then take care that the group reaches unanimity and work together harmoniously.

- Not procedure-oriented (like Westerners), but people oriented — agendas and schedules are also seen differently.

- Seniority is highly regarded, as opposed to the West where youthfulness is almost glorified. In Africa the youth is thought to be the strength of the community and the old the wisdom of the community.

- Some kinds of virtues that promote good interpersonal relationships (like being forthcoming and flexible) are highly valued in Africa, unlike the West where virtues such as assertiveness, competitiveness and even aggressiveness are asserted.

These realities given by Van der Walt are not uniquely African, they are also shared by other non-Western cultures such as the Japanese. However, by pointing to these realities, Van der Walt seems to allude to some kind of similarity between some other cultures (say Japanese) with African culture. This allusion or assumption may be questionable in light of the discussion on cultural evolutionism and relativism. Cultural evolutionism and relativism seems typical of say the Japanese culture as opposed to African culture (Van der Walt, 2006:202-203).

2.2.3 The concept of time

Van der Walt observes that Africans (mainly Black Africans) irritate the Westerners by what seem to them to be a waste of time and lack of keeping appointments, work schedule or even planning. The Africans on the other hand are irritated by the Westerners insensitivities to people and important events because of their sticking to strict time, schedule and planning. An African may ask, since people are more important and the community even more vital, is it not in order to listen and keep listening to people, and more so attending to the community's need than sticking to time? (Van der Walt, 1997:57-58).

Expanding on time, Van der Walt goes on to show a sharp difference in the African and Western perspectives on time. He seriously ventures on this difference because he thinks time is an important facet of any culture and a core system of life through which people build their picture of the world. If the time system of the two cultures is different, it follows from this that every other thing should also be different (Van der

Walt, 1997:59-60). Van der Walt agrees with Mbiti's observation that time is the key to understanding the traditional African religion and philosophy (Mbiti, 1969:15).

Van der Walt observes that in the case of the African culture, time is seen as something relative (depending on the context), dynamic, equivalent to events and determined by events. For the West time is absolute, something static, mathematical and measurable in figures and is determined by a clock (Van der Walt, 1997:62).

He further notes that the African time is concrete, interwoven with one's daily existence, it is organic-holistic and *Kairological* (opportune or momentous). It is located within a person as in a natural biological sense and is community-centred. For the West time is something abstract and independent of one's ordinary life, it is chronological, located outside of the person, say on one's wrist or on the wall, and it is task or issue related (Van der Walt, 1997:62-63).

Finally, Van der Walt argues that for the African time moves past the human person and is more directed at the past and less directed towards future. Time is not there to be observed, but is made to meet the need, which means that when a need is identified time is made to address the need. The question is not how long it takes to meet the need, but how satisfactorily the need is met. The occasion makes up its own time. The occasion is not restricted by time, hence time is made up just when it is needed. For the West the human person moves through time, it is more futuristic and less directed at the past. One has to fill in for time and it can be lost, saved or wasted and is quantified by a clock (Van der Walt, 1997:63).

Van der Walt observes that as a result of the above views of time, the African culture feels that the human person is a master of time and things are done at a tranquil pace with concern for human relationships. Time is there to unite people and for the people. There is poor planning and schedules are more flexible. Being punctual is not important compared to what one has to attend to. Africans are irritated by a rush for completion of events to stick to time and deadline (Van der Walt, 1997:63).

Contrary to the African culture, in the Western culture the human person is a slave of time. Things are done hurriedly to keep time with tense human relationships, and there is often an alienation of people for the sake of time. There is serious and thorough planning and people stick to schedules and procedures. In this culture punctuality is highly respected, and people are irritated by those who are not punctual and do not stick to schedules and procedures (Van der Walt, 1997:63).

In conclusion, Van der Walt observes and warns against the Western over-emphasis on chronological-linear time on the physical-spatial aspect of time. Here the confusion is between what is measured by the clock and real time. If indeed what the clock measures is the real time, it means that there was a time that time was not, that is before the clock was discovered. We should be careful not to reduce time to only one aspect. Van der Walt observes that in different circumstances the length of time may be conceived differently, for instance during a positive experience such as good social moments like watching a good match time may seem to move faster than when the opposite is true, say when a husband is waiting for his wife to undergo surgery. One hour may seem like four hours. Assuming there was no clock or wrist watch and one asks the question to both of them, 'how long did it take'? The one watching an interesting match would answer that it took a very short time, but for an anxiously waiting husband the answer could be that it took a very long time (Van der Walt, 1997:60-61).

Van der Walt agrees with Boman (1968) that for the Greeks (likened to the West), time was cyclic in nature, and history was not so important for it did not bring anything new. The Hebrew (likened to Africans) vision of time and history was linear, and the right use of time and comprehension of history was very important. Van der Walt concurs with Boman's conclusion that both these modes of thought are needed to be in touch with (the whole) reality (Van der Walt, 2006:197).

On history and time, Van der Walt points to Wilson (1997:161), who confirms that the Hebrews did not hold to a circular view of history. He concurs with Wilson that the circular view of history was tied closely to the view of the cycles of nature held by the Orient cultures.

Still, Van der Walt concurs with Wilson that the Hebrews did not view history as monotonous, purposeless, and eternal cyclic happenings. They did not view life as a race towards death in which one desperately seeks to escape from the clutches of time. Rather to the Hebrew, time and history was essentially linear, durative and progressive, going somewhere, it was *en route* to a goal. Time was valuable and was to be used wisely and in the right manner. Hebrews taught the world to sanctify time. They believed that something sacred was at stake in each event and each life. Hence one must not kill time, but redeem it (Wilson 1997:161-162; Van der Walt, 2006:198).

Van der Walt's engagement with Wilson and Boman expresses an attempt to illustrate a close connection between the African culture and the Hebrew culture, especially with regard to time, history and also other matters, as will be articulated in the next section. However, Van der Walt's comparison of the West with Greek and the Hebrew with Africans seems confusing because in actual sense the Westerners identify with a linear view, while Africans identify with a cyclic view.

2.2.4 Ways of thinking

Van der Walt makes some general remarks regarding the African and Western modes of thinking before attempting to describe how the two cultures' modes of thought differ.

He alerts that science (accompanied by technology) is the most important value of the West. This arms the Westerners with the autonomous power to control the environment as they please. The Westerners do not subject this power to higher norms (such as stewardship, responsibility, accountability and respect for the environment), power is for its own sake. Science is idolised, leading to scientific knowledge being regarded as higher and more important than other forms of knowledge. This secular way of scientific endeavour has undoubtedly led to enormous prosperity in the West. He says that today the West measures its wealth by way of scientific knowledge, technological power and commercial strength. He questions whether the abundance of possession and pleasure is the measure of

human wealth if one goes by Jesus' teaching in Luke 12:15 and Matt. 6:25 (Van der Walt, 1997:73).

Van der Walt cautions that the Western obsession with faith in progress sees development simply as scientific, technological and economic development. In these fields the West is well–developed, even overdeveloped. In human relationships, communion and aesthetics, the West is poverty-stricken (Van der Walt, 1997:74). He asserts that the Western scientific practice and way of thinking clashes with African culture, and more so with Christian values, and for this reason the nature, purpose, practice and results of science have to be critically evaluated (Van der Walt, 1997:74).

As Van der Walt ventures to compare the African and Western modes of thought, he adds other problems alongside the ones raised earlier. Firstly, he struggles with the question of whether acculturation has eradicated the traditional African way of thinking. In fact he poses important questions: Do Africans still think like their traditional forefathers? Has Western culture, and other cultures, influenced their thinking? His own answer is that while it is true that Westernisation has influenced African thinking, it is also clear that the traditional religion and world view still remains the core of the African mode of thought. It has not been eradicated by Westernisation (Van der Walt, 1997:76).

What is the case with Western thought? Do the contemporary Westerners still think in the traditional sense, like their forefathers? Do they think in a pre-scientific manner that may be regarded as the traditional Western thought? By comparing the traditional African thought with Western thought, do we compare it with the Western pre-scientific thought or with contemporary Western thought? If Westernisation has not eradicated the traditional religion and world view, does it mean that it has not eradicated the traditional pre-scientific thought of the Western people? Why should we not compare modern African thought with modern Western thought? Van der Walt thinks this is possible, but it may not be helpful, because modern Africa is just a matter of a Western top-dressing on an African substratum (Van der Walt, 1997:77).

Secondly, Van der Walt distinguishes three realities as he considers the differences in the mode of thinking of Africans and Westerners. Firstly, he claims that the human person is a multifaceted being (biotic, emotional, language-creating, social, economic, aesthetic, ethical, and even religious). Secondly, the human person lives in an environment that is as multifaceted as he or she is. Finally, humans in different cultures respond differently to God's creational revelation as they focus on different aspects of His multifaceted creation (Van der Walt, 1997:76-77). Given the situation stated above, he deduces that enormous differences between the African and the Western modes of thought should be evident.

As Van der Walt gets closer to comparing the African and the Western modes of thinking, he identifies two phenomena to be compared. These are the pre-scientific and scientific. Van der Walt suggests that the Western culture is strongly "scientified" and "technified" and that although the African culture is influenced by Western scientism, it is still influenced at the core by the traditional religion and world view (Van der Walt, 1997:77-79).

Van der Walt cautions that pre-scientific thinking is not un-logical, it is logical. To avoid misunderstanding and misrepresentation, Van der Walt affirms that pre-scientific thinking, 1) is typical of all people, Westerners and Africans alike, 2) is not more or less important or inferior. Both scientific and pre-scientific thinking are ways of trying to understand, explain, control and predict reality. Both ways of thinking try to find regularity in the midst of irregularity, order in the midst of chaos, and unity in the midst of diversity, 3) ought to be distinguished from the scientific, but should not be compartmentalised water-tightly. The two are two types of knowledge or two types of knowing. Scientific knowledge builds on the pre-scientific. Pre-scientific knowledge could be enriched, but also impoverished by scientific knowledge. Sometimes it is difficult in life to know where pre-scientific knowledge ends and where scientific knowledge begins. This is particularly the case in a strongly scientified culture such as the West (Van der Walt, 1997:78-19).

Finally, before getting to a comparison of the African and Western modes of thinking, it is important to note that Van der Walt presupposes that, 1) in the African culture we still find a strong traditional component, which 2) provides a good picture of what

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most people's pre-scientific knowledge was like (including an earlier Western community), and 3) in comparing the African and the Western ways of thinking, one actually compares African pre-scientific way of thinking with modern scientific thinking (Van der Walt, 1997:79-80).

Van der Walt shows that traditional African thinking is concerned mainly with spiritual powers establishing ways of manipulating these powers. This thinking focuses on the knowledge of the spiritual world to provide supernatural power through divination and magic. African thinking then is purely spiritualistic. On the other hand, the Western way of thinking is concerned with material entities. It focuses on knowledge of the material world. It is materialistic and truth-oriented. It looks for physical causes through verification and technology with a focus on controlling the visible reality. Here concepts and right insights are more important (Van der Walt, 2006: 210-211; 1997:81).

Van der Walt sees African thinking as more dynamic, psychic, deep, warm pragmatic, symbolic, affective, emotional and concerned with insight into personal, subjective feelings and relationships, rather than with knowledge of things. Contrary to this, Western thinking is focused on ontology, it is logical, cold, businesslike, abstract, and concerned with universal laws. It is more theoretical and intellectual. Western thinking is thought to be neutral and objective (Van der Walt, 2006: 210-211; 1997:81).

When it comes to the knowing person, in the traditional African setup, this person is socially sensitive, contextually bound and works within the bounds of the existing tradition where facts are bound to be reproduced. In the West, the knowing person is autonomous, contextually independent, more critical and open for new ideas because he/she is not traditionally bound (Van der Walt, 210-211).

 Van der Walt looks at the traditional African way of thinking as colourful, compacted with stories and not just the precise, analytical and speculative mode of thinking of the West. For the African, truth consists of practical acts, it is not so much an idea to be contemplated, but an experience to be lived. For the West truth is the right

(theoretical) knowledge, explaining why for them epistemology has always been so important (Van der Walt, 2006:210-211; 1997:81-82).

Regarding the objectives for knowledge of the two cultures Van der Walt thinks that for the traditional African way of thinking the objective is insight into the personal rather than knowledge of things. It nourishes subjective feelings and relationships, thus emphasising interaction. For the West it is the other way around because the objective of knowledge is knowledge of non-human entities. Traditional African thinking could be characterised as concrete, and closer to reality than the Western mode that is abstract and a bit distant from reality (Van der Walt, 2006:196-197).

Traditional African thinking is more experiential, past-oriented, more cyclic and more expressive. This mode of thinking has elementary distinctions with ideas bound to events. The ideas in this way of thinking are flexible, flowing, complements differences and seeks consensus. It follows an "and-and logic". African thinking is also more protective and closed. It does not easily accept coincidence, probability and factors that render knowledge uncertain. Western thinking is technical, more experimental and future-oriented. It is also more linear-systematic, methodical and instrumental. It entertains complex distinctions, ideas are bound to ideas, and it is fixed and rigid. It follows an "either-or logic" and entertains a duality of opposites, thus encouraging competition. Unlike African thinking, Western knowledge is more critical and open. It accepts coincidences and probability of knowledge more easily (Van der Walt, 2006:81-82).

Traditional African thinking is pre-scientific and does not employ a distinction between laws valid for nature and laws valid for people, the part from the whole, an aspect from the cohesion of all aspects of reality, the simple from the complex structure of reality, the personal from the communal. As opposed to Western thinking, African thinking is life–encompassing and holistic (Van der Walt, 2006:196).

Following the African manner of thought, their traditional mode of communicating is rather indirect, particularly on sensitive matters, with the use of stories, parables or proverbs. Traditional Africans do not give answers, but set the stage for the person to discover the answer or the truth. They are rather indirect and sometimes subtle

and imaginative. This communication may even hide the truth from persons who are not supposed to know (Van der Walt, 2006:200-201). In Kenya for instance, during the Mau Mau (the uprising against the colonialists), the Gikuyus loyal to the colonial masters lived together with the Gikuyus loyal to the Mau Mau. The Mau Mau loyalists could use the same Gikuyu expressions, but communicate a totally different message to their own people. For instance, if a Gikuyu loyal to the Mau Mau was engaged in a discussion with a Gikuyu loyal to the colonialist and a third person loyal to the Mau Mau joins, a Mau Mau loyalist will warn the incoming person to not engage in any Mau Mau discussion. He will say in Gikuyu something to this effect, "I have been stung by a bee, be careful here lest you get stung". The other person literally thinks that his friend has been stung though in actual sense he warns his Mau Mau loyalist to desist from any Mau Mau discussion, for the colonial loyalist, is a dangerous person.

Van der Walt (2006:201) observes that the African mode of communication is also full of repetition that is always deliberate and often meant to emphasise an important theme. For the West, it is a waste of time and lack of preciseness. Because of the oral nature of knowledge transmission, this mode of communication is vital in the traditional African setup. Lack of this understanding has caused havoc in our educational systems where modes of communication are totally Western, causing education to remain foreign to African pupils or students.

2.2.5 The concept of knowledge

This section builds on the earlier part that deals with the ways of thinking. Van der Walt looks at the concept of knowledge from the following viewpoints: The aim of knowledge, the nature of the one who knows, the knowing process, the nature of the object of knowledge, the characteristic of the result of knowing and how knowledge is transmitted (Van der Walt, 2006:210-211).

Van der Walt is right in continuing to observe that the differences between the Western and African cultures regarding the concept of knowledge, and even the other concepts under description, may not be watertight. He therefore uses words such as more-or-less in explaining the difference. He further shows that in this

discussion he attempts to improve on his previous work by not simply looking at the cognitive process of knowing, but at the whole process of knowing (Van der Walt, 2006:212).

On the aim of knowledge he notes that the West's aim (with its scientific-technical approach) is to control the visible reality, establish an epistemological base for universal regularities and fully conceptualise it. The African aim (with its magical-ritualistic approach) is to manipulate the spiritual world, establish the ethical base for individual concrete phenomena and build relationships (Van der Walt, 2006:210).

On the nature of the one who knows he suggests that the emphasis for the West is on the individual who is contextually independent and more progressive, who is open for new ideas and has an independent-critical attitude. For the African the emphasis is on the person in community who is contextually and traditionally bound, not readily open to new ideas and inclined to a reproduction of facts (Van der Walt, 2006:210).

When it comes to the knowing process, Van der Walt proposes that for the West hearing takes precedence and the process tends to be more rational, intellectual, clinical and dualistic (separating matters of religion from reason). On the other hand, for Africans seeing is of utmost importance, since the process being more intuitive, emotional and more integral (where issues of reason and religion are inseparable) (Van der Walt, 2006:210).

The nature of the object of knowledge for the West are material things distanced from the knower who believes that natural causes and laws regulate the object of knowledge. For Africans the object of knowledge is the spiritual powers and forces totally involved in the life of the knower. These forces and powers determine events that make the object of knowledge more dynamic (Van der Walt, 2006:210).

Regarding the characteristics of the result of knowing, Van der Walt goes on to state that for the West knowledge is more abstract, analytical and systematic. Step-in logic is applied where one thought is built logically on the previous one, ending with a clear-cut conclusion. This could be described as "either/or" logic geared towards differences rather than similarities. For Africans knowledge is more concrete, integral

and seemingly unsystematic, and block-logic is applied. Here the central theme is often repeated without a clear-cut conclusion. The style flows and is linked together in an "and-and" manner. It is more geared towards analogies and similarities than differences (Van der Walt, 2006:211). Finally, on how knowledge is transmitted, for the West it is without mincing matters, while for Africans it is in a circumspect and indirect way (Van der Walt, 2006:211).

2.2.6 The concept of religion or faith

Van der Walt (2006:198-199; 1997:83-85) observes that for the traditional African, faith is holistic and not divorced from the rest of life. It does not distinguish between the profane and sacred, faith and science, material and spiritual and natural and supernatural. Van der Walt agrees with Mbiti that for the traditional African all of life is religion. For this reason Mbiti thinks a traditional African is notoriously religious (Mbiti, 1969:1). Makumba (2007:166) also agrees with Van der Walt (1997:83-85) that the religious experience is the gateway to the African heart and mind. Makumba goes on to say that religion gives an African ways of interpreting the world and understanding his/her own existence. Religion also equips Africans emotionally, intellectually and culturally as they go through life and face its many challenges. Van der Walt goes on to indicate that Westerners define spirituality as denying oneself, being detached from earthly concerns and depending on other-worldly values. Contrary to this, the traditional African experiences the world of spirits as robust, life affirming and thus worldly in character. Spirituality does not mean negating or withdrawing from the world. Instead, Africans affirm creation by finding a sense of connecting to the spiritual realities in the here and now. There is no division between the secular and sacred areas of life. Life is lived in God's world, but full of fear and sensitivity to the world of the spirits and the living dead (Van der Walt, 1997: 83-85).

Van der Walt (1997:83-85) thinks that Africans do not perceive faith as an intellectual-acceptance of propositions, but as doing what is right. The West has deified science and ignored the spiritual dimension. It has concentrated on the visible, measurable and countable physical reality. The supernatural is thought of as unnecessary, or even just myth. Faith (in the supernatural) is thought of as personal, subjective and metaphysical. Science is seen as neutral, objective and universally

valid. Van der Walt is aware that scientists like Thomas Kuhn (1962) have questioned the objectivity and neutrality of science (Van der Walt, 1997:83-84).

Van der Walt makes the interesting remark that Westerners in their dualistic world view (that divides the natural and supernatural) look at Africa's ontology and think that the supernatural causes are the explanation for everything. The Westerners are flawed if they arrive at this out of their dualistic world view. In the real sense of African ontology, the natural and supernatural are not distinguished, and to conceive of the supernatural explaining everything is to misrepresent the African reality. He appreciates that Africa's ontology is concerned with the spiritual world and the forces that play a role in it, but does not see it as the supernatural invading the natural. For Africans spirituality is very natural, and in fact ordinary. He observes that symbols in Africa play an important role in the way Africans know and view reality. Concrete objects have magical qualities because of what they represent.

Western science on the other hand use pictures, images or metaphors, but reduce them so much (by definition and precision) that they lose the flowing quality of the symbol and the just become signs. In the African magical-symbolic way of thinking, the images are undefined, but still fully represent some important realities (Van der Walt, 1997:84-85). Supporting what Van der Walt says about symbols, Makumba (2007:169) notes that Africa's beliefs and thoughts are manifested in artistic expression because art expresses the ideas that inspired it.

Having seen how Van der Walt evaluates the differences of the African and Western cultures, it is vital to attempt to establish the underlying factors of these two cultures and thereby investigate whether Van der Walt has satisfactorily unmasked and dealt with them. The next section will first of all investigate the underlying factors of Western culture and then move on to African culture.

2.3   The underlying factors of Western culture

In order to critically evaluate both Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism, Van der Walt suggests that we need to get to the deepest motive or spiritual forces behind these cultures (Van der Walt, 1997:93). He notes that this process asks for radical world

view thinking on the core points of departure (Van der Walt, 2008:143). Fowler agrees with Van der Walt that this is important, but cautions that although there has "been an upsurge of interest in world views and the key role they play in the way we see and act in the world", this interest is marked with failure to identify and recognise the hidden religious roots of world views. He goes on to say that "even in Christian discussions where the existence of religious roots is recognized, the influence of centuries of Western cultural tradition in shaping Christian thought and practice commonly blunts the cutting edge of the discussion, leaving us locked within a cultural framework deeply rooted in an idolatrous faith" (Fowler, 2007:10).

Getting to the spiritual forces behind these cultures is not a simple matter. Hiebert (1985:112) seems to echo Van der Walt in noting that world views are largely implicit and that there is no easy way of understanding them except by inferring their basic assumptions from beliefs and practices, thinking and language, and symbols/signs and rituals. Van der Walt has done this by analysing some beliefs, practices and characteristics of the African and Western cultures. Hiebert has cautioned that this may not be easy because of our own unrecognised assumptions underlying our own cultures. He notes that it is easier to see flaws in other people's cultures than our very own.

The next section takes a look at Van der Walt's attempt to show the underlying assumptions of the secularist or Western culture. He also attempts to expose the secularist's deceptions, seductions and flaws. The underlying assumptions of Western culture include, but are not limited to the beliefs discussed below.

2.3.1 The real and rational world

Hiebert (1985:113-117) observes that one of the underlying factors of Western culture is a belief in a real and rational world that exists outside us that is orderly and operates according to the natural laws that can be discovered and understood by human reason. This belief conditions Westerners' belief in laws for physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, sociology, history and so on. Van der Walt (2001:1-40; 2002:90-119) sees this as the background to the West's Cartesian dualism, which he blames for the inefficiency of Christianity. Van der Walt agrees with Hiebert

that this dualism drifted from the biblical duality (differentiating God and creation) to Greek dualism necessitating the science/religion, reason/faith, materialism/spiritual, natural/supernatural dualisms (Van der Walt, 2001:6; 2002:109; Hiebert, 1985:113-114).

Fowler asserts that this belief is founded on thought that did not claim a religious commitment. However, a critical look at it displays the fundamental features of religious faith. A firm belief in the ultimate source of order and meaning is evident (Fowler, 2007:11). Fowler maintains that during both the pre-Christian and Apostolic ages the faith of the social elite in philosophy was characterised by "abstract conceptual systems developed by systematic rational thought providing a conceptual map of the source of coherent order and meaning in the world of human experience" (Fowler, 2007:12).

Van der Walt (2001:6-15; 2002:110-111) agrees with Fowler that when Christianity moved into the Western cultural mainstream, it adapted to the pagan world view. What was viewed (in the pagan world view) as a conceptual order of the world was now (in Western Christianity) uncritically viewed as given by God in creation, and revealed in Scripture. Things shifted at this stage, the ministry of theologians was at the centre in place of the teachings of philosophers. Theological ministry nevertheless included philosophy. Through systematic study of the text of Scripture, theologians defined the order that was adapted from the pagan world view into a conceptual system. In this development the Holy Spirit was moved to the background. Fowler further observes that the Scriptures became "the source text from which the human intellect derived a system of divine truths governing spiritual life and the understanding of the nature of the world we experience". However, the Apostolic faith challenged both of the above existing faiths, pointing to God as the real ultimate source of order and meaning in human experience (Fowler, 2007:12). The point Fowler and Van der Walt try to bring to our attention is that what was abhorred by the Apostles, was smuggled into Christianity via Western cultural beliefs in a real and rational world. It unfortunately masks the biblical teaching of God as the ultimate source of order and meaning for our human experience.

Let us continue with other underlying factors of Western culture

2.3.2 The power of domination

Another underlying factor, as noted by Van der Walt, is the power of science, which is regarded as the most important value of the West. This secular science is motivated by the power of domination. This power is autonomous and not subject to norms outside or above science. Through science Westerners attempt to control the environment as they please. The idolised scientific knowledge is regarded as higher and more important than other forms of knowledge (Van der Walt, 1997:73, 93). Van der Walt echoes Herman Dooyeweerd (1965:2), who noted that human theoretical reason (emanating from the autonomous self) is the accepted theoretical axiom of Western culture.

The real and rational world and the power of domination are not the only underlying factors of Western culture. We therefore have to continue exploring other underlying factors.

2.3.3 Individualism and Materialism

Van der Walt (2001:80) sees the individualistic tendency as another major underlying factor of Western culture. Much has been said about it in section 2.2.2 above. Individualism in the West is a product of many forces in Western culture, namely Greek philosophy, Renaissance, Enlightenment, Rationalism and so on (Van der Walt, 2008:134-135; Fowler, 2007:17-25). Fowler maintains that the Enlightenment caused a turning point with its belief in an autonomous Reason that gives order and structure to life, causing an individualist view of the human person (Fowler, 2007:17). This is anchored in materialism, the view that all of reality is material and that material reality is the most important entity. We now turn to the final underlying factor of the Western culture characterised by three related "isms".

2.3.4 Subjectivism, historicism and relativism

Van der Walt locates these factors mainly in the postmodern era. He nevertheless believes that they are not something altogether new to Western history, as many may suppose (Van der Walt, 2008:135).

Van der Walt argues that the starting point of Christian thinking should be God's law that should be clearly distinguished from the realities to which it applies (Van der Walt, 2008:135). He posits that in Greek philosophy the laws for reality were confused with the things subjected to these laws, which leads subjectivism. In the modern stage of Western thought, the norms for life, previously located outside and before the human person, are located as *a priori* knowledge inside the human mind. In this way the creational laws lost their ontological status and became something regarded as epistemological phenomena. During the time of rationalism, the Hellenistic theory of *a priori* normative knowledge became the idea of Reason, the final measure of truth and conduct (Van der Walt, 2008:134).

Fowler's (2007:15-25) historical survey gives a detailed analysis of the underlying forces that shaped Western culture. His survey agrees with Van der Walt's survey of subjectivism, relativism and historicism. These underlying forces of Western culture, as stipulated by Fowler (2007:15-25), include: Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment Rationalism and Positivism. They add to other listed factors that underlie the Western culture.

To further his description, Van der Walt supposes that rationalistic trends in the history of Western thought were alternated with irrationalistic waves (Van der 2008:135). For him subjectivism is not just the knower determining knowledge, as the term is commonly used. It means finding the norms in that which is subject to the law, for instance to see the economic markets as a norm instead of the markets being judged normatively. Van der Walt argues that the subjectivist viewpoint cannot provide the steadiness, direction and certainty that true laws/norms are supposed to bring. He furthermore argues that ontological subjectivism leads to epistemological relativism (Van der Walt, 2008:135-136).

How does Van der Walt counter the notion that subjectivism is something new? In his brief survey of subjectivism, he underscores the fact the Sophists understood norms not to be outside the human person. In fact, the human person was viewed as the norm. Van der Walt thinks that Socrates and his successors were already imprisoned in subjectivism, because they anchored norms in human knowledge and virtue. "Knowledge was basically about regularity of things" (Reference). Naked

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hedonism became the guideline of pagan life. Looking at the moral decadence of Greek civilisation, Plato sought a solution in theoretical knowledge of a world of ideas outside the cosmos. Van der Walt goes on to show that "the intellectualism of Plato led significantly to the idea that our mind, our rationalist analytic function, is the only human tool to be trusted in life" (Van der Walt, 2008:136-138).

Van der Walt further shows that the law or essence in the works of Aristotle lies on the analytical level. In this way the creational laws lose their independent ontological nature and are reduced to something logical or epistemological in the human mind. The Hellenistic sceptics further shifted attention from ontological, to epistemological problems. Van der Walt thinks these sceptics thought that the solution to their epistemological problem is the theory of the *a priori*. According to this theory every human being has reliable innate ideas on regularity or normativity (Van der Walt, 2008:138-140).

Van der Walt concludes this argument by pointing to the disturbing impact of the rational and irrational view of reality. He notes that the early Christian and Medieval philosophy theory of the *a priori's* was to seek for semi-autonomous reason because reason had to be accommodated by faith, since faith had the final say. After doing away with faith, Rationalism declared the human person or his rationality to be autonomous. Van der Walt argues that irrationalism counters this. It rejects attempts to quarantine thought so as to deny it all the conceptual endeavours of personal and cultural contingencies. Irrationalism does not mean the human person is unreasonable, it just means the human person is pre- or suprarational. It accepts reason, but with limited meaning. It is no less secularist (Van der Walt, 2008:141-142).

Van der Walt argues that another aspect of irrationalism is historicism — it is the overemphasis of the historical aspect of reality, which implies that everything is historically determined. The final stage of irrationalism is radical subjectivism and relativistic tendencies which, as stated earlier, are the underlying tendencies of the contemporary Western culture, commonly referred to as postmodernism (Van der Walt, 2008:142).

When concluding on the underlying trends of Western culture, firstly Van der Walt summarises his argument on irrationalism. He notes that though the three irrationalistic tendencies look for the law in the subject, it happens in different ways: For the pragmatics the norm is practical value, for the vitalists the norm is instinctive life and for the existentialists the norm is existential human freedom (Van der 2008:142).

Secondly, Van der Walt (2008:141-142) in his analysis of subjectivism and relativism shows that irrationalism is secularistic just as rationalism. He laments the devastating impact of Western secularism that propagated a dualistic view of interpreting reality (Van der Walt, 2002:90-119). Fowler shows how Kant helped to generate this secularism. Kant divided the world of human knowledge into two separate realms, the realm of Pure Reason (realm of phenomena) and the realm of Practical Reason (the realm where matters of faith and morality resided). He provided the first definitive account of modern secularism that would shape the Western cultural outlook (Fowler, 2007:18).

Thirdly, in an important observation Van der Walt and Fowler ask from us to critically analyse the underlying factor of any thought. Van der Walt observes that the early Christian and Medieval philosophy theory of the *a priori* referred to a semi-autonomous reason that had to be accommodated by Christian faith. This actually secularised Christian faith during those periods (Van der Walt, 2008:141-142). Fowler, on the other hand, thinks theologians accommodated Kant's secularism because it appeared to release them from the worry of science domination. However, soon the Christian faith was sidelined by the cultural mainstream to give a triumph to the Renaissance, as opposed to the Reformation. This is because an increasing number of people thought they did not have experience of a spiritual world, and Kant's view of "the experience of the spiritual as a moral imperative experienced by all" was abandoned. So, the acceptance of the authority of an autonomous human Reason over all areas of life other than church, theology, and public morality, laid the foundations for a secularist society. It did this by limiting the role of biblical revelation to a sacred realm of life not viewed as important as that area of the Pure Reason that had been postulated by Kant (Fowler, 2007:18).

These underlying trends of Western culture as described by Van der Walt have a devastating effect, not only on the Western view of African culture and other non-Western cultures, but also on the Gospel. In the next section we shall consider the underlying trends of the African culture.

2.4   The underlying world view trends of African culture

Van der Walt (2003) tries to understand Africans in order to rebuild Africa. To fully understand Africa, Van der Walt attempts to identify the underlying factors of the African culture. He appeals to notable African writers in order to achieve this (Van der Walt, 2003:61-62).

Van der Walt (2003:61-127) concurs with Steyne (1989:176-185, 240-242), Turaki (2006:31-42; 1999: 96-116) and Mbiti (1969:16, 75-76) on some of their views of the underlying world view trends of the African culture. As will be seen, Van der Walt accepts holism, spiritualism, dynamism, communalism, superstitiousness, anthropocentrism and a past instead of a future mentality as philosophical presuppositions or the underlying world view trends of the African culture.

2.4.1 Holism

As noted in section 2.2.6, Van der Walt is disturbed by Westerners' view of African ontology as invaded by or packed with supernatural causes that explain everything. He is categorical that the Westerners are flawed because they arrive at this image from their own dualistic world view. In the African ontology, the natural and supernatural are not distinguished. The spiritual world and the forces that play a role in it do not invade the natural—spirituality is very natural and in fact ordinary.

Holism is the theory that states that parts of a whole are in intimate interconnection, so that they cannot exist independently of the whole or cannot be understood without reference to the whole. In the traditional African culture there is harmony between nature, humanity and the spiritual world. We have "one fluid coherent unit" where "the visible material world or universe comprising both living and non-living things,

the visible and the invisible, plants and animals, the inanimate and the natural phenomena,...are all centred around man" (Turaki, 2006:32-33).

Africans do live in an integrated world. Life is mysterious and part of the whole. The African holistic reality is a religious reality (Van der Walt, 2003:115). The whole is governed by the law of harmony, which has the goal to maintain a "state of agreement or peacefulness" in life. An African seeks to live in balance and harmony with his or her life in a harmonious existence with the entire world, both material and spiritual (Turaki, 2006:33).

Wangiri (1999:71-72) agrees with Van der Walt on holism by asserting that the Aembu people of Kenya conceive all of reality as one with God, who is in turn seen as both transcendent and immanent. Since all creatures emanate from God, their relationship must be cordial. Reality for the Aembu then is not just one. It is also harmonious. "All entities are generically harmonious: God, ancestors, animals, plants, stones and air, must live harmoniously". Harmony is vital since it guarantees a sense of certainty and security in the universe, while disharmony spells out disaster.

2.4.2 Spiritualism

As stated in 2.4.1 above, the spiritual world and the forces that play a role in it do not invade the natural world. Spiritualism then simply means that spirits saturate the traditional African world. Everything in the African traditional culture and religion is interpreted by the spiritual and is under the control of the spiritual powers and forces (Van der Walt, 2003:62). This means that everything the human person is, does, handles and interacts with, is spiritually interpreted. It means, "the whole of creation is replete with the dominant and pervasive presence of the impersonal powers and forces, spirit beings, many divinities and gods". It is therefore the responsibility of the human person to maintain good relations with the spirits in order to secure their favour (Turaki, 2006:35).

"The law of the spirit is a universal principle which governs and controls universal events and unseen powers and mysteries", affecting the destiny, the well-being and

the general life of an individual, as well as the lives of "people, groups, clans, communities and tribes" (Turaki, 2006:35). This "manifests itself in and through the spirits, human beings and inanimate objects", defining the African world view reality as "pervasive, hidden, unexplainable, unpredictable, powerful, dreadful, and awesome" (Van der Walt, 2003: 62-63).

2.4.3 Dynamism

As noted in section 2.2.4, traditional African thinking is concerned mainly with spiritual powers and specifically with manipulating them. This power-oriented way of thinking looks for supernatural causes mainly through divination and magic.

Dynamism is a response to spiritualism, that is, to establish ways of communication with the world of spirits, which is seen as impersonal, unseen and unpredictable, yet as having direct effects on individuals and social life. The knowledge of this power provides security and control of this unseen and uncertain world. This power is obtained through ritual manipulation, laying hands on the person seeking this power by the person who has it, or by encountering a spirit or persons of superior religious status. The view that the world is permeated by spirits requires this law of power (Turaki, 2006:35).

2.4.4 Communalism

In the traditional African setup, communalism (check section 2.2.2) is an organic relation to everything else that exists. People are not just individuals living independently, but in community — living in relationships and interdependence. This community is extended not only to other humans, but also to the world of the spirits, ancestors and the world of nature. In relation to other humans, communalism embraces, preserves and strengthens kinship. In relation to the ancestors and the world of spirits communalism embraces communion with this world and the generation of community (through marriage) to ensure its continuity. Finally, in relation to nature, communalism is embraced by seeking the mysterious forces lying behind natural phenomena. Totemism is one such expression of the relation to nature. This practice ensures that each community sets apart some animals or

plants for kinship affinity, religious or medicinal purposes (Van der Walt, 2003:115-120; Turaki, 2006:36-40).

2.4.5 Superstitiousness

Superstition is another underlying factor of the African culture. This is the unjustified belief in the spiritual causation leading to certain consequences of action or belief. For instance, if an owl cries on top of one's roof it is believed death will soon come to that home (Van der Walt, 2003). While preparing for a journey, a visit by a woman means a bad omen rests on the journey. The journey should be postponed to avoid the bad omen. More examples could be cited. Charms and amulets are safeguards against any harm or bad omen generated by this superstitious belief.

2.4.6 Anthropocentrism

Another important underlying factor of African culture relevant for this study is anthropocentrism (Van der Walt, 2003:65). Masolo (1994:107) maintains that the constant personification of God and the spirits is "due to the strong anthropocentric characteristic in the African thinking". Masolo observes that Africans always see the spiritual world in relation to the physical world in which the human person stands at the centre. All things centre on human beings.

2.4.7 The concept of time — past without future?

Van der Walt (2003:161-172), like other scholars such as Mbiti, thinks that the concept of time is an important underlying factor of the traditional African culture. This in itself may not be in dispute, but what I think is in dispute is the concept of a lack of future in the African concept of time. This notion is untenable if one takes into account the pre-eminence of diviners and fortune-tellers in the African context. A lack of a vocabulary, say for the future, does not denote a lack of the future in the mentality of African people. The ministry of diviners and fortune-tellers or prophets is irrelevant if the concept of distant future is denied in traditional African concept of time. A seer's ministry is only meaningful in the context of distant future, and does not refer to the short-term future. The emergence of white people (Western

colonisers) for instance, was foretold by some African seers/prophets long before it happened. They projected a long future when this was going to be a reality.

Kwekye (1975: 90-92) observes that the practice, belief and application of divination is fully dependent on a future (even distant uncertain future), which cannot at all be limited to Mbiti's idea of a future with a maximum of two years. Gyekye's supposition that Mbiti may have been limited to East African communities (if it is anything to go by) needs qualification, for even in East Africa that is still in dispute. For instance, the Gikuyu community that Mbiti elaborates on and who he purports to have no concept of distant future is my own community. However, it is very clear that the evidence provided by proverbs, riddles, and prophecies in my Gikuyu community nullifies Mbiti's argument, because most of them imply not only a short future, but a very long-term future.

Masolo's (1994:112-114) argument disputes the notion that Africans lack a concept of future. Van der Walt (2003:161-162) entertains the Mbitian concept of time, a past without future. Van der Walt, however, should take note that Masolo and other African scholars dispute Mbiti's evaluation. Masolo uses the example of the Gikuyu and Kikamba verb "to come" to ascertain his dispute. He argues that the same argument Mbiti uses to disqualify the future concept in the African culture when applied to English could yield the same ridiculous result of connoting that the English culture does not have a concept of the future. This is because the verb "to come" when conceived in the future tense "I will come", unless qualified remains vague, it cannot for instance tell when the "I will come" will be.

Unless the misconception of a lack of future in African culture is cleared, the interpretation of time as a underlying factor of the African culture remains controversial.

2.5   Chapter summary

This chapter sought to investigate how Van der Walt views the fundamental differences between the traditional African and Western worldview and culture.

Chapter 2: B.J. van der Walt's comparison and evaluation of the African and Western cultures

In an attempt to articulate the fundamental differences, Van der Walt first of all spells out the problems faced in the effort of evaluating differences. He cited challenges such as ethnocentrism, relativism, methodology of evaluation and what a holistic approach entails. Van der Walt notes that one has to overcome issues such as appearing to generalise cultural reality, being branded ethnocentric as one evaluates a culture that is not one's own, being seen as overlooking similarities and instead concentrating on differences.

It is noted in the chapter that Van der Walt indeed generalises the cultural differences of the traditional African and Western cultures - this touches on his weak spot. It is good to also point out that Van der Walt's concern that the consciousness of the challenge of ethnocentrism and even an attempt to genuinely overcome it does not fully eradicate the fear of being branded ethnocentric. He warns that while this is somehow healthy because it keeps one alert, it may be too dangerous if this fear prohibits a critical evaluation of cultures.

Van der Walt proceeds to look at the differences of the traditional African and Western cultures after settling the above precaution. He compares the African and Western cultures in the following areas: shame versus guilt conscience, communalism versus individualism mentality, the concept of time, ways of thinking, concept of knowledge, religion and faith.

The chapter concludes by identifying the underlying presuppositions of the two cultures according to Van der Walt's. They are seen to explain the cause of fundamental differences in the interpretation of experienced reality. For the Western culture the presuppositions cited include the belief in a real and rational world, power of domination, individualism and materialism subjectivism, historicism and relativism. For the traditional African culture the underlying assumptions include holism, spiritualism, dynamism, communalism, superstitious mentality, and anthropocentrism.

Having seen how Van der Walt has described the differences in the African and Western cultures and the overview of their underlying factors, we shall now turn to how he views the contemporary impact of the clash between African and Western

cultures and associated world views on African societies. From there we shall investigate his alternative and thereafter establish a critical evaluation of what he provides as an alternative.

Chapter 3: The world view clash of African and Western cultures: Van der Walt's view of the impact on African societies

There is no better way of capturing the focus of this section than the title Van der Walt chose for one of his books *"When African and Western cultures meet: From confrontation to appreciation".* The first part of the sub-title of the book reveals a hostile, violent conflict situation, characterised by incompatibilities that lead to unfortunate disagreements as Western and African cultures meet.

The forcible imposition of alien structures rooted in an alien culture as seen in the introduction to the research, "Orientation and background", points to a hostile and violent conflict situation in the relation of African and Western cultures. This forms the basis for a need to consider the impact of the clash between Western and African cultures within African society that this chapter seeks to address. This concern was raised in 5 (3) of the research objectives, as found in the introduction of this project. This situation anticipates a solution and Van der Walt's third way is proposed in this project as the viable solution. This solution is presented in chapter 4-6.

The questions that this chapter wrestle with are: What is this clash or hostile, violent conflict situation? Where is it? And how is it? If we do not get to the heart of the matter, we may end up struggling with symptoms while leaving the real problem untackled. A look at what Van der Walt and other scholars presents provide understanding of how the Western culture behaved towards the African culture, and this will implicitly provide answers to the questions just raised. This then will establish the need for Van der Walt's third way that seeks to contain the damage on African society caused by the clash of Western and African cultures. This is anticipated by the second sub-title of Van der Walt's book cited above.

3.1   Van der Walt's analysis of the clash

Van der Walt analyses how Westerners approached the African culture and how Africans reacted to this approach. This analysis helps us to understand the gravity of the problem and why Van der Walt seeks to offer a solution.

3.1.1 A derogatory approach

Van der Walt observes that in colonial times Western culture was regarded as superior to other cultures because it was believed to be the most highly developed civilisation. The cultural differences were viewed as inborn, and not acquired. Westerners were seen as culturally born to be the masters and Africans as inferior and destined to remain slaves. "Whites" were regarded as civilised, good, beautiful, intelligent and rational, and "blacks" as primitive, bad, ugly, unintelligent and irrational (Van der Walt, 1997:5).

Van der Walt located the philosophical background of this attitude in the Western evolutionary theory developed by C. Darwin and others (Van der Walt, 1997:5). He sees Comte's tripartite view of social evolution, namely the supposedly consecutive theological/fetishism, metaphysical/polytheism, and the positive/monotheism phases as exemplary of the Western attempt to explain the human mind's evolution. The fetishism stage that was also attributed to African culture was seen as the most primitive (Van der Walt, 1997:5).

Van der Walt explains that Comte must have influenced Edward Taylor's thought about primitive culture. Taylor believed that the acts of the "primitive" are based on a specific outlook, world view or philosophy and this in turn must have influenced Lévy-Bruhl in his designation of the concept of a "primitive mentality". Van der Walt noted Lévy-Bruhl's postulation that the bizarre, strange and surprising deeds (of the supposed primitive culture) should be sought not in philosophy (a particular form of rationality), but in a specific kind of *mentality* (Van der Walt, 1997:5).

Van der Walt goes on to explicate how Lévy-Bruhl's ethno-psychology seemed to have replaced Taylor's ethno-philosophy. Lévy-Bruhl's ethno-psychology led him to believe that the so-called primitive people were governed by emotions and not reason. Within this development it was obvious that there was no comparison between the "primitive" Africans and the "civilised" Westerners. The reason for this was simple: their theoretical presuppositions and mental functions were totally different. The difference is not one of degree, but of a kind. Judged by the Western

mode of rationality or logic, the primitive mentality was viewed as basically irrational and pre-logical (Van der Walt, 1997:5).

Lévy-Bruhl asserted that the modern person makes his judgements "by means of the principles of identity while the primitive by collective representations realising a mystic participation or relationship with his object". Lévy-Bruhl's argument presents "two systems of inferential practice, the Western and non-Western" (Masolo, 1994:7). The Western inferential practice depends "on the naturalistic view of material causality" supported by observation. This inferential practice was thought by Lévy-Bruhl's logic "as conditional argument (if p then q), in which the consequent must be seen to inescapably derive its validity from the precedent" (Masolo, 1994:7-8). Contrary to this is the primitive way of thinking where "the mind does not base its inferential practice on sufficient grounds supported by observations". Instead it always introduces indeterminable factors into the explanation of experience (Masolo, 1994:7-8). Masolo describes primitive logic as follows:

> "Instead of saying:
> "If p then q
> But p
> Therefore q
> Primitive reasoning will usually run something like the following:
> p and q if x
> But p and q
>   Therefore x" (Masolo, 1994:8).

In this case x is "indeterminable, arbitrary and alterable at will" and not subject to observation. X is introduced disregarding "patterns of factual relation in explanatory process". It is beyond reason often contradictory and at best mystical (Masolo, 1994:8).

Lévy-Bruhl's explanation of the "civilised" and the "primitive" mentality seems to have influenced Van der Walt's description of the African logic, as was seen in subsection 2.2.4. Van der Walt thinks that African logic follows an "and-and logic". This seems to tie with how Lévy-Bruhl describes primitive reasoning, which is something like "p and

q if x, But p and q therefore x" (Masolo, 1994:8). While it can not be disputed that Van der Walt criticises Lévy-Bruhl and regrets that he influenced the way the Westerners viewed African culture so negatively, this does seem to stop Lévy-Bruhl from influencing Van der Walt's view on African logic. This influence on Van der Walt's view of African logic does not in any way undermine Van der Walt's criticism of Lévy-Bruhl's argument. It only points to the fact that we can sometimes be influenced by what we abhor, and Van der Walt is not an exception. Masolo observes that Lévy-Bruhl himself saw his own flaw in the analysis of the civilised and uncivilised mentality and attempted to correct it at the end of his life. The concern here is, if Lévy-Bruhl abandoned his analysis of the civilised and uncivilised at the end of his life, is Van der Walt justified in using it to analyse African logic? It will only be fair for Van der Walt to revise it if indeed he was influenced by Lévy-Bruhl. If not, he should clarify how he comes with an "and-and logic" (Masolo, 1994:8).

Van der Walt argues that the evolutionistic viewpoint was also applied to Christianity, with the result that it was seen as the "highest" religion. With this view of a supposedly superior culture and religion, Christian missionaries exported the Western form of Christianity (a mixture of Western culture and Christianity) to the "uncivilised" non-Western world. The implication was a one-sided Eurocentric way of evaluating non-Western cultures, with the Western culture becoming the norm according to which every other culture had to be judged (Van der Walt, 2006:6-7).

Mbiti (1969:8-10) confirms Van der Walt's observation by showing how African cultures and religions have been derogatorily considered as primitive, savage and uncivilised. Mbiti argues that the African people were regarded as lacking imagination or emotion with terms such as animism, fetishism, totemism and naturalism wrongly used to describe African religion, and by extension culture. Mbiti is pained by how the African culture was treated by the West, as is reflected in the following comment:

> "… African religions and philosophy have been subjected to a great deal of misinterpretation, misrepresentation and misunderstanding. They have been despised, mocked as primitive and underdeveloped… in missionary circles they have been condemned as superstition, satanic, devilish and hellish. In spite of all these attacks, traditional religions have survived, they dominate the background of African peoples, and must be reckoned with even in the middle of the modern changes" (Mbiti, 1969:10).

Bediako thinks that the twentieth century African intellectual criticisms of Christianity, whether by Okot p 'Bitek, Ali Mazrui or especially proponents of Afrikania in Ghana, share a persisting sense that Christianity can never become an adequate frame of reference for full expression of African ideals of life because of the nature of its history in Africa (Bediako, 1995:5). It is Bediako's wish that the situation should be different, because Christianity has a liberating and transforming power. But if the status quo is maintained, Christianity will continue to fight a losing battle in Africa.

The above criticism of Christianity shares a particular intellectual perception of the problem of African identity, which has its roots in the history of Africa's contact with the West. This contact occurred especially during the nineteenth century when increasing Western cultural and political penetration and dominance in Africa coincided with an equally massive Western missionary enterprise. Unlike colonialism, the missionary enterprise was part of a different benevolent European involvement in Africa. However, since the missionaries also treated Africans as savage, ignorant and superstitious, they expressed something of the general European view. This view is what Bediako calls *Afrikaanschauung (*Bediako, 1995:6) and what Van der Walt refers to as the one-sided Eurocentric way of evaluating Africans and their religions and cultures (Van der Walt, 2006:6-7).

3.1.2 Four African reactions to the Western attitude

It will be unreasonable to imagine that the Western attitude towards the African culture would not be met with some kind of reaction. The African culture that guarded African identity was at stake and Africans had to react in one way or the other.

Van der Walt gives four ways in which Africans reacted to the Western attitude towards them. The four ways are *acceptance and assimilation, rehabilitation, exclusivism* and *a multi-or trans-cultural consciousness*. Let us look at how Van der Walt explains the four reactions.

- *Acceptance and assimilation* – Van der Walt notes that some Africans accepted their inferiority without changing their culture. Others thought of overcoming their black "inferiority" by adopting Western styles and customs. In these attitudes Western culture was still regarded as positive and superior and a standard by which African culture can be gauged. So, by schooling, training and hard work,

Africans thought they could abandon their inferior culture and adopt or acquire the superior Western culture. In this way some *"black Englishmen"* arose from British colonial rule, *évolvés* from French colonial rule and *assimilados* from Portuguese colonial rule (Van der Walt, 1997:6). Despite this attempt, blacks[1] were never assimilated into the white culture. Even after marrying whites they were not accepted as equals. They were reminded that everything they have accomplished — history, culture and scholarship — were the accomplishments of the white person. An impossible state was expected of blacks in order to be whites. They had to not be "a black skin in a white mask", but a "white skin and soul". Was this attainable? Africans had to completely denounce their own culture and then act and think completely as "whites". But even if they did so, one wonders whether they could be treated as equals (Van der Walt, 1997:6).

- *Rehabilitation* – this was a type of reaction and cultural consciousness that developed in African countries (possibly after the first attempt failed). According to the *negritude* movement a culture could not be the monopoly of whites only. Blacks have contributed to the civilisation and history of mankind in their own ways, and these contributions should be known to the rest of the world. Europe may be the master of *logic, science and rationality*, but Africa is the master of emotion and rhythm. Both reason and emotion are equal positive qualities in a person (Van der Walt, 1997:6). If whites are identified with rationality, Africans are identified with emotionality, both are needed in the development of the person. In this case whites could brag with 50% and Africans with the other 50%. Van der Walt asserts that the negritude rejection of rationality was an emotional reaction against the Western claim of rationality being the preserve of the "white" (Van der Walt, 1997:6). Did negritude reject rationality or pose a case for possessing what the whites did not have? The negritude viewpoint sent a clear message to whites. They were alluding that whites could "keep their 50% and remain half-developed and Africans could remain with their 50% and also remain half-developed as humans" (Masolo, 1994:1-3). In this case each group needed the other. However, irrespective of this, Van der Walt points out that the negritude

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[1] Blacks in this context is synonymous to Africans, as opposed to how it is used in the next section which addresses rehabilitation as a reaction against the Western attitude to African cultures. In the later sections it refers to all the black people— Africans and those in the Diaspora.

viewpoint did not appeal to the African masses, but the "alienated intelligentsia". To support this claim, Van der Walt indicates that L. Senghor (a negritude proponent) addressed the French intelligentsia, and not ordinary Africans (Van der Walt, 1997:6-7).

- *Exclusivism* – beyond negritude, the next phase of cultural consciousness was that of an uncompromising, anti-white black nationalism. All positive qualities previously identified with the white race were denied. The gains from the whites had to be forgotten and the blacks had to fight to regain their past lost glory, own their culture and pursue political independence. This was an unrealistic reaction because even scholarship that was used to champion this reaction was gained through the Western influence (Van der Walt, 1997:7).

- *A multi- or trans-cultural consciousness* - Van der Walt sees this as the last stage in the modern development of the black consciousness movement. It tries to transcend all previous phases and seems to be a better alternative. It seeks to get rid of the imperialistic tendencies in both Western and African cultures. Due to technological and economical imbalances and numerous ethnic and other conflicts, this viewpoint has not been fully established in Africa. Tribalism, which is a major problem in Africa, has not provided good nurturing ground for trans-cultural consciousness (Van der Walt, 1997:7).

All these reactions did not provide a better alternative to respond to the Western attitude towards African culture. It is for this reason that Van der Walt advocates for his third way.

3.1.3 The philosophical context of the Western reaction to Africans

It is worthwhile to briefly reflect on D.A. Masolo (1994), an African scholar whose work is important because it gives a view of a militant Africanism that was caused by Western ethnocentrism. Masolo also elaborates on what Van der Walt cites in subsection 3.2.2 as reactions against the Western attitude to Africans and their culture. In establishing the context of Western reaction towards African culture, Masolo (1994:1-24) first underscores the philosophical development of Western thought with an elaboration of both rationalism and irrationalism (in their different

forms) and their impact on Western culture. He notes that this provided a basis for interpretation of African and other non-Western cultures.

Masolo not only confirms Van der Walt's observation that the rational and irrational thinkers think that everything is on a path of progress with no fixed norms that give direction. He also strengthens Van der Walt's criticism of a historicist interpretation of reality with an irrational belief in progress at the root of it (Van der Walt, 2006:51-53). Van der Walt and Masolo show that historical realities counter the Western claim of greater progress through reason - two World Wars and massive environmental degradation in our times fiercely challenges this claim.

3.2   Impact of the clash on African identity

The discussion now turns to the negative impact of the clash between Western and African world views on African society. We begin with the effect on African identity. Coupled with what Van der Walt has noted in 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. above, it is good to observe that the clash of Western and African cultures impacted seriously on the identity of African people. As Van der Walt has indicated, Africans responded to the Western approach on their culture in different ways. Masolo, who defends the African world view by downplaying the role of reason celebrated as important by Europeans, presents the context of the African response. In discussing the historical context of the African reaction to the West, Masolo (1994: 2-11) notes negritude as a legitimate origin of philosophical discussion in Africa, and a reaction to the Western attitude towards Africans and their culture. Van der Walt (1997:4-8) agrees with Masolo regarding negritude as the context of discussing African reaction.

The Harlem Renaissance ignited this reaction. The Harlem Renaissance was a literary movement in the 1920s that centred on Harlem and was an early manifestation of black consciousness in the US. This movement influenced the African elite to champion for the reaffirmation, redefinition and reproclamation of the African culture and identity that was derogated and nearly destroyed by Westernism, slavery and colonialism. The Movement influenced African writers such as Blyden and Garvey, Diop and Olela and so on. The movement aimed to fight social

segregation, political disfranchisement, labour exploitation in the economic sector and cultural discrimination in America and worldwide (Masolo, 1994:2-42).

Masolo observes that in Africa the Harlem Renaissance assisted to establish a successful way to confront white racism. This was to redeem the African dignity trodden underfoot for centuries by the West. The Harlem Renaissance categorically stated that white discrimination aimed at non-Western cultures had no logical foundation. Pan-Africanism (arising from the Harlem Renaissance) is viewed by Masolo as not an instance of African racial discrimination against the West, but rather a justified opposition of any form of racial prejudice and social chauvinism and a catalyst for a constructive solidarity among all Africans (Masolo, 1994:12).

But, as cautioned by Van der Walt, this became a form of Afrocentrism even as also expressed by Masolo's frustration — that different forms of negritude went beyond what was anticipated. He notes for instance that Césaire — a proponent of negritude — did not intend to see negritude become a school of thought or an ideology, but rather a literary phenomenon, a personal ethic, not biological, but cultural and historical. The founders of negritude did not intend "a 'back-looking idealism,' a falsely naturalised, consistent African mentality that tends to assimilate or reascribe the categories of a romantic, and sometimes racialist European ethnography". Masolo regrets that what the negritude founders abhorred, namely the deterioration of negritude into an ideology, became an unfortunate reality in Africa, making negritude a suspicious movement (Masolo, 1994:15).

It is significant to observe that Van der Walt's third way goes beyond what Masolo, as a representative of many African scholars, gives as an alternative for protecting African identity. Masolo merely defends the African world view and criticises the Western notion of the validity of reason. Van der Walt on the other hand, would argue that the failure of rationality and irrationality should give way to divine order/normativity.

What Masolo presents justifies Van der Walt's third way as an answer to both Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism. The "ism" in both Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism represent a deification of culture, which is a form of idolatry and therefore untenable

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from a Christian perspective. This means that Masolo's presentation and defence of what Van der Walt would regard as Afrocentrism is not acceptable from a Christian standpoint. Even what Masolo sought to establish as African philosophy to champion the redemption of African dignity, has its flaws. The result of his search for an African philosophy is not actually African, but an existentialist philosophical movement that advances the "appraisal of the mystic contact with being" as was advocated by Heidegger. This was welcomed by a number of Africans, because it was hostile to the scientific systematicism and rationalism of for instance Hegel and Descartes. The latter "Western logocentrism" was instrumental in "discriminating against non-Western cultures, among them the African culture (Masolo, 1994:24). What is thus clear from Masolo's argument is that the African identity (and we should add — all cultures) should be given its space. However, as important as that may be, we must guard against allowing the means to justify the end. Van der Walt's third way struggles not only with the end, but also with the means.

What then began as an Afrocentric search of an African mode of thinking, different from the Western mental scheme, identity and philosophy, turns out to be just an echo of several European schools of thought. We end up with the phenomenological school of Edmund Husserl and the existentialism of Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers. Masolo also recognises this (Masolo, 1994:24-27). Besides, some formulations of this African philosophy contain similar formulations as those of European Romantics (e.g. Herder), which were the origin of the aggressive nationalisms of the 20th century. A Christian reflection should be critical of any form of idolatry. Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism as noted above are forms of idolatry because they deify culture. Middleton and Walsh (1984:64-65) warns that idolatry is abhorred by God because it does not accept, fulfill and demonstrate God's rule in the whole range of our cultural activities. Instead of this, it seeks to project this responsibility to idols. Idolatry is the illegitimate alternative to the genuine task to image God. It involves false worship and false imaging. Both of these are condemned in entire Scripture and more categorically in the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20: 3-5:

> *"You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the*

sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me".

Middleton and Walsh continue to warn that we have no authority as human beings to designate what the image of God is going to be. God settled that when he created us noting that we should become his image and not that of anyone or anything else. Idols are not at all adequate representation of God. That task is reserved for human beings. Idolatry thus usurps not only the rightful place of God, but our place too (Middleton & Walsh, 1984:64-65)

This should lead us to think of Van der Walt's third way, which abhors any form of idolatry and advocates for a demonstration of the rule of God in the whole range of our cultural activities. However, let us first elaborate on some more impacts of the clash between Western and African world views.

3.3. The impact of the clash on the socio-political-economic development of Africa

Van der Walt shows that the current type of development shaping the African continent has done little to advance human well-being. This development is fitted in the structure of the Western concept that is thought to be ideal. It is thought that the poorer non-Western countries, among them the African continent, inevitably have to be developed by means of Western science, technology and economy. Western democracy is seen as the only viable means of propagating this development (Van der Walt, 2006:47-49).

Nyasani also bemourns what Van der Walt observes as the failure of the current development agenda to advance human well-being. Nyasani thinks that culture and traditional thought patterns are major determinants in any developmental process. He therefore asserts that a culture and the thought systems emanating from it significantly define and control the development of any society of people (Nyasani, 1988:31). Failure to consider this only complicates the situation and leads to an impoverished society. The proponents of the current economic development who think that economic development is complete development have failed to consider this.

According to Van der Walt, industrial progress was seen as the only machinery for improving and growing underdeveloped areas. Unfortunately the underdeveloped world accepted this view. According to this line of thinking the world could only be divided into three categories: the developed, underdeveloped and undeveloped. Greater production was seen as the key to prosperity and peace. The key to greater production was thought to be realised only through a wider and more rigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge. Through this scientism and technicism, development was reduced to economical development, material prosperity or richness (Van der Walt, 2006:49).

Van der Walt identifies three features that characterised the development that was propagated to Africa: A first feature is the strong reductionistic character where all emphasis is on the economic and technical side of cosmic reality, the Eurocentric character and an absolute faith in unlimited economic and technological growth and progress. Productivity that considered the cultural-historical circumstances of Africans was totally ignored. Instead the development that was implemented was one that reduced everything to "profit, acquisition and power". This brought to Africans the dehumanising sickness of Western society, cultural under-development (Van der Walt, 2006:51-53).

Secondly, Van der Walt notes that the Western mode of fixing the African problem of poverty became a big illusion. It created a more serious problem, which is still Africa's current monster. This is the widening gap between rich and poor. Isn't it now apparent that poverty is not something to be fixed with more money and technology? It is a complex and dehumanising issue, much deeper and harder than something merely socio-economic. In solving it Africans need justice in access to and a voice about resources, better training, more opportunities and other forms of empowerment (Van der Walt, 2006:54-55). Fowler (1998:407; 2002:75-80) concurs with Van der Walt on the failures and paradoxes of Western development.

Thirdly, Van der Walt is categorical that the developmental attempt by the West was not simply aimed at development. It was more than that. It was the transfer of a secular religion through culture. Its mission was clear: All cultural forms other than that of the West had to change by all means to fit the Western ideal. If that did not

happen, non-Western cultures risked being totally demolished. It was this Western secular religion that gave the vision of an ideal society that had to be realised in the whole world through the Western developmental agenda conditioned by the following presuppositions: (i) Western culture, though different from non-Western cultures, should not clash with non-Western cultures, but could wash and clean them. (ii) Western culture is superior to all other cultures. (iii) Western culture is universally valid and has to be transferred to other parts of the world to solve the problems of those other worlds. These presuppositions imply that a comprehensive understanding is needed to appreciate the African and Western cultures, and their world views are ignored. It is barbaric to think Africans could develop (economically) without a culture, world view and values (Van der Walt, 56-58).

Fowler backs Van der Walt's criticism of the superiority and self-image of Western culture by noting and also criticising John Stuart Mill's (the 19th Century English champion of Liberal Democracy) categorical exclamation that the "uncivilised" tribes could "only be fitted for civilisation and democratic government through the despotic authority of military rule". When a sense of civilisation is brought to them in this manner, they could somehow learn to govern themselves (Fowler, 1995:6). Fowler argues that though Christians and secularists alike asserted the basic dignity and worth of all humans, it seemed self-evident to them that Africans could experience full human dignity and worth only if, in their social and political relations, they adopted the civilisation mode of European societies.

Van der Walt views the effect of these imperialistic actions as the cause of the demolition of indigenous cultural values, leading to the loss of identity and self-respect (as explained earlier) and adopting a dependency syndrome (Van der Walt, 2006:59). Fowler adds that this subjugation ironically became a major hindrance to the West's purpose of developing Africa (Fowler, 1995:6).

Van der Walt warns that though the West added more human elements to their development paradigms, they still reflected the point of view of economism, overemphasising, exaggerating and idolising one aspect of the rich variety of the human reality. Everything is seen from an economic perspective, instead of being judged normatively. This becomes the goal, means and norm for life. It is unfortunate

that "the non-economic matters are viewed to have no value or where they are, they are — against their true nature — commercialised" (Van der Walt, 2006:59).

Fowler supports Van der Walt's argument that, based on an individualistic faith in human reason and the supposed socially liberating power of political democracy, the West saw the developing democracies of Europe as a model of civilisation for the whole world. This impressed on Europe a solemn moral obligation to bring these civilised benefits to all (Fowler, 1995:9). The partition of Africa into colonial territories totally disregarded the social realities of the African people. It regularly divided closely related people, for example the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania, or the Venda of Zimbabwe and South Africa. The colonial masters brought together people who had no common interest other than their common humanity and political subjugation. Africa had no say in what came to be their political map today (Fowler, 1995:9-10).

In realising what the colonial masters regarded as a "noble" task, the African social and political realities were totally disregarded and infringed. Africa was seen as inhabited by lawless savages who needed discipline to bring them to the status of respected humanity. This could only be achieved through European rule, hence subjugation. The existing social order and political arrangement of African societies, the basis for African "law and order", were undermined and disrupted by the imposition of the alien political structures of European society (Fowler, 1995:10,12).

Fowler observes that in some cases the maintenance of the colonial legacy meant planting colonial authorities of "tribal" chiefs as agents of colonial authority within African societies. Drawing their authorities from their colonial masters, these chiefs rivalled the traditional African authorities within African societies. Their authority within the African society was coerced by the colonial administration. This disrupted the African society. In other cases, existing African leaders such as the Kabakas of Baganda in Uganda were recruited as agents of colonial authority. On the surface, this seemed to respect the existing African order because it endorsed African leadership, but the effect was as disruptive as the practice of the appointed chiefs. In practice, only the shell of the African social structure was retained (Fowler, 1995:12-13).

The Kabakas or the appointed chiefs in the colonial authority were not accountable to their own people, but to their colonial authority. The checks and balances that had been part of the traditional social structure no longer operated, since they were overridden by intervening colonial power. Leadership was not checked by African social values that had been effective. It was rather checked by the political interests of the colonial masters (Fowler, 1995:13). This explains why post-colonial Africa continues to suffer; the colonial political authority serving the European economic interests mutilated the African social checks and balances.

Nyasani noted, with Van der Walt and Fowler, that the positive aspects of the cultural ingredients that Africans could "ideally cherish and preserve" had been subverted and corrupted to such an extent that their positive value may be questionable. "The modern African seems to stand before an unpleasant dilemma: either to adopt the so-called modern cultural realities and thereby choose to pursue the path of distortions in development or retrace his cultural roots at the expense of actually slowing down his developmental tempo and progress". Africans are in this problem because the component of culture, so crucial in determining the course of the desired development, is the same component that was mutilated by the Judeo-Christian tradition on the one hand and colonialism on the other (Nyasani, 1988:32).

Nyasani goes on to say that where culture is a major developmental driving force, the following is presupposed: Firstly, an authentic cultural awareness and an inspiration to the developmental unfolding and, secondly, a natural affection of the kind of objects of culture. Nyasani notes that sadly, the above has not happened in the African case, but rather in the majority of cases. African development has been riddled with physical, moral and even spiritual interruptions. Agreeing with both Fowler and Van der Walt, Nyasani shows that colonial domination forcefully banished the peculiar mode of development in Africa and imposed institutions that were alien to those actually discovered by the Africans themselves (Nyasani, 1988:32-33).

The situation as identified above is unfortunate and pathetic. Nyasani sees it as thwarting and disorienting a natural moral development. It also demands an unnecessary re-assessment of social values to effect a social transformation in the

nature of social advancement. Finally, it postulates a new awareness not in keeping with the people's traditional vision, thus disrupting continuity in the realisation of their social objectives. In this way, Nyasani notes that "progress is either de-accelerated or simply made to take a distorted course because of the attendant requirements relative to the mental re-adjustment that must necessarily be made under the exotic influences" (Nyasani, 1988:34).

3.4   The impact of the clash on education

Not only did the clash of Western and African cultures impact negatively on the identity and socio-political-economic development of Africa, it also negatively impacted education. The supposed superiority of Western culture and a total disregard of the value of African culture were clearly seen in Africa's education. Van der Walt asserts that Africa was introduced to modern Western and formal education by the Christian missionaries at the end of the 19th century. They thought that this was the most effective way of evangelising and civilising Africa. He observes that colonial rulers promoted the Western mode of education in order to propagate and promote their colonial agenda and to progress Africa. Only this mode of education and not the primitive African education could present what Africa needed for its growth and progress. This Eurocentric world view was founded on an absolute faith in unlimited growth and progress. While there was nothing wrong with bringing a Western form of education to Africa, Africans were denied opportunities to interrogate this education from their world view perspective. The education that was forcibly planted in Africa fragmented the African holistic view of reality because of its dualistic nature. Van der Walt notes that this education from a dualistic orientation created big gaps in the academic world that continues to be with us to date. There are now secular departments/disciplines and secular subjects and sacred department/disciplines and sacred subjects in our institutions of higher learning, and worst of all in Christian higher education (Van der Walt, 2001:98-99).

Van der Walt further observes that the curricula that were adopted, even by independent African governments, for primary, secondary and higher education, still remain irrelevant to the African situation (Van der Walt, 2001:99). In looking at the African development in the 21st century, Panford and Agyemang (2006:15-16)

support Van der Walt's perception of the irrelevance of Africa's educational systems by citing failures in these educational systems to fundamentally restructure the colonial educational systems into ones that would address Africa's needs. They lament that the African schools' curricula even fail to "meet the economic needs in terms of human capital/resource development". Fowler (2007:1) also clearly captures Van der Walt's conception. He notes that when the Europeans came to Africa they thought the African people were ignorant savages who lacked any form of education. This is because they could not see classrooms, books, or writing materials and it became obvious to them that there was no system of education in Africa. It was urgent for them to provide the uneducated Africans with education, so easily done by transplanting their system of education to Africa. Fowler notes that the result of this was devastating. for:

> *"The highly effective educational systems of Africa that produced expert trades- men, traders, agriculturalists, politicians and lawyers whose knowledge was grounded in African history and communal life, were eroded. They were displaced by an educational system based entirely on learning from books designed for other peoples in other cultural and historical contexts with little relevance to the daily lives of the African peoples" (Fowler, 2007:1).*

It is ironic that many of the educational systems and approaches introduced to Africa by the Missionaries and the colonisers have by now been disregarded in the West, but African educational institutions are still slavishly clinging to them. As Africans are getting more and more educated, African problems are also multiplying. As Van der Walt has noted, this is due to curricula that is irrelevant to African situations. The African educational systems are producing more job seekers than job creators. They generate more candidates who pass exams, but not those who seek to give answers to Africa's problems. Books are read to pass exams and secure good jobs, but not to generate knowledge. In most cases academic research is completed to satisfy examiners, but not to provide stimulation for resolving Africa's predicament.

I think of a point in case: While undertaking my undergraduate studies in theology, we conducted research in one of the local churches in the college's neighbourhood. Part of the research was to envision a ten-year strategic plan for the church. We got an excellent grade for the research. Immediately after our graduation, a colleague with whom I conducted the research was posted in the very church where we did our research. I called him to enquire how our research was helpful to his pastoral work

and his answer was simple: "That was meant for exam and I am here for the ministry, those are two different things".

We know of some research that has produced good results in the field, but it is a pity that most of it becomes filled with dust on the shelves. Fowler's observation is correct — Africa's academic endeavour is barely grounded in the African context and does not seek to address issues that could improve Africa's life realities. That is why the learned community continues to congest the existing available facilities and even duplicate each other, while the virgin fields are waiting for more exploration. Unfortunately the younger products of Africa's educational systems lack direction and the unemployment problem continues to trouble Africa amid the under-exploitation of Africa's natural resources. We continue to export raw materials and import them back at exorbitant prices after value has been added to them.

3.5   Chapter summary

This chapter analyses Van der Walt's understanding of the impact of the world view clash between Western and African cultures on African society. Western culture had and has continued to have a derogatory approach to African culture. This was and is still informed by the supposed superiority of Western culture. It is believed by Westerners that their culture is civilised to such a degree that the African culture, and possibly other non-Western cultures, must be judged by it. This unjustified belief in the superiority of Western culture has been criticised and rejected by Van der Walt. He has called for a consideration of a sober way to evaluate cultures. Van der Walt notes that Africans have reacted in different ways to the derogatory Western approach. He cites four initial reactions, namely acceptance and assimilation, rehabilitation, exclusivism and supposed multi- or trans-cultural consciousness. A more elaborate reaction has been through negritude, which sought the affirmation or consciousness of the value of black or African culture, heritage and identity (New Oxford American Dictionary, 2005–2009)

The chapter has also identified areas where Van der Walt thinks the clash has been felt most in the African society. They include: African identity, socio-political-economic development and education. Van der Walt has indicated that post-

independent Africa continues to live with the bitter realities of this clash and he points us to his third way as the viable alternative.

Having underscored the impact of the clash of Western culture and world views on the identity of Africans, their social-economic-political and educational realities, it is good to caution that our focus is not to demonise Western culture and glorify African culture. To the contrary, the focus is to provide a fair critique of both cultures by critically examining Van der Walt's evaluation. There are major questions contemplated in this chapter, which include: What would the contemporary African situation have been if the African culture, social order, the political arrangement of African societies, religious and even the African educational systems had been considered? I think we would have seen the benefits incorporating the best features of Western education, while enriching this with the valuable features of African culture. This education could help to develop a coherent educational system that supports the African society in which the gifts of all could be utilised to the full. This could also enrich other parts of the world, especially the West, who provide a fertile ground for the reductionist view of reality.

Considering that the Western culture and world view has impacted negatively on the identity of Africans, their social-economic-political and educational realities, is the battle forever lost? I do not think so. We should think of how the damage could be repaired. We must do now what ought to have been done, instead of just mourning the damage that was inflicted on us. In doing this, Africa must recognise that it needs the West just as the West and other non-Western cultures need it. Beyond this, Africa needs a transforming vision that must shape its culture and world view. All Africans are welcome to this contribution. From a reformational perspective, Christians must penetrate the structures of society, reforming and remoulding our culture; from scholarship in universities to politics, business and family life. This Christian vision is not only for Africa, but the entire world. The Christian vision calls all Christians (an indeed all human beings) to be of one heart and mind. It acknowledges that Christ is the Lord of all of life. The Christian vision provides hope and not doom for Africa and the entire world (Walsh & Middleton, 1984: back cover) The next section will consider whether Van der Walt's third way provides this transforming vision or not. If so, how shall we help to propagate Van der Walt's third

way, and if not what can be recommended as an alternative to his third way? While the explicit agenda of the chapter is to better Van der Walt's approach, its implicit agenda is to address the above concerns about the African peoples.

Chapter 4: Van der Walt's third way

Van der Walt has shown the problems of colonial and postcolonial Africa, particularly the destruction of Africa's functioning institutions by forcible substitution with alien structures — the effect of Eurocentrism. He has also shown the Afrocentric response. He denounces both Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism and presents his third way as the better alternative to resolve the African problem of the divided soul, Afrocentrism and the false dilemma that Africa finds itself in as explained in the introduction to this research project (section 1, "Orientation and background" and section 2, "Research question"). This chapter addresses what is raised in section 5(4) of the research objectives, namely the development and exposition of Van der Walt's third way. It starts to answer the question of whether this third way provides an effective basis for reuniting the "divided soul" of the African people.

4.1 Expounding Van der Walt's third way

In expounding his third way Van der Walt wishes to provide what may sustain the African community. His attempt to establish what may sustain the African community is also anticipated by other scholars, such as Attie van Niekerk. In an unpublished article Van Niekerk details results of research conducted by the Nova Institute and the University of Pretoria. Van Niekerk thinks that the traditional African culture, which is more communal and less individualistic (than Western culture) is drastically being eroded by urbanisation (Van Niekerk, 2014:3). Bearing in mind Van Niekerk's concern, let us see how Van der Walt articulates his third way.

4.1.1 Van der Walt's third way: Articulating the false dilemma

As noted earlier, Africans find themselves in a false dilemma as they intend to remain in the mainstream of today's global society. The dilemma of choosing between retaining the unique African cultural identity — and thus developing a society that can only be a primitive backwater in today's world — or abandoning all traces of African culture to embrace wholeheartedly the cultural values of modern Western societies.

Van der Walt thinks that this is a false dilemma because it blurs reality. It puts Africans into an unnecessary fix. To choose one way or the other implies that one still remains caught between the horns of the dilemma. It blinds Africans from seeing viable alternatives.

Van der Walt has shown that this false dilemma is generated by the supposed superiority of Western culture. This is a lie that a good number of Africans tend to accept uncritically. He has also shown that some Africans may seem to recognise this false dilemma, but their attempt to resolve this false dilemma has not been satisfactory either. It has led to the vice of Afrocentrism, which is also the unwarranted way of handling Eurocentrism. A solution is needed for Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism on the one hand, and the false dilemma on the other.

Van Niekerk's paper on the results of the Nova research helps to demonstrate Van der Walt's point on the fix the false dilemma puts Africans in. The research shows that Africans attempt to develop as their Western counterparts tempt them into urbanisation. What Van Niekerk points to is also captured in the introduction of this research, section 1, "Orientation and background". It indicates that "in the urban areas especially the trend to adopt Western cultural patterns of life is accelerating as younger generations see this as the pattern of a developed society and the key to the good life". This life robs them of their traditional sense of community that in turn robs them of their morality. Van Niekerk correctly observes that the moral person in the African view was formed by the normative attitudes, structures, and principles of his community. This person became a person by serving the community. But this has been strongly eroded by urbanisation, and an emptiness has developed, sometimes described in terms such as "nothing coming from within" or "now there is just nothing" (Van Niekerk, 2014: 3-7).

Worse than this, Van Niekerk shows that the disillusionment caused by the state of life as described degenerates to what Van der Walt may refer to as extreme Afrocentrism, African nihilism. This is the urge to destroy the remnants of Western colonialism in post-independent Africa because of their culture's devastating effect on the traditional African world and identity. It is interesting to note that the desire to be like Westerners was very attractive at its inception, but once Africans had it, they

felt misled. Then, since this foreign culture could not be absorbed and assimilated, it had to be destroyed. African nihilism had many African leaders as its champions (Van Niekerk, 2014:13). Van der Walt's third way is totally opposed to this Afrocentrism, just as he is to Eurocentrism.

4.1.2 A way beyond Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism

Van der Walt sees his "third way" as providing an alternative to both Afrocentrism (with its holism, spiritualism, dynamism, communalism, anthropocentrism, and superstitiousness) and Eurocentricism (with its individualism, rationalism, scientism, materialism, and naturalism) (Van der Walt, 2006:212-213).

When it comes to health problems for instance, W. Meredith Long (2000:31) observes that Africans attribute this to the work of the spirits, usually in the service of a declared or undeclared enemy. Diviners' and sorcerers' role is to manipulate the spirits. Diviners and sorcerers either discover what the spirits demand, or counter their strategy, or use their power to re-establish a balance in the world of a sufferer. Acknowledging the spiritual world is a strength in the African world view, but going to the extent of engaging diviners and sorcerers misses the point. Western rationalism that denies the existence of the spirit world is not convincing in its pursuit of a healthy solution (Long, 2000:27). Even most Christian missionaries and health workers who acknowledge the existence of the spirit world ignore it in their practice. Long implores Christians in health care in Africa and across the world to know how to respond to the role and place of the spiritual reality. His appeal seems to tie in with what Van der Walt's attempts to establish as a third way beyond Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism.

Meredith Long considers healthy solutions within the broader scope of God's kingdom. Unlike in the African world view where diviners and sorcerers "maintain harmony" in the spiritual world, Long directs our attention to God as the source of harmony. He establishes that the exercise of dominion is central to the covenants of shalom in the Old Testament. This exercise of dominion is rooted in the relationship between humans and the rest of creation. Adam and Eve demonstrated God's image

through the creative and productive work through which they exercised dominion over his creation (Long, 2000:39-40).

Within the covenants of shalom, dominion is exercised when humans become stewards rather than owners. It is also exercised when humans attempt to understand the rest of created reality as both fallen and redeemed, and God as both the creator and sustainer of his creation. This understanding helps to maintain harmony in the human relation to God, in the relationships between humans, and with other created beings (Long, 2000:40). This spiritual reality also provides an imperative for not only the physical, but also psychological, social, and emotional health. Van der Walt underscores that this reality is missed, misplaced or misapplied in both the Eurocentic and Afrocentric world view. He thinks his third way attempts to provide an alternative, the missed, misplaced and misapplied reality.

It is important to note that Van der Walt does not see his third way as a compromise between Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism, or the bridge between them, but foresees a totally different alternative with a totally new paradigm. It also provides alternatives to cultural evolutionism (ethnocentrism) and cultural relativism. It rejects (negative) ethnocentrism, because one is not allowed to judge another culture according to one's fallible response to God's calling. It also rejects the relativist idea that one should withhold any judgement about culture, because Van der Walt notes that a culture cannot be isolated from either one's religious orientation towards God (or an idol) or from the various societal institutions (Van der Walt, 2006:9; 2013:79).

4.1.3 Van der Walt's solution for the false dilemma

Van der Walt's third way provides a basis for reuniting the "divided soul" of the African people. As noted earlier, African institutions are modelled on Western cultures and their associated world views. These are underlain by traditional African values and a world view at grassroots level without relevant functional social structures to support them. In the end it is not African cultures and world view that supports African institutions, but Western structures and world view. The Western cultural patterns are seen as the patterns of a developed society and the key to the good life (Van der Walt, 2006:6-8; Fowler, 1995:42-48).

Van der Walt thinks that this state of affairs is absurd: Western culture is individualistic and African culture holistic (see subsection 2.2, "Comparison of the African and the Western cultures"). Envisioning African institutions with a Western orientation is the same as envisioning oranges grafted on mangoes. A big disconnection is therefore evident in African institutions, because there is no mutuality between these institutions and the African world view that undergird them. It is for this reason that Africans today confess one thing and do the other. They know much about what ought to be done, but do almost nothing. African political parties that govern African countries have very good manifestoes, but the leadership does not seem to match these manifestoes. African institutions of learning have good 'Vision and Mission' statements, but what takes place at these institutions is a contradiction to what is stated in these statements. Churches too have good creeds, which are repeated every Sunday, but their lived lives show the opposite.

Van der Walt's third way provides hope for the African society because according to him God has placed in each culture a way of opening and sustaining it for his glory. Van der Walt's important point is that God provides functional social norms or structures that each culture can support. This means that Van der Walt does not just fight Eurocentrism or Afrocentrism for its own sake. He does so to pave the way for African institutions to be modelled on a transformed culture and world view (Van der Walt, 2006:1-3).

This has two advantages: The vice in traditional African culture is abandoned and the good in Western culture is maintained. However, the functional social structures remain deeply African within the African world view orientation. This then reforms the traditional African cultural values and world view to give an ideal-framework that supports functional and authentic African social structures for Africans in today's Africa (Van der Walt, 2006:4-6).

Van der Walt's hope for Africa echoes Plantinga's call to the human community to discover God's purpose for his people and to own it, uncover the mind of Christ and strive to be like-minded. This is because the mind of Christ includes looking not only after one's own interest, but also after the interest of others (Plantinga, 2002:94). As established by Van der Walt, this checks the derogatory attitude towards other

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cultures, and specifically the attitude of the West towards African cultures (subsection 3.2.1, "A derogatory approach").

Van der Walt (2006:100-124) agrees with Plantinga that a correct view of the fall and redemption is liberating. It guides our understanding of the notion that God is not content with saving only human souls or bodies, but their whole being. He wants to save social systems and economic structures too. He also wants to save management and labour structures from their internal antagonism. He extends the same to health, hostile relationships of race, gender or class and to educational, marriage and family institutions and so on (Plantinga, 2002:95-96).

Plantinga agrees with Van der Walt (2008:85-124) that God's world is not divided into a sacred and a secular realm with redemptive activity confined to only one zone. He observes that the "whole world belongs to God, the whole world has fallen and the whole world has to be redeemed — every last person, place, organisation and programme … in fact, "every square inch", as Abraham Kuyper said (Plantinga, 2002:95-96).

Middleton and Walsh (1984:79-80) shows that God binds his creation to himself by his sovereign word; he rules by decree. Creation, as God's covenantal kingdom, thus responds to his word in either obedience or disobedience. Humankind, giving allegiance to another "king", exposed creation to disobedience to God's law. This resulted not only in various kinds of inter-human bondage and bondage of all creation, but in bodily disease and even death. Christ's redemption, as Plantinga noted, restores humanity by providing forgiveness from sin. It also restores the whole of creation that was and is subjected to pain by the fall of the human person. Redemption is cosmic in scope, denoting that no area of creation is beyond God's reach or care. No aspect of our cultural life is exempt from God's redemptive plan and righteous rule. This counters the traditional African view of God as being distant, unknowable and separated from his human creatures by a gap that can only be bridged by intermediaries (Long, 2000:24).

It is good to suggest that Van der Walt's third way assumption is rooted in the understanding that Africa is included in God's plan of redemption. We can be certain

that his exhortation to the Africans is to pride in the very notion that they are included in God's plan of redemption. It is not hard to see that his hope for Africa lies in the divine redemption. In this redemption, Africa's divided soul has the hope of being re-united. Incidentally, Africa does not need to live in the false dilemma that Van der Walt has articulated, because in God's redemption Africa's doom and gloom will blossom in hope. Its sickness will blossom in health, and its poverty in wealth. But this is only if Africa will accept to exercise the dominion that is central to the covenants of shalom as W. Meredith Long illustrated above.

We see that Van der Walt's third way rejects any form of absolutisation of any aspect of reality. He therefore shows that both Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism are forms of ethnocentrism. He furthermore argues that ethnocentrism, evolutionism and relativism are all manifestations of historicism and its 'cousin' particularism. His third way then tries to articulate an alternative to historicism and a universalism that does give a place for cultural uniqueness. Van der Walt's third way emphasises transcultural norms. It asserts unity and diversity. This is actually the core of Van der Walt's third way (Van der Walt, 2006:9-10). What is at the core of Van der Walt's third way ties in with his basic assumptions that are underscored in the section that follows.

4.2   Van der Walt's assumptions in the development of his third way

The first of Van der Walt's assumptions that can be mentioned is the recognition that all of life has religious meaning, and that every area of human activity is therefore religiously directed, either to the living God or an idol in its ancient or modern sense. This, however, does not exclude the exposition of a framework of theoretical endeavour (Van der Walt, 2006:191; 2008:1-10).

Second, Van der Walt assumes that the human person acts within basic relationships, that is, the relationship with the self, other beings, nature and God. When any of these relationships are absolutised, the danger of "isms" such as individualism, communalism and naturalism emerges. The religious nature of the human person in its fallen nature is inclined to lead the human persons to over-emphasise one of these basic relationship. Western individualism for instance

absolutises the relationship with oneself. African communalism absolutises the relationship with the community. In each case, the other relations are warped, for they are seen in the light of the absolutised relationship (Van der Walt, 2001:17-19; 2006:191)

Third, Van der Walt notes that the way human beings treat or respond to these basic relationships shapes their cultures. Van der Walt infers that differences in cultures may be attributed to the ways humans in different parts of the world treat or respond to these relationships. This in turn shapes their societal and institutional values (Van der Walt, 2006:191).

Fourth, Van der Walt assumes the prominence of divine order/norms. Divine norms are the verdicts/principles/standards established by God for his creation in all places and at all times. Van der Walt thinks that every culture is fundamentally a religious response to a divine calling. The human cultural answer is to obey God's norms or principles for different areas of life. The human person has to positivise or concretise these divine norms according to God's central command of love towards God Himself, one's self and neighbour (Mathew 22:37-40). Based on this, humans are called to answer to God's revelation (Van der Walt, 2006:9)

Fifth, Van der Walt's assumes that all cultures are fallen. He acknowledges that in spite of the fact that each culture is dignified as ordained by God, no culture can be accepted as a norm to measure other cultures. There is no culture that is fully obedient to God's norms. Romans 3:10-19 shows how wicked all mankind is (Van der Walt, 2006:9). There is also no culture that is fully useless so as to warrant its obliteration. Each culture is in dire need of transformation to measure to God's norms. All "isms" in cultures are clear evidence of the fallen nature of cultures.

Sixth, Van der Walt recognises the validity of cultural diversity, but insists that each culture must be subjected to critical scrutiny in the light of the Word of God. This Word is revealed in all of creation, in Scripture as the normative revelation for human living, and supremely in the person of Christ, the Living Word who became one of us. Van der Walt's position on this is also attested to by reformational thinkers such as Herman Dooyeweerd (1953:52-68), Albert Wolters (1985:10-31) and David Naugle

(2002:4-42). Van der Walt thus recognises the diversity within the unity of humanity, as well as the unity within the diversity.

Finally, Van der Walt's assumption of clearly distinguishing between the divine norms and the fallible ways in which sinful humans attempt to understand them deserves mention. Cultural varieties are an indication of the various ways people correctly or wrongly apply God's norms in their lives. It is unwarranted to equate this fallible application and even interpretation of the divine norms, as many people do when it comes to evaluating cultures (Van der Walt, 2006:9).

4.3   Van der Walt's call for transcultural norms

Having seen the articulation of Van der Walt's third way and his basic assumption in the development of this third way, the discussion now turns to how he articulates the diversity within the unity and the unity within the diversity.

Van der Walt points to "transcultural" norms in light of God's revelation in Scriptures. Hiebert (1998:103) agrees with Van der Walt on the existence of transcultural norms. In looking for these transcultural norms, Van der Walt urges us to distinguish between Christendom and God's revelation in Scriptures, because the Christian faith itself appears in different cultural forms. He observes that there is relative continuity between each culture and God's revelation in creation, which prompts the goodness in all cultures. On the other hand, as a result of the fall, there is a radical discontinuity between every culture and the Word of God, denoting the evil in cultures. Because of this all cultures require reformation, hence cultural transformation (Van der Walt, 2006:11).

Van der Walt thus agrees with Meredith Long's assertion that working from a biblical basis in dealing with the African culture we should be "able to identify traditional beliefs and practices that may be affirmed, those that may be transformed by Christ to new meanings, and those that must be combated" (Long, 2000:6). Meredith Long takes this journey in his search for a solution for African Christian Health workers because he agrees with Van Niekerk's observation that a culture is an inner frame of

reference that gives people direction. Therefore, once a culture is distorted, people may switch to what is terribly harmful (Niekerk, 2014:13).

Van der Walt asserts that even the search for "trans-cultural" norms in Scripture should be undertaken with great circumspection because even the Old Testament and the New Testament are rooted in specific cultures (the ancient Eastern and Hellenistic). In Scriptures we must distinguish between cultural experiences and timeless norms. It is only by meticulous study of the Scriptures that we can arrive at universal, lasting norms (Van der Walt, 2006:194). But this is hampered by various misunderstandings due to our fallen nature.

Van der Walt (2013: 1-25) fully appreciates that a journey towards transcultural norms is not an easy one. He agrees with Plantinga that Scriptures only give us solid principles for transforming life. The Scriptures invite us to find creative ways of applying them in the contemporary world. A community of Christian faith, blessed with an abundance of intelligence, devotion, and experience, bound together with mutual respect and accountability, can explore the principles that could guide in the search for transcultural norms. This community of faith could explore the height and depths of the contemporary world and its cultures before pretending to understand them, understand them before presuming to appraise them, and appraise them with an informed judgement gained from the communion with Christ. In this way, this community should discern the spirit of our age and not just absorb and consume everything the world offers (Plantinga, 2002:99-100).

Van der Walt underscores the genesis of cultural misunderstanding and misrepresentation. In doing so he agrees with Hiebert's (1998) argument that different cultural contacts may raise problems at three levels: at the cognitive level (the way people think), leading to misunderstanding; at the emotional level (the affective), leading to feelings of superiority towards people of other cultures; and at the evaluative level (what people value), leading to unnecessary condemnation of other cultures (Van der Walt, 2006:188).

Van der Walt, just as Hiebert, notes that while the above scenario is undesirable, it is a normal practice when a person encounters other cultures. It is also possible that

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people come to know their own cultures better by interacting with other cultures, thereby appreciating them. Contact with other cultures should not be seen as a threat, but as enrichment. Problems attached to inter-cultural contacts should not be regarded as negative, but as positive, for they provide a challenge to consider where the actual problem is, whether in the cultural variety or the way the varieties are evaluated (Van der Walt, 2006:189).

Tackling for instance communication problems at the cognitive level in the right way should help one understand how and why people from other cultures think differently. It guides in understanding not only how people think logically, but also how knowledge is generally obtained. We come to appreciate that analytical reasoning is but one of the many ways of understanding reality. There are other ways of understanding and appreciating reality, such as the affective and evaluative (Van der Walt, 2006:189). This is why Van der Walt advocates transcultural norms. The appreciation of difference is only after differences are acknowledged and bridged. This is on the basis of norms that transcend particular cultures and forges a kind of cultural unity without mutilating diversity.

4.4   Anthropological and psychological insights and transcultural norms

How then do we attain these transcultural norms? Van der Walt shows how some in the fields of anthropology and psychology have attempted to lay a common ground for all cultures in order to dispel the ground for superiority of any culture.

Van der Walt first points to a section of anthropologists who generate the thought that the rationality of "primitive" or primal thought (e.g. of the East and Africa) might not be the same as Western rational thought, because they have a kind of rationality of their own that may be inferior (Van der Walt, 2006:190). This argument does not really help to reveal transcultural norms. Van der Walt therefore also listens to anthropologists such as Jarvie and Agassi (1970) and Winch (1970), who assert that the cultures of the East and Africa are also rational (in their own way) and that this rationality is not inferior to Western culture. Van der Walt nevertheless questions whether justifying the rationality of the cultures of the East and Africa from a

sympathetic paternalistic perspective is itself justifiable, and even wonders whether this is the right path to look for transcultural norms (Van der Walt, 2006:190).

How do we settle the matter on the basis of reality? Van der Walt appreciates that different ways of thought must be acknowledged and appreciated. But how does the employment of rationality help us when we know many meanings have been attached to rationality in different times? In the West, for instance, many meanings have been attached to rationality through the ages. In Ancient Greece rationality was sought as the absolute good, and today it has ended in economically driven technical-scientific rationalism (Van der Walt, 2006:190). The argument on the basis of rationality may not take us very far in our search of transcultural norms.

The study of cognitive psychology, for instance, is important, but is limited on two grounds: Firstly, it is purely psychological, meaning that broader cultural backgrounds (decisive in people's thinking) are not taken into account. Secondly, psychological tests or methods of testing cognitive capacity have been drawn from a Western cultural perspective and are not fit for application in the Eastern or the African contexts (Van der Walt, 2006:190). These tests are too limited in providing transcultural norms.

Transcultural norms will be arrived at only through what can be seen as team-work. We must accept to deal with people from other cultures on the understanding that God preserves all cultures from evil only by his grace. We must also understand that God expects of us to discover his norms for cultural diversity. This must be done through earnest prayer and search of Scriptures together. This teamwork is necessary to check the force of our world views in Scriptural interpretations, since our hermeneutic is also world view directed. This then humbles us to entirely rely on the Holy Spirit.

In addition to transcultural norms, Van der Walt considers other factors that aid his third way.

4.5   Other factors in Van der Walt's third way

Van der Walt notes that a number of issues has to be understood in the process of cultural evaluation. One of them is the need to understand that cultures are transmitted and learned and very difficult to change from the core. Moreover, cultures are not static, they are dynamic. They are influenced by diverse factors and also by other cultures. No culture is therefore homogeneous, each consists of subcultures, but this does not negate the fact that one can trace certain general features in a culture (Van der Walt, 2006:191).

As noted earlier, Van der Walt further observes that people's evaluation of different cultures takes place on three levels: On the cognitive level they ask whether the other culture is true or false. On the affective level they ask whether the other culture should be approved or rejected, and at the evaluative level they ask whether the other culture is right or wrong (Van der Walt, 2006:193).

Evaluation on each level has its particular hazards. On the cognitive level it can present *misunderstanding*. A person may misunderstand the thinking of other people just as other people may misunderstand the thinking of this person. To prevent this misunderstanding a person has to look at his/her own culture from a distance (Hiebert, 1998:92). Anthropologists distinguish between an "emic" and "etic" understanding, which should complement each other. *Emic* is needed to understand how people see the world and why they respond to it as they do. *Etic* is needed to compare one's culture with other cultures and to test its understanding of the world against reality (Hiebert, 1998:92-97; Van der Walt, 2006:193).

Affective evaluation concerns acting. Thus ethnocentrism (for example Eurocentrism or Afrocentrism) is usually the first reaction when one is confronted by another and it should be expected in one way or the other. However, when what is typically negative emotional and aggressive reaction to other cultures becomes the order of the day, there is a problem that cannot be tolerated. Here a feeling of one's own culture being normal and civilised is entertained over against the stranger's culture (Van der Walt, 2006:193).

At the evaluation level, values play a significant role; here we encounter the danger of prejudging another's cultures before knowing and appreciating them (Van der Walt, 2006:194).

Because of sin (Fall) no culture is wholly good, not even one's own. But as a result of God's (general or common) grace, no culture is totally corrupt or evil. No culture can therefore be idealised in an uncritical manner or rejected in an over-critical manner. Every culture tends to exaggerate something that is inherently good so that it becomes warped. Van der Walt cautions that we must therefore learn — particularly in the scientific or theoretical field — to distinguish between the good and the bad in every culture (Van der Walt, 2001:99; 2006:194).

4.6   The distinguishing features of Van der Walt's third way

Before considering the distinguishing features of Van der Walt's third way, it would be helpful to first revisit what has been articulated in this chapter. The discussion probed how Van der Walt tackles the issue of the false dilemma that Africans are misled to accept as real and why he thinks it blurs reality. We also observed how Van der Walt provides a way beyond Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism, noting the idolatrous nature and ethnocentric form of both. He has shown that both Western and African culture have to evaluated from the core that is invisible, but which impacts either negatively or positively on a culture. Van der Walt has also helped us to understand his basic assumptions and the need for establishing transcultural norms that may guide in our evaluation of cultural differences. He has also pondered whether such fields as anthropology and psychology could help in the establishment of cultural norms. While he has acknowledged their value and role, he has shown their limitations in enabling us to establish the transcultural norms. This leaves us with the question of where to go from here, but his answer is that his third way is the best option as it rejects any form of absolutisation of any aspect of reality, denouncing both Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism as forms of ethnocentrism. It tries to articulate an alternative to historicism and a universalism that does leave a place for cultural uniqueness, and it emphasises and asserts unity and diversity. It actually tackles the solution of evaluating cultures from the core and not from the surface — the behaviour, habits, dress and so on (Van der Walt, 2006:9-10).

Since the chapter has provided a general picture of how Van der Walt has attempted to articulate his third way, the stage is set to investigate the distinguishing features of his third way.

4.6.1   Recognition of the problem of generalisation

Van der Walt rightly argues that because so many ethnic communities, languages and dialects spread across Africa, uniformity is actually impossible. The same could be said about the West. Therefore, to say something is African or Western is actually an over-generalised characterisation (Van der Walt, 1997:74). Rajuili (2008:77-79) concurs with Van der Walt on this assertion. Rajuili first underscores the fact that the Southern region of Africa is very diverse in terms of its history, economy, and the cultures of its inhabitants. This generates different and at times hostile world views, leading to hostile encounters. If this is the case in just one region of Africa, how complex is the case when we deal with the whole of Africa? It makes it difficult to generalise about Africans and even African culture. However, Van der Walt, just like Rajuili, recognises some common religio-cultural motifs in Africa that may warrant us to think of the African culture and world view (Rajuili, 2008:78-79).

It is vital for Van der Walt's third way to pinpoint this, because what is attributed to either the African or Western culture or world view may not present itself in all situations in those cultures. That is why he cautioned earlier of his preference for the phrase "more or less" when attributing this characterisation (Van der Walt, 1997:75).

4.6.2   Emphasis also on similarities

Van der Walt's third way emphasises that a shared humanity is a similarity that must be emphasised. All emphasis cannot be on the differences identified in the different cultural groups. The differences should be acknowledged, respected and celebrated in the context of our shared humanity (Van der Walt, 1997:75). Different cultural backgrounds give us a broader picture of how different people experience, interpret and understand the same reality. Other cultures also help us to appreciate and critique our own. They also help us not to stereotype other cultures. Moreover, constant experience of other cultures unconsciously inculcates values that generate

appreciation and respect for other cultures. A person who encounters and interacts with different cultures appreciates and respects other cultures more than a person who does not, or who has just partial contacts with other cultures. Van der Walt's third way advocates a unity in diversity with regard to different cultures (Van der Walt, 1997:95-135). He seems to caution that our differences should not be allowed to destroy us through disunity, but that we should allow our differences to be a blessing as each member of the global community articulates what unites. In this way our diversity will be unified and our unity diversified.

4.6.3 Recognising and appreciating continuities and discontinuities

Van der Walt's third way acknowledges that God does not meet us in a cultural vacuum. The third way deals with the structural and directional aspects of a culture. In this respect it acknowledges that there are aspects of a culture that are good or not evil that should be retained, whereas other aspects of this culture are wrong or evil and must be discarded (Van der Walt, 2006:11). Those that must be discarded are the products of the fact that our heart is directed away from God to an idol.

In the Genesis episode we can think of our patriarch Abraham. He was asked to forsake the idolatrous allegiances of his Terahite household and commit himself to the Lordship of Yahweh, which he obeyed (Genesis 12:1-4). But it is understandable that at this time the culture that Abraham identified with was his Chaldean culture. It may be for this that Abraham needed Lot to go with him to provide an heir just in case he had no heir of his own. This was provided for in their culture. In case this failed, his servant Eliezer could be the heir (Gen. 15:2-3). God had no problem with this cultural practice, even though he had a better plan for Abraham (Gen.15: 4). The oath ritual which Abraham prepared was customary in treaty ratifications (Guthrie & Motyer, 1970:93-95). God allowed Abraham to continue with what was customary, but the object of worship was shifted from the Chaldean polytheism to Yahweh. Many more examples could be cited from Scriptures. I think what is illustrated in Abraham's case is what Van der Walt alludes to by his continuities and discontinuities in culture as envisioned in his third way.

4.6.4   Towards a biblical perspective of cultural diversity

Van der Walt's third way advocates cultural plurality, implying that we should appreciate the good in all cultures and shun the evil in all cultures. He sees it as "mutually affirming and corrective cultural pluralism". It welcomes dialogue within the plurality of cultures. It also checks the attitude of coercing cultures to uncritically adopt values from other cultures. Strength and limitations in each culture is appreciated. It rejects either Afrocentric or Eurocentric tendencies and provides a fair criticism of both cultures — the African and the Western. It looks for a balanced and correct interpretation of the Word of God. It counters any form of ethnocentrism, relativism and all other forms of "isms" (Van der Walt, 1997:92-93).

4.6.5   Engaging cultural transformation from the core

Van der Walt's third way addresses the problem of the clash between African and Western cultures from the core. In looking at a culture, he employs several metaphors. Earlier he had considered the onion metaphor that compares different cultural layers to the layers of the onion. He also compares a culture with an iceberg, of which the tip is visible and the larger part is submerged. This means that there are certain components of a culture that appear visible such as habits, customs and behaviour. However, the most important components of a culture that determines its essence are totally invisible. The visible (or outer layers) are easily changed, while the invisible (inner layers or the core) are hard to change. It is this core, the world view aspect of a culture, that is religiously directed and which Van der Walt's third way seeks to address.

Van der Walt's third way is highly commended for this, for it is not impressed by change of habits, custom and behaviour. It penetrates to the core and seeks transformation from the core — the religious nature of a culture that is manifested in the world view. Unless the Gospel touches the culture from the core, its conversion at the level of habits, customs and behaviour may not mean much (Van der Walt, 1997:99). Cultural hostilities will still be entertained when much effort is concentrated on the outer lays of cultures. But as Van der Walt has shown in his third way, when this is done in the inner layers, the world view that is religiously directed, the cultural

hostility is handled and the fruit of cultural diversity is enhanced. With this in mind, the problem of Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism could amicably be resolved.

Having said that, it is good to clarify that Van der Walt does not overlook the "external" context. He appreciates that the socio-political-economic situations may shape a culture, for there is no culture that is static or even homogeneous. However, attempting to transform a culture externally is very superficial. This only affects some behaviour and customs, such as dress codes, while the core remains unaffected. Yet it is when the core is transformed that transformational life is realised. The change at the core invites tension and/or a cultural crisis (Van der Walt, 1997:99). It is the tension at this level that prompts the clash between Western and African cultures. It is here that Van der Walt locates the solution. It involves the philosophical level of a culture undergirded by a world view that is religiously directed. It is a matter of life and death for any society or community.

4.7   Chapter summary

It has been established early in this research project that the fundamental approach of the study is reformational. This approach has also been presented as the basis of Van der Walt's third way. This chapter expounded this third way. It has revisited and articulated the false dilemma and established Van der Walt's third way as a viable solution for it. This solution goes beyond Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism. Van der Walt's assumptions and his distinctive features in establishing transcultural norms have been brought out. Both the anthropological and psychological insights have been interrogated in Van der Walt's attempt to establish transcultural norms. The chapter also pointed out Van der Walt's recognition of the problem of generalisation. An appeal has been made to recognise differences in cultures and the need to emphasise what brings unity. A need to recognise continuities and discontinuities in cultural transformation is emphasised. A clear biblical perspective is needed for cultural norms. The envisioned cultural transformation must be attempted at the core of a culture, and not from the surface. In a nutshell, the chapter pointed out that Van der Walt's third way is firmly established in the following:

- First, the supremacy of Scriptures in providing "transcultural" norms should be acknowledged with the fullest understanding of the need to distinguish between the divine norms and the fallible ways in which sinful humans attempt to understand them. Everything in a culture that is acceptable from a Scriptural point of view should be accepted and celebrated as valid for sharing with other cultures. Whatever is filtered out by Scripture should be rejected and it should not be entertained for any cultural interaction.

- Second, the serious acknowledgement of the effect of sin and the redemptive work of God in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God gives hope for cultural transformation.

- Third, the reality of a religious direction in cultural experience leading to the goodness and evil in cultures, rules out neutrality and the absolute goodness of cultures. This totally rejects any argument that some cultures may be the standard by which other cultures are judged.

- Fourth, the sustaining grace through which cultures still retain some goodness, irrespective of the fall, should be acknowledged. This gives us hope for cultural dialogue and assurance that there is no culture that is totally evil.

- Fifth, the need for transcultural dialogue that helps to see the strengths and the shortcoming of our cultures and those with whom we engage should be acknowledged.

- Sixth, as will be established in chapter 6, Van der Walt's third way is founded on a non-reductionist ontology that rejects all forms of reductionism.

Finally, there is a need for working together towards "transcultural" norms and acceptance to deal with persons from other cultures. This must be done through earnest prayer and mutual inquiry into Scriptures. This teamwork is necessary to check the force of our world views in Scriptural interpretations since our hermeneutic is also world view directed. Warped hermeneutics leads to warped cultural interpretations, even in Christian circles.

Chapter 5: A critical look at B.J. van der Walt's third way

Chapter 1 to 3 of this study anticipated Van der Walt's third way, which is discussed in chapter 4. Van der Walt's third way is geared at resolving the problem of ethnocentrism (expressed as both Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism) and the false dilemma in which Africans find themselves as they seek to come to terms with modern society. This fifth chapter offers a critical analysis of Van der Walt's third way to establish if it resolves the research problem — the false dilemma that leads to the problem of the divided soul of African people. The chapter also considers some weaknesses in Van der Walt's third way and ask how he could improve its articulation.

5.1   Strong points of Van der Walt's third way

As witnessed in the preceding chapters, Van der Walt has done a commendable job of championing a third way. A critical evaluation of his work may not be fair if his strengths are not clearly recognised and applauded. Building on the strengths that have been stipulated in chapter 4, this section states in summary what Van der Walt's third way has achieved. It has attempted to give a clear perspective of the false dilemma African people are faced with. Van der Walt's third way recognises the distortion caused by Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism and proposes the possibility of transcultural norms. The third way seeks to tackle African problems not from the surface, but from the core — the religious root. Van der Walt not only gives basic assumptions for his third way, but also describes its distinguishing features to enable his readers to understand his vantage point.

Van der Walt depicts the relation between religion, world view and culture and portrays world view "as the "soul" of a culture (Van der Walt, 2001:ii). He warns that a world view can degenerate into an ideology, especially when one aspect of reality is absolutised (Van der Walt, 2001:58; 2003:101). He articulates the fact that all human life is ultimately directed by religion. However, as will be seen later, the use of his five layers as an analogy to articulate this does not fully aid his project. Van der Walt ascertains that the Word of God sustains all cultures just as all creation (all these have been articulated in chapter 1).

Finally, Van der Walt's third way cautions that our world views, emanating from our cultures, influence our biblical hermeneutics. This means that Scriptural guidance and an obedient response to the Word of God in particular circumstances is vital (Van der Walt, 2008:13-44). He shows that satisfaction with the status quo, the cultural confrontation between the West and Africa, only helps to aggravate the existing problem. This explains Van der Walt's passion, effort and determination to fight it and provide a better alternative that steers greater opportunities for cultural appreciation.

5.2   Weak points of Van der Walt's third way

As shown in the preceding sections, Van der Walt's third way provides an impressive African reformational approach towards tackling the dilemma of the relations between the African and Western cultures and world views. Nevertheless, one has to look at the weak points of his third way to establish ways of strengthening it. These weak points are not only related to Van der Walt's attempts to resolve the African problem of the divided soul, but also to how he looks at the Eurocentric and Afrocentric problem.

5.2.1   What is in control —world view or heart?

Most of the weak points in Van der Walt's work were already raised in passing in chapter one of this study. It will be wise to follow up on them in this section. The starting point is to look at Van der Walt's assertion that the world view takes possession of the heart.

Subsection 1.1.2.1 explains Van der Walt's view that a world view takes possession of one's heart. One wonders whether Van der Walt does not reverse the order of reality that he establishes in his reformational framework. He clearly stipulates that the heart is the religious root of human existence and we are charged to guard it as the wellspring of life (Proverbs 4:23). We wonder why he turns around and assigns to world view the role that is meant for religion. How can a world view take possession of a person's heart, the centre of existence? Isn't it rather the heart, the religious centre of human existence, which takes possession of one's world view as

this world view is directed at God or an idol? By making that assertion, does he not reduce religion to a sub-part of a world view? This also prompts us to interrogate Van der Walt on how he relates religion and world view. As will be seen later in this discussion, Van der Walt does not seem to clearly distinguish between the two. One can then propose to Van der Walt that a world view and religion are two separate aspects of human experience that are intimately related and that this relationship is something that he should attempt to describe with more clarity. As is evident from a critique of his five layers of cultural analysis where he relates religion, world view, and culture, Van der Walt does not achieve this.

5.2.2 World views are pre-scientific, and yet not unscientific

The second issue pertains to what Van der Walt implies by 'pre-scientific, not meaning unscientific'. As Van der Walt ponders other characteristics of world views (on subsection 1.1.2.4), he cautions that the pre-scientific or pre-theoretical nature of world views does not mean that it is unscientific. He notes that a world view and science are two distinct ways of knowing and each has its own right of existence. There is no problem when Van der Walt argues that a world view should not be confused with sciences like philosophy or theology and so on since a world view is pre-scientific or pre-theoretical. Even up to the point where he says that world views and sciences are different avenues of knowledge acquisition and that each influence the other, there is still no problem with his view.

However, Van der Walt gets into trouble when he uses a play of words. What exactly does he mean by saying that world views are pre-scientific, but that this does not mean they are unscientific? In my understanding "pre-" is a prefix denoting before (in time, place, order etc.) and at the same time mean not the thing itself. How, for instance, does one say that pre-adolescent does not mean un-adolescent? Can a world view be pre-scientific or pre-theoretical and yet be scientific because it is not unscientific? How is a world view said to be pre-scientific, and yet it does not become unscientific? Is it then scientific since it is not unscientific? In my view, if something is pre-scientific, then it is surely not scientific. By saying that world views are pre-scientific or pre-theoretical and then saying that world views are not unscientific, may mean that world views can also be scientific. Ultimately Van der

Walt seems to contradict himself here. This reasoning does not support the view that a world view and science assume two distinct ways of knowing, but that each has its own right of existence. It also contradicts Van der Walt's valid argument that a world view's falsity, validity, and goodness cannot be proven by scientific argument. If Van der Walt's assertion that a world view is not unscientific is maintained, it will contradict his assertion that a world view is pre-scientific.

Instead of saying that world views are not unscientific, one could rather argue that world views are actually not anti-science. As a separate way of knowing, a world view is as valid as a science.

Before evaluating Van der Walt's five layers of cultural analysis, the discussion has to be expanded to look at how Van der Walt is not clear on the relation between religion, naïve experience, world view, philosophy and culture. This helps not only to support the criticism of Van der Walt's claim that world views are not unscientific, but also serves as precursor to a criticism of his five layers of cultural analysis. The section below looks at the lack of a relation between world view, concrete and theoretical knowledge in Van der Walt's view.

5.2.3 Lack of clear relation between naïve experience, world view and philosophy

The argument in this section is invoked because the concept of naïve or concrete experience is often overlooked. This seems to be the source of the problems highlighted in subsection 5.2.1 and in section 5.2.2. The same may be what creates the problem highlighted in subsection 5.2.4 regarding.

Invoking the important element of naïve or concrete experience may clear some conflicting issues in Van der Walt's analysis. As stated earlier, Van der Walt seems to have overlooked this while dealing with the relationship of world view, religion and culture.

5.2.3.1 *"Naïve" experience and world view*

Herman Dooyeweerd's (1948:1:157) concept of "naïve experience" may assist to strengthen Van der Walt's cultural analysis.

What Dooyeweerd refers to as naïve experience, I choose to refer to as concrete experience. The use of the term "naïve experience" in the English translation of Dooyeweerd's work is unfortunate, since in standard English usage as defined in the Oxford Dictionary it means "showing a lack of experience, wisdom, or judgement." This is far from what Dooyeweerd aims at with this term. His meaning is better conveyed by the term "concrete experience". However, concrete experience might not successfully include spiritual experiences, which could be implied by Dooyeweerd, but it can help to comprehend somehow what he had in mind.

The connection and distinction between religion, world view, naïve experience, culture and philosophy is vital. It is therefore important to ask the following: What is the place of naïve or concrete experience in our world view, cultural and theoretical activity? How does it participate in religion?

Spier (1973:12) says that naïve experience is the experience of "concrete reality in our daily life in which we associate with various people and observe a multiplicity of things around us such as plants and animals etc". The richness and diversity of reality is experienced in naïve experience. Naïve thought, just as a world view, is uncritical and pre-scientific. It is the raw material of scientific and cultural thought. Scientific thought is discriminative, analytical and antithetical. In our naïve experience we are closely in touch with life-in-its-totality or fullness. In science we maintain a certain distance between ourselves and the object of our investigation. Philosophy as a science is systematic, analytical and antithetical (Spier, 1973: 12-15). Could naïve experience be confused with world view? Yes, in the same way that a world view can be confused with theoretical experience. So when do we confront a world view and naïve experience? Does Van der Walt's relating of religion, world view and culture anticipate naïve experience? If not, why? If yes, how?

A number of scholars see a contradiction between naïve experience and theoretical experience. Kant, for instance, questioned the existence of anything outside our mind. He noted that if such reality does exist outside our consciousness, it is unknowable. For him the philosopher's task is "to 'demolish' to a disordered mass of phenomena the reality we experience naively". From this mass a philosopher must then theoretically construct the real world. According to Kant a philosopher's task is aided by forms of intuition and reason (Spier, 1973:13). I can compare Kant's effort of theoretically constructing the real world by denying naïve experience to a person who reads a book for all its worth, but denies the existence of the trees from which the pages of the book are made.

It is therefore a relief that in Christian philosophy the contradiction between naïve experience and philosophy vanishes, they rather supplement each other. In Christian philosophy the diverse aspects and coherences directly experienced in naïve experience can for instance be subjected to scientific analysis. In naïve experience diverse aspects are experienced in totality, as a whole. What is experienced naïvely can nevertheless be abstracted from each other and "placed in antithetical relation to the mind and examined systematically". Naïve experience is not inferior to a scientific view of the created cosmos. "In fact philosophy cannot do without naïve experience, as it is based upon it". It remains "a touchstone of the philosophical truth" (Spier, 1973:14). It is not a wonder then that a philosopher, in the end, is an ordinary man. He lives as 'naively' as other men and women and "does not eat or sleep philosophically" (Spier, 1973:15). The only difference between the philosopher and others is the consciousness of his or her calling to examine the world scientifically/philosophically by "reflecting upon creation and its relation to its origin" (Spier, 1973:14-15).

If we begin in life naively, and naïve experience is religiously directed just as a world view, isn't it in order to then suppose that even in our theoretical activity and cultural developments, the naïve experience betrays us to act in a certain way. It is imperative for us to realise the implications of religious and world view directed naïve experience, especially when it comes to cultural analysis and development of functional institutions in society. On the distinction between naïve experience and scientific analysis, the former places itself concretely within reality, while the later

abstracts a distinct aspect of reality. Science views reality in an antithetical relation so that a particular aspect is exposed to scientific analysis (Spier, 1973:15).

When it comes to cultural transformation, how do we deal with world view issues without dealing with the raw data that is acted upon by a world view? If naïve experience can betray a person at the theoretical level, how much more will this be the case at the pre-theoretical level? If naïve experience places itself concretely within reality and if for instance it is directed away from the living God to an idol by a worldview that is itself also directed to an idol, humanity then has a serious problem. It means what is abstracted from a distinct aspect experienced naively is also warped. We must then have our hearts directed to the right "ultimate", from where our world view is transformed to inform the naïve experience that provides data for scientific analysis.

Since Van der Walt and other scholars discussing culture and world view issues give it little or no attention at all, can we conclude that this explains why the unconfessed deeply naïve influence still remains an enigma?

In contemporary Africa particularly I think that which is naively held, which may be religiously directed (away from the living God) to different idols, and which is scientifically analysed, is what fosters reductionism in Africa's functional institutions and the very concept of development. How is this so? Though in naïve experience we are closely in touch with life-in-its-totality or fullness, our world view shapes this naïve experience. A person shaped by a modern world view characterised by scientism, technicism and economism has his/her naïve experience unconsciously organised by the three idols of scientism, technicism and economism in that pres-scientific state of naïve experience. By the time this person starts his or her theoretical or scientific endeavour, already the idols are manifest in the data provided by naïve experience for theoretical endeavour.

The above is not all about contemporary Africa, as much as contemporary Africa is infected by the above idols of scientism, technicism and economism, and remnants of the vice (idols) of African traditional religions are evident in Africa. They include holism, collectivism, superstitionism and anthropocentrism and so on. These could

impact negatively for instance in Christian growth. An African's naïve experience may be infected by these idols of African traditional religion and these could be transferred to the African practice of theology. The idols could impact their biblical hermeneutics, thereby effecting warped Christianity. The envisaged cultural transformation, especially one that is propagated by Van der Walt's third way, is not possible in this kind of warped Christianity. This calls for a genuine transformation that first of all tackles the African world view that influences African naïve experience. An African world view should be directed at the right ultimate source instead of being directed at idols.

Spier echoes what Dooyeweerd (1948:1:157) says about philosophy, world view and naïve experience:

> *"At this juncture, the problem also necessarily emerges, why philosophy will never be in a position to replace the life- and world-view. It cannot do so for the same reason that prevents it from replacing naive experience by theoretical knowledge. There is left a residue of living immediacy in every life- and world-view, which must necessarily escape theoretical concepts".*

I need to qualify that even though naïve experience is immediate to reality, it is still world view directed. It provides world view directed data or raw material for theoretical activity. Since a world view is not religiously neutral, naïve experience is likewise religiously directed. Apart from providing data for theoretical work I think naive experience also provides raw data for culture. It is then proper to suppose that at the root of human existence is the heart that is religiously directed, shaping our world views that in turn shape our naïve experience. The religiously directed naïve experience that provides data for theoretical thought, such as philosophy, establishes a firm philosophical base for a culture. The disregard for naïve experience sets the stage for unjustified assumptions in cultural analysis. It is unfortunate then that Van der Walt does not pay serious attention to naïve experience in his world view and culture discussion, nor does pay much attention to the relation between philosophy and world view, which is crucial in the analysis of cultural.

5.2.3.2   *World view and philosophy*

As noted in chapter one subsection 1.1.4 on the brief history of the concept world view, Al Wolters (1985) gives due attention to the relation between world view and philosophy. Goheen and Bartholomew (2008), as they interact with Dilthey, also give the relation due attention. Regarding this relation of world view and philosophy, Van der Walt just poses a question on whether they are the same thing and appeals to Klapwijk's (1986:1-2) response, which asserts their difference. Klapwijk asserts that a world view is concerned with the deepest and most comprehensive questions of life that orients a person. Philosophy, though concerned with a search of such a view of totality, is scientific and more general. A world view, unlike philosophy, is pre-scientific and more deeply personal in character. However, Van der Walt asserts that at the core of any philosophy there is a world view. We should add to this that even at the core any culture there is a strong philosophical foundation that is deeply religious and world view directed.

Van der Walt avoids getting into a deeper[1] study of the difference and relation between philosophy and world view and further points us to Wolters (1989:14-25) and Klapwijk's (1989:41-51) contribution on this (Van der Walt, 2008:57-58). Since Van der Walt has avoided this discussion, I suggest that we consider Dooyeweerd's contribution to determine whether he could aid in what Van der Walt has avoided. In the end we may ask whether it is fair for Van der Walt not to give it some attention.

In an attempt to relate world view and philosophy, Dooyeweerd asks the following: "In what sense does philosophy have to give an account of the life-and world-view?" In response to this he notes: "It has to bring the latter to theoretical clarity by rendering a theoretic account of its pre-theoretic picture of the world". He adds, "so far as it includes in its horizon life- and world-views which possess another religious foundation than that which finds expression in its own transcendental ground-Idea, it must try to approximate this foundation in a transcendental ground-Idea, which is equal to the task of the theoretical illumination of these life- and world-views". He

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[1] Whether or not delving into the relation between philosophy and world view in Van der Walt's is justifiable, he himself mentions that the reformational philosophy has done extensive work on this. He thinks not enough has been done in the field of world view and culture, and that is where he puts much of his strength. But one wonders how he handles African philosophy and religion if he shelves this.

then asserts that it is only in this way that it is possible to do justice to the various types of world views (Dooyeweerd, 1984:1, 156-157).

In the same context he brings to our attention that a "life- and world view is not a system and cannot be made a system without affecting its essence" (Dooyeweerd, 1984:1, 157). According to him a world view focuses thought on the full concrete reality, whereas a theoretical systematisation of thought cannot do that. Hence, as soon as a world view is made into a system, Dooyeweerd claims, "it loses its universality, it no longer speaks to us out of the fullness of reality". In this state it does the opposite, "it speaks out of the distance which scientific abstraction must preserve in opposition to life, if it is to furnish us with theoretical knowledge". But, contrary to this, Dooyeweerd maintains that a world view "must rather remain continuously open to each concrete situation of life, in which it finds itself placed. Its deeper unity lies only in its religious root" (Dooyeweerd, 1984: 1:157).

Here Dooyeweerd raises a fundamental question that needs attention: If a world view is not a system, does it mean it cannot be analysed? If it cannot, then how can it be studied at all? I think he wants us to remain conscious of the fact that it is the world view that organises systems. When we think we have systematised it, we only get betrayed by the underlying presuppositions that have not been analysed. Could this explain what Bartholomew and Goheen (2008:13) think Dilthey wrestled with by perceiving a continual clash of world views that are just partial expressions of the universe? They note Dilthey's perception that these clashes will never be resolved, for they are rooted in faith and are thus both "unprovable and undestructable". This argument is not discussed any further since it falls outside of the scope of this study, but it would be negligent to not mention Dooyeweerd's concern.

When the relation of world view and philosophy is settled after first settling the fundamental relation between world view and naïve experience, it becomes clear why the tool (philosophy) with which Van der Walt articulates culture should be understood. However, as Van der Walt leaves things, his readers do not understand the nature of the tool he uses. Thankfully Dooyeweerd has done some of the work for him. I recommend that Van der Walt should give a brief account of the philosophy he employs for cultural analysis. This would enable him to show the bases of the

philosophy he employs to criticise the philosophical foundations of the cultures he tackles. His reformational commitment is not in doubt, but owing to the fact there are variations on this approach in practice he should establish where he stands. (The concern of various approaches in reformational practice has been pointed out in section 3 of the introduction to this study).

I think Naugle's observation that world views are not the most deeply rooted elements in the soil of the heart, but rather religion, identifies with what Dooyeweerd stipulates regarding the relationship between naïve experience, world views, and philosophy. Naugle notes that the religion of the heart is the cause and the world views and philosophies are the cognitive effects, and they stand side by side as intellectual siblings of religious parentage (Naugle, 2002:27-28). This gives further impetus to criticism of Van der Walt's notion that a world view takes possession of one's heart, as seen in subsection 5.2.1.

It is good in this context to consider how Dooyeweerd finally contrasts philosophy and world-view and locates their foundation at the affective core of the human person:

> *"The genuine life- and world-view has undoubtedly a close affinity with philosophy, because it is essentially directed toward the totality of meaning of our cosmos. A life- and world-view also implies an Archimedean point. Like philosophy, it has its religious ground motive. It, as well as philosophy, requires the religious commitment of our selfhood. It has its own attitude of thought. However, it is not as such, of a theoretical character. Its view of totality is not theoretical, but rather pre-theoretical. It does not conceive reality in its abstracted modal aspects of meaning, but rather in typical structures of individuality which are not analysed in a theoretical way. It is not restricted to a special category of "philosophical thinkers" but applies to everybody, the simplest included"* (Dooyeweerd, 1984: 1:128).

Based on this argument Dooyeweerd clarifies that Kuyper's argument, which supposes that Christian philosophy is a philosophically elaborated world view, is incorrect. Dooyeweerd claims that to accept Kuyper's argument is to accept a fundamental error and to entertain a clear misunderstanding of the relationship between world view and philosophy. Even the revelation contained in the divine Word does not provide the Christian with a detailed world view or Christian philosophy, it gives "both simply their direction from the starting point in their central basic motive (the heart)". This direction is purely "a radical and integral one, determining everything". The same is true for the direction and the point of view that

"the apostate religious motives give to philosophy and life- and world-view" (Dooyeweerd, 1984:1, 128).

I agree with Naugle, who observes that Dooyeweerd thinks that both world views and philosophy share common things such as, "a mutual concern for totality, Archimedean foundations, and religious ground motives". They are different in that "philosophies are abstract, theoretical systems devised by a select group of professional thinkers". It is true that all people everywhere have world views and that, unlike Kuyper, Dooyeweerd does not think of Christian philosophy as an elaboration of an underlying biblical world view. Both philosophy and world view are the products of the "religious ground motive, juxtaposed to one another as cognitive phenomena of diverse kinds that share a common root" (Naugle, 2002:28). For Dooyeweerd "worldviews are not philosophical systems at all", since philosophy as a theoretical thought is "detached from and even antithetical to life", whereas a world view is directly connected with life.

With regard to the Christian revelation, Dooyeweerd is of the view that it "does not provide either a ready-made world view or developed systematic philosophy" (Naugle, 2002:29) as Kuyper seems to allude. However, Christian revelation gives direction to both world views and philosophy in a radical and determinative way. It does so in the same way that the spirit of unbelief abiding at the core of unbelieving persons gives rise to non-Christian world views as well. The human heart, which is the single root of all thought and action, is the ultimate factor in shaping how one understands and views reality, "whether practically in a worldview or theoretically in philosophy and science" (Naugle, 2002:29).

This section presented claims to the effect that Van der Walt's failure to accord the relationship between naïve experience, world view and philosophy may lead to problems with how he relates religion, world view and culture. This issue now receives further attention in the next section.

5.2.4 Problems with Van der Walt's five layers of cultural analysis

In a number of his publications Van der Walt uses a five-layered cultural analysis, prompting the conclusion that he accepts these five layers analysis as valid. Does this cohere with his reformational framework? In the course of articulating the five layers analysis, as established in subsection 1.4.4, Van der Walt appears to interrogate himself on fundamental concerns arising from his five layers of cultural analysis. However, this interrogation does not seem to help him adjust his analysis. The analysis, in the same format, preoccupies his thought in many of his publications on the subject.

The major area of weakness is a disconnection between what Van der Walt holds in his reformational framework and what he displays in his five layers of cultural analysis with regard to the relation between religion, culture and world view. Van der Walt himself admits that there is a weakness in his model and thus offers room for a fair criticism of his approach when he deals with the stated cultural and world view dilemmas.

It is necessary to first state the reformational perspective in Van der Walt's perception of reality. In line with mainstream reformational thinking he asserts that in the development of philosophy it is crucial to know how to relate religion, world view and culture and to bring this down to concrete reality (Van der Walt, 2001:43; 1997:9-10). He also acknowledges different facets of culture, for example the psychical, aesthetic, economic, juridical, logical, ethical aspects of culture and so on. Again in line with mainstream reformational thinking he distinguishes the "central religious commitment" from the dimension of faith (the pistic aspect). This, according to him, guards us from confusing the all-encompassing religion with the facet of faith. He also maintains that we serve God or an idol in all other aspects of reality and not only in our faith. He even wonders whether it is correct to regard religion and world view as aspects of a culture, which his five layers of cultural analysis tends to assume (Van der Walt, 2001:49-50).

Van der Walt furthermore, in accordance with mainline reformational thinking, observes that "religion is not disconnected from, but part of culture". Cultures are

"coloured" by the religious core. It is also not unlikely for cultures to influence the religious aspect (Van der Walt, 2001:59; 2003:99). Van der Walt thus portrays mainline thinking in the asserting that "religion is not an addition to life, but its essence; it is not a complement to existence, but its character, it is not higher than 'ordinary' life, it is its central thrust". Religion is as broad as life itself, it is a way of life, it is therefore not improper for him to state that "life is religion" (Van der Walt, 2001:35; 2003:99-101).

5.2.4.1 Is religion a cultural phenomenon?

It is true that religion is a reality involved in culture and surely not disconnected from it. However, in the context of Van der Walt's five layers of cultural analysis we have to rethink the connection carefully. Van der Walt gives his version (of religion as a cultural phenomenon) after first carefully representing the mainstream reformational thinking and secondly after presenting the five layers of cultural analysis. It dawns on him that he has treated religion and world view in this analysis as cultural aspects (which he refers to as cultural phenomena). It is in this context that his presentation should be addressed. According to his link with mainstream reformational thinking he cannot see world views and religion as simply cultural phenomena, but according to his five layers of cultural analysis he in fact does.

Though Van der Walt's reformational understanding of religion, world view and culture is indisputable, his analogy of the five layers of cultural analysis is disputable, especially when he treats religion and world view as cultural aspects. With this he "robs" religion of its all-encompassing nature. This is unfortunate, because the all-encompassing nature of religion is what Van der Walt labours to stipulate as part of his reformational philosophical framework.

Van der Walt is fully aware that the faith function is a characteristic of all people, just as the functions of thought and feeling and so on. He is also aware that the heart, the religious root unity of human existence, is not one of those functions. One therefore wonders why he would slavishly use an aid (model or analogy) that blurs the reality that he correctly perceives, believes in and propagates. His excuse that the aid is not descriptive, but prescriptive, does not resolve the issue. Since this

analysis has formed the basis for his cultural analysis in a number of his publications, he should be encouraged to review and adjust it to cohere with his reformational commitments or discard it and look for a better aid. There is no justified reason for the five layers of cultural analysis to put him in the unfortunate and unwarranted dilemma. The analogy simplifies what is not simplifiable, and jeopardises his argument.

5.2.4.2   Can we have several cores in one body?

As was pointed out in chapter one, Van der Walt hints at religion as the core of culture, but he also talks of a "worldviewish-ideological core" (Van der Walt, 2001:58). How can this be when in actual sense there can only be one core in a body? Subsection 1.4.5 showed that Van der Walt surprisingly adds that we should recognise a single religious core with respect to primitive cultures and more than one religious centre (core) in the contemporary, "open", multicultural world, of which one gradually becomes dominant.

Unless Van Walt makes his case clear, his explanation leads in a direction he does not intend. Looking carefully at what he puts across he probably wishes to explain that "worldviewish-ideological core" seems to be the secular equivalent or substitute for "religious". If this is what he has in mind, he can then rescue his description by explaining that "worldviewish-ideological core" can be described as a secular substitute used by the secular religious outlook. This of course will imply there is only one core, namely the religious, which in a secular world manifests itself in a variety of ideologies that all have in common their reduction of life to some aspect of human life.

If Van der Walt does not rescue his argument as explained above, his five layers of cultural analysis will seem to champion a secularist version of the relation of religion, world view and culture, which of course is far from his intention. We know for sure that secularism sickens Van der Walt and his anti-secularist campaign is not in dispute. That is why if something in his analysis tends to point to the secularist side we need to sound a loud voice of alarm to him.

Van der Walt nevertheless agrees that in the case of secularism other religions are gradually marginalised so that they start functioning "outside" the core. They become irrelevant to culture as a whole and the religious influence is limited to a small part, for example in the case of Christians, their "spiritual" or "ecclesiastical life" (Van der Walt, 2001:53; 2003:98).   Since he acknowledges religion "as the central directedness of all human life towards the real or presumed ultimate source (God/god) of meaning and authority", he should clarify what he means by more than one religious core in the contemporary and modern world. As explained above, he should show that we do not have many cores, for if this not clarified he may be viewed as entertaining a contradiction of facts or accepting a secularist way of understanding religion.

My suggestion is that Van der Walt would do better if he emphasises the mainstream reformational notion that religion, as the central directedness of all human life toward the real and presumed ultimate source, directs both the un-open ("primitive") and open (contemporary) cultures. We cannot deduce from the many cultural and multi-religious dimensions a series of cores. All these multicultural and multi-religious realities are grounded in one religious core, the central directedness of human life towards the real or presumed ultimate source. All multicultural and multi-religious situations are dimensions or responses of the central directedness of life towards the real or presumed ultimate source. This generates Christianity, African traditional religion, other world religions and ideological frameworks.

Instead of Van der Walt using the five layers to explain his reformational framework, he should use his reformational framework to criticise it. The five layers explanation is actually the secularist way of explaining the relation between religion, world view and culture. The reason for this is clear; the secularist version has a vague understanding of religion, and even entertains the notion of religious neutrality. A secularist disregards or lacks knowledge of the central directedness of life towards the real or presumed ultimate source. The secularist version ignores or does not understand that religion is the nature of all of life, implying that all of life is a spiritual response to God (or idol).

The secularist version of Christianity downgrades most human aspects as "second-rate or natural or even the locus of evil and sin" (Van der Walt, 2001:35). It does not lead us to understanding that "our eating, sleeping, sexuality, emotions, and politics are as spiritual as our thoughts, morals and beliefs" (Van der Walt, 2001:35). This secularist version reduces religion to one sphere of life, which Van der Walt acknowledges (Van der Walt, 2001:35). Van der Walt's position on secularism is clear, he is a reckoned voice against it, but his five layers of cultural analysis model tends towards the secularist notion that he strongly rejects.

5.2.4.3   Why five layers and not all aspects of culture?

Another problem with Van der Walt's five layers of cultural analysis is that he concentrates on only a few aspects, some of which are not really accepted aspects of being human. This model fails to point to culture as a concrete entity that displays at least fifteen aspects. Without underrating Van der Walt's caution of the limitations of his model, I wish to reiterate again that it contradicts his beautiful understanding and appreciation of culture as concrete entity that displays different aspects (pointing to the whatness and howness of culture).

5.2.5 Does Van der Walt definition of world view contradict his articulation of world view?

In the articulation of the concept world view Van der Walt alludes to a clear distinction between the confessed and real (and unconfessed) world view. However, in his definition of world view (discussed in subsection 1.1.1) he sees a world view simply as "the network/framework of confessional convictions which determines how one understands and experiences reality". How does this tie with his admission that a world view not only originates from confessional convictions and that many factors play a role in its formation (as discussed in subsection 1.1.3)? At this point one wonders whether he contradicts his own definition of world view as outlined above. How is a world view confessional, and yet it does not originate only in confessional convictions? If there are elements in a world view that do not originate in confessional convictions, it is difficult to see how a world view is simply a framework of confessional convictions. A world view is clearly more than merely the

confessional. Van der Walt should re-think his definition of world view on the strength of his argument on the complexity of a world view.

As opposed to his definition, Van der Walt goes on to note that a world view is shaped by both internal factors such as "emotional life, personality type, intellectual development, gender" and external factors such as a "certain tradition, education (by parents, school, college), the influence of friends and soul-mates, the current-social, political, economic and cultural circumstances and many more" (Van der Walt, 2008:61). This proper perspective, which contradicts his definition, shows that he sees the origin of a world view as "a multi-dimensional network of influences" (Van der Walt, 2008:60-61). Van der Walt's view (2008:60-61) — not as portrayed in his definition — seems to agree with Kuyper's acknowledgement about the logical and systematic complexity of ruling ideas and conceptions that make up our world views (Kuyper, 2007:189-190).

5.2.6 Van der Walt's lack of attention to confessed versus real world views

With more and more interest in the subject of world view, and particularly with the considerable attention to it in the reformational approach, problems that need attention are emerging. Terms such as integral, holistic or transformational are gaining much usage, but in actual practice, they are just lip service - and this is worrying. The interest in the study and usage of the concept world view is commendable, but the way it has just become another term, just as the ones listed above, also raises serious concerns. Its complexity and illusiveness, as shown earlier, is often overlooked. For instance, a clear perspective is needed on what is seen as confessed world views versus real world views that may not be confessed, but influences us thoroughly. Van der Walt recognises this, but he does not give it much attention. The discussion on naïve experience as stipulated in subsection 5.2.3, is my attempt to give the confessed versus real world view issue more attention. What is unconsciously held and which may be directed by some idol, may be the real directional power behind our doings, even though we make more virtuous confessions of faith.

When Christ addressed his, critics who were mainly the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, he noted: "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, 'These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me …'" (Mark 7:6-7). He wanted us to know that people could confess and profess one thing and do just the opposite. The confession "I am Christian" does not always match "what I do". In most cases a contradiction occurs between what is confessed and what is done.

Christ appears to contrast two world views here, one that is purely confessional, that is unmistakably articulated, and one that is lived, real and quite antithetical to the one confessed. The worship that is a farce is the effect of articulating right things and not practicing them. As was noted earlier, Fowler (2007) clearly distinguishes the two and gives it due attention, while unfortunately Van der Walt does not.

Though Van der Walt pays attention to the effects of Christian dualism by providing a reformational framework as an alternative, he does not seem to pay serious attention to dualism — as it appears in the disjunction between the confessed and unconfessed, but real world views. Jesus Christ clearly shows that this is a serious problem.

Those of us advocating a reformational approach must be aware of the deceitfulness of the heart, the religious root of existence. We must always see to it that what we confess matches with what we do. Indeed what we do is what characterises our world view. Jeremiah is right in observing that: "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I, the LORD, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve" (Jeremiah. 17:9 -10).

The devil — the god of this world — blinds the (unbeliever's) mind to disable it from seeing the glorious light of the Good News (2 Cor. 4:4). He disguises himself as the angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). The devil twists the truth to have us entertain Christian dualism, or he may allow us to clearly profess, truth to but live in total rebellion against God by violating the very truth that we profess by what we do (what is meant by Christian dualism is explained in the third paragraph after this paragraph). The

glorious light of Good News gives us the content and enables us to put it in practice. The devil who disguises as the angel of light makes us blind on practice and active on the confession of the content.

For this reason it is imperative that we give this reality serious attention. Though Van der Walt handles the world view concept from a reformational perspective, he does not seem to pay a serious attention to the danger of a dualism of what is articulated and what is lived. As seen above, this dualism is the product of the deceitfulness of our hearts and the acceptance of the devil's lie. A dualism of this kind, if entertained even in the reformational circle, is worse than the Christian dualism that the reformational adherents tends to criticise. It is not different from unbelief.

Christian dualism in this study refers to a perspective of Christianity that accepts dualisms such as natural/supernatural, faith/reason, spiritual/material, nature/grace, sacred/secular in their interpretation of reality. This also informs their biblical interpretation. This form of Christianity is rejected by reformational Christianity. Van der Walt's third way provides a reformational perspective of Christianity that he thinks is needed in Africa and the entire world. A dualism of what is articulated and what is lived, between the confessed and lived world view, is a problem that all Christians are confronted with. It is actually a serious Christian problem that all Christians guard against.

The following account demonstrates the reality of the above: A pastor in three services on a particular Sunday preached on honesty. Come Monday, the pastor boards a bus and is given more money than his change by the bus driver. The pastor is tempted to keep the money. He even rationalises on the need to keep the money as divine providence. Finally, as he alights, he decides to give the extra money back to the driver. As he does so, the bus driver tells him that he did give more change on purpose because he wanted to test him against his Sunday message on honesty. The driver told him he had attended all services where he preached on honesty. This driver had rejected church life on the grounds of its hypocrisy. He wanted to discover better grounds to be in that church where his wife was a member and where the pastor had preached in three services on honesty. It appears he got good grounds to attend the pastor's church since he bid goodbye with "see you on Sunday." The test

here was the test of whether what is confessed matches with what is lived (Njaramba, 2014:6) It is good to acknowledge that a dualism between the confessed and lived world view is a problem that could be associated with all cultures and it would be wrong to assume that it is a typical problem of particular cultures and not others. Since this was anticipated in the African culture, taboos were invoked to balance what is said (confessed) and what is the lived truth. For example, in certain circumstances a person was required to take an oath to validify whatever he/she confessed. It was believed that if the truth was compromised, if what was said was not the truth, a bad omen would result, and this somehow checked the balance between the two.

The role of taboos is downplayed within Christian circles as a result of Christian education. More emphasis is placed on the role of the Holy Spirit, but unfortunately a dualism looms. African Christians do not fear taboos meant to check the unfortunate dualism, they do not fear divine punishment because it seems quite eschatological. The absence of taboos — a good result of Christian teaching — and the lack of fear of divine punishment or purported Christian maturity in African Christian backgrounds unfortunately provides fertile ground for the stated dualism where one professes a truth and lives contrary to it.

Van der Walt's third way should provide not just how African and Western cultures should be reconciled, but how the unfortunate dualism may be dealt with in both cultures. Failure to do so limits the ability of the third way to tackle a major problem faced by the continent of Africa and which forbids the enjoyment of God and honesty.

That is why Fowler cautions that it is possible to formulate statements about world views, but these may not necessarily match our real world view. Our world view is only revealed in our everyday life (Fowler, 2007:1). His warning is right that if we do not make this distinction, we will always be puzzled by why people make virtuous confessions, but act in a contrary manner (Fowler, 2007:3).

5.2.7 The problem of generalisation

Van der Walt wishes to get to that ordinary non-technical level where we see people's daily practical undertakings. He also attempts to assist Western and African cultures to appreciate, understand, accept and respect each other and thus come closer to each other (Van der Walt, 1997:75). He even includes the Eastern and Oriental cultures to make his argument more globally applicable.

However, in his evaluation of African and the Western cultures, Van der Walt handles too many issues, which then overstretches his argument. Because of stretching so much he does not delve into transcendental ideas about what he compares, and this somehow robs his work of the philosophical appeal that he intends. It is actually not the differences on the surface that is the underlying problem. The real problem is rather what lies behind certain assumptions, and not just the assumptions themselves.

Van der Walt's argument that the difference between African and Western thinking is not watertight somehow touches on his other weak spot, namely a strong generalisation - a generalisation that is unable to explain everything. It seems to me problematic to simply assume that one can generalise about cultures by equating them to others. Although the generalised comparison, as Van der Walt gives, may still have some validity, a more careful formulation is needed. The generalised comparison should not replace a more careful formulation of the matter. Nevertheless, Van der Walt's distinction takes him a long way, which can be appreciated and which can be a good starting point for a more careful formulation.

As far as exposing the underlying assumptions of Western culture and arguing for transcultural norms Van der Walt has done a substantial job. This is, however, not the case with unmasking the underlying factors in African culture, though he has sought some help for this from people like Yusufu Turaki (subsection 2.4). But this is understandable, because he admits that he writes as a Western African. A clear view of the underlying factors of African culture, which forms the basis of the African world view presents an opportunity for the solution of Africa's divided soul. It should be pursued at all cost.

As envisioned in the introduction of this research study (section 2, "Research question") providing a better framework to check the problem of the divided soul is highly anticipated. I would have liked to see Van der Walt doing a more thorough work of subjecting African culture to the reformational framework. Employing the modal theory of Herman Dooyeweerd to the African culture could have helped significantly. Is it wrong to suppose that a culture is a structure with modal aspects that reflects its coherence? This seems to be denied by Roper's suggestion that we use the adjective *cultural* instead of the noun *culture* (which is subject to misconceptions). He goes on to suggest that a culture is a modal *how* of creation rather than a concrete *what*. Does this approach not cause Roper to consider culture from only one perspective of concrete reality — the formative aspect? I am not sure that treating a culture as a modal *how* as Roper suggests is satisfactory. I think treating it as a concrete *what* makes more sense, because a culture, as any other concrete reality, participates in all modal aspects. Since in Roper's philosophy of culture it is not treated as a concrete reality that participates in all modal aspects, Van der Walt, who is in serious search for an alternative to Africa's divided soul, should treat it as a concrete reality.

Van der Walt's third way ought to solve this problem by providing an effective basis for reuniting the "divided soul" of the African people. This is the task of reforming the traditional African cultural values and world view to give an ideal framework that supports functional and authentic African social structures for Africans in Africa today. It is my conviction that this could be tackled well by Van der Walt if he shows how African culture participates in all modal aspects in their coherence. If African culture is transformed in this way, each aspect of the African culture will nourish and provide coherence in the African society, given the strength of its holistic world view. The African culture will realise a constellation of meaning, rich and diverse, centred on a kernel or nucleus (http://www.dooy.salford.ac.uk/aspects.to1005.html)

This will possibly provide functioning institutions for today's Africa, namely state, church, school, university, news media and commerce with functional structures modelled on African culture and world view. It will keep an uncritical adoption of Western cultural patterns in check. The scenario of the remnants of African culture, adopted by Africans after uncritical adoption of the Western culture, will also be

checked (Fowler, 1995:42–48). Only the positive of the Western culture will be adopted to the African culture and *vice versa*.

The younger generation in urban areas, especially those who are tempted by the trend of adopting the Western cultural patterns as model of the good life, will learn to appreciate their culture if a constellation of meaning, a rich and diverse reality of each aspect of the African culture, is exposed.

It may be good to note that some of Van der Walt's weaknesses are not strictly speaking difficult ones to handle. They only need a reformulation of his ideas. They do not fundamentally affect his reformational outlook, but they cause confusion and can be subject to misinterpretation. Problems such as those with the five layers of cultural analysis seem to fundamentally disorient his good reformational framework. This needs a serious consideration.

5.3   Other cautions for Van der Walt's third way

This point will deal not with a perceived weakness in Van der Walt's third way, it cautions him to investigate what might be criticism of the foundations of his third way.

Shaw (2006) shows that the African church has, and continues to struggle with being an effective witness to the risen Lord. In this struggle it finds itself wrestling with rival concepts of Christ and his Kingdom. The African church discovers that reflecting on the rule of Christ and his Kingdom is always an elusive ideal not easily achieved by all who bear Christ's name (Shaw, 2006:7-8).

Shaw maintains that what is at stake for the African church and the entire global community is a complete failure on the part of the church to maintain a balance between three distinct, but interconnected elements of the Kingdom of God. These elements include: God's sovereign rule that is tied to the doctrine of providence; Christ's redemptive reign over the human heart that is tied to the doctrine of salvation; and the coming Kingdom as an earthly utopia that is tied to eschatology and ethics (Shaw, 2006:12). Shaw maintains that the church in different historical

periods has tended towards putting more emphasis on one of these three kingdom aspects to the relative neglect of the others. He cites different examples and the striking one is where he describes those who see the Kingdom of God as the theocratic rule over all things. He says in this regard that the church mirrors "this by building centralised political, theological, and ecclesiastical structures such as the Holy Roman Empire…" (Shaw, 2006:16). He furthermore makes an interesting blanket statement that Van der Walt ought to take note of:

> *"When we encounter eighth-century Christian Berbers fighting against Muslim invaders or sixteenth-century Ethiopian kings going to war under the banner of the cross or twentieth-century Reformed theologians in South Africa attempting to construct a comprehensive reformational world view for Africa, we are seeing forms of African Christianity that seek to witness to the kingdom as the theocratic rule of God" (Shaw, 2006:16).*

How does Van der Walt address this, noting that his third way that provides an alternative to Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism is founded on the reformational foundation? If, as Shaw notes, the reformational approach neglects the other two aspects of the Kingdom of God, can it be trusted to provide an alternative to the two extreme approaches (Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism) that have only caused confrontation? Is it true that the reformational approach provides a tool for African Christians to usher in the theocratic rule of God in the same light as the Christian Berbers fighting against Muslims?

Shaw thinks that early African Christianity presented the imperial rule of God and hence missed the full Evangelical impulse. It underplayed the redemptive rule of Christ in the hearts of the human persons and the vision of the coming justice and peace (Shaw, 2006:81-82).

Shaw furthermore sees medieval African Christianity as presenting a clash of the views of the kingdom of God. The Portuguese and the Dutch emphasised the kingdom as a theocracy. This was seen to conflict with those who presented the Kingdom as liberating the hearts from sin and hands from chains of slavery. It combined the "evangelical fervour for souls with eschatological passion for justice" (Shaw, 2006:144). Shaw argues that this happened as the evangelical awakening responded to the dualism and rationalism of the Enlightenment (Shaw, 2006:141-144). Shaw shows that, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, African

Christianity showed evidence of the Kingdom of God as the reign of Christ in the hearts of his people. This was the total opposite of European Christendom and its imperialism (Shaw, 2006:16).

If we could use Shaw's yardstick: How does Van der Walt's third way measure up to the three concepts of the Kingdom? Does it place them in a balance or does it tend to emphasise one or two over and against the three of them. It is the assessment of this research that Van der Walt needs to weigh his third way against the three concepts of the Kingdom and hence see if it addresses the concerns Shaw raises for African Christianity. This is important because an approach that seeks to provide a solution to Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism need to be itself well-balanced in its appropriation of the sovereignty of God, the rule of Christ in the hearts of the human persons and coming Kingdom as an earthly utopia tied to eschatology and ethics. In Van der Walt's work, the concept of the sovereignty of God and coming Kingdom seem to be louder than the concept of the reign of Christ in human hearts.

5.4   Chapter summary

This chapter critically analysed Van der Walt's third way to establish if it resolves the research problem, namely the false dilemma leading to the problem of the divided soul of African people. It also sought to identify some weaknesses in Van der Walt's third way and discussed how he could improve its articulation.

Before criticising Van der Walt, the chapter detailed major strengths in his third way. Key among these strengths include Van der Walt's recognition of the fallacy of all forms of reductionism and their effects; and a clear understanding of the all-encompassing nature of religion and its implications for world views and culture. His third way boldly attempts to resolve Africa's problem of the divided soul from core and not from the surface.

Having seen these and many other strengths, the chapter then focused on pointing out Van der Walt's weak points to suggest ways of how he could improve on these weak points.

One of the weaknesses identified in Van der Walt's description of a worldview is the attribution of religion to world view, thereby reducing religion to a sub-part of world view. This is evident in his claim that a world view takes possession of one's heart. The reality is the other way around.

Another weakness is the unusual and unjustified claim that pre-scientific does not mean unscientific. This statement seems to imply that a world view is scientific, since it is not unscientific, a claim that is far from what he means. These and other weaknesses could be a result of Van der Walt not giving due attention to the relation of naïve experience, world view and philosophy, and could be the result of not reconsidering his formulations. It would be better if he revised some of his formulations.

A major weakness that seems to fundamentally affect Van der Walt's reformational framework is his five layers of cultural analysis. The chapter observed that this analysis does not aid his reformational view of religion, world view and culture, but instead blurs it. As a result of his five layers of cultural analysis, religion wrongly appears as a cultural aspect, and several cores are wrongly alluded to as featuring in the same body. If Van der Walt does not urgently address the situation, his explanation and description (of his five layers of cultural analysis) risk pointing in the direction that he totally campaigns against — the secular allusion.

The chapter suggested among other things that instead of Van der Walt allowing his five layers of cultural analysis to undermine his good reformational thinking, he should instead employ the Dooyeweerdian reformational modal theory to investigate and articulate culture.

Other weaknesses identified in the chapter include: A seeming contradiction of his own definition in his articulation of the concept of world view; lack of paying serious attention to what is confessed and what is lived, the confessed versus lived world view. World view is commonly and mistakenly perceived to be what is articulated and not what is lived. It is for this reason that Van der Walt should shed light on the distinction between the confessed and lived world views. Christ actually condemned professing virtuous beliefs and failing to live those beliefs. Generalisation is a

weakness in Van der Walt's comparison of Western and African culture, because it denies him the opportunity of delving into the transcendental ideas of these cultures. Finally, the chapter urges Van der Walt to interrogate his third way against Shaw's claim that the reformational approach tends towards one aspect of the three concepts of the Kingdom of God, namely the sovereignty of God, the rule of Christ in the hearts of the human persons and coming Kingdom as an earthly utopia tied to eschatology and ethics. The chapter concludes by asserting that if Van der Walt seeks to provide a solution to Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism, and hence to solve the African problem of the divided soul, the solution has to be well-balanced in its application of the three concepts of the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 6: A look at the future

As outlined in the introduction of this study, this chapter intends to discuss how Van der Walt's third way helps in the prevention of future damage on African culture, especially as it interacts with different cultures. This chapter thus concludes on the research objectives as outlined in section 5 (6) of the introduction. Secondly, the chapter will try to capture how this study, a critical philosophical engagement with Van der Walt on African culture and world view, helps to stimulate a critical look at all structures of today's African societies. Finally, the chapter will show how Van der Walt intends to encourage an effective Christian participation in promoting appropriate development for the contemporary Africa. This envisioned development is not only fit for Africa, but also for the entire world, because it counters the reductionism that is promoted by the Western secularist world view.

To achieve what is anticipated in this chapter and to bring out what Van der Walt provides in his third way, the discussion engages some recognised strategies for developing Africa, such as: The Eastern Africa Regional Integration Strategy Paper 2011 – 2015 (RISP) and The Kenya Vision 2030. These strategies are considered to help us acknowledge some optimism for Africa from perspectives that may nevertheless represent some forms of reductionism. This will be contrasted with Van der Walt's third way that represents a non-reductionist perspective. This serves to not only show practically the impact of the Western secularist world view on Africa, but also to show how Van der Walt seeks to correct this with his third way. Van der Walt then helps us to understand that we need to not only mourn the status quo, but to provide workable alternatives. This explains why much attention will be given to the RISP so that the spirit behind it may be articulated and its strengths and shortcomings exposed. This will lead to a consideration of Van der Walt's third way as an alternative for Africa's development. Van der Walt's third way for instance reveals some shortcomings in these strategies that are proposed to develop Africa. A good number of these strategies for Africa's economic development are shaped and informed by the Western world view. Van der Walt therefore calls on his readers to not accept them uncritically.

As the discussion turns to looking at Africa's future in the light of Van der Walt's third

way, it has to capture what Van der Walt (2003) envisages in his book title, "*Understanding and rebuilding Africa: From desperation today to expectation tomorrow*". This captures well what is anticipated in this chapter, namely to check the future damage to African culture, to stimulate a critical look at all structures of today's African societies and to encourage an effective Christian participation in promoting appropriate development for contemporary Africa. Before laying out what is appropriate for developing Africa as envisioned in Van der Walt's third way, the argument first considers the strategies established by African leaders for Africa's development.

The astounding thing about the strategies for developing Africa (even from a reductionist point of view) is that they envisage a brighter future for Africa. It is therefore a mistake to suppose that what we propagate is the only strategy that envisages and works out a brighter future for Africa. This shows that Africa's status quo is a disturbing thing for Africans in general. The problem we have is how different interest groups attempt to address it. Should it be addressed within the categories of reductionism or with an intention of a paradigm shift, a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions? Van der Walt's third way provides a direction towards a paradigm shift that is missed by other interest groups that strategise to develop Africa.

Two of the documents that represent a reductionist perspective that will be considered are the following: The Eastern Africa Regional Integration Strategy Paper 2011 – 2015[1], whichfor instance envisages a well-connected, economically prosperous and peaceful region as both public and private sector actors are supported in engaging in the regional integration process.

Kenya Vision 2030 envisages a globally competitive and prosperous nation with a high quality of life by 2030. The vision has three pillars, namely the economic, social and political. On the economic pillar the vision envisages maintaining a sustained economic growth of 10% p.a. over the next 25 years. On the social pillar, it

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[1] The RISP is considered because apart from stipulating strategies for East African regional development, it also incorporates the COMESA, EAC and SADC Tripartite Arrangement that touches the greater part of the African region. It also recognises the efforts of ECOWAS.

envisages a just and cohesive society, enjoying equitable social development in a clean and secure environment. Finally, with regard to the political pillar, an issue-based, people-centred, result-oriented, and an accountable democratic political environment is envisaged.

The optimism expressed in Africa by RISP and even Kenya Vision 2030 is very encouraging, but the worrying thing is the means propagated to get us there. We shall need to consider the justification of Van der Walt's third way given the reductionist underlying reality in the strategies propagated for African economic development.

6.1   Optimism about Africa in the context of a disturbing situation

A critical reflection on Africa's problems and a search for answers should be accompanied by a good knowledge of Africa's history and its current socio-economic-political situation. However, on the back cover of Van der Walt's book (2003), he notes that it is regrettable that in spite of modern communication there is still a serious lack of insight into the socio-economic-political situation of our continent. According to Van der Walt it is imperative that if the African situation is to be made better (to be re-built), some insight into the African context and how it should be rebuilt are needed. He shows that optimism about Africa is not just wishful thinking.

In identifying with Van der Walt's claim as stated above, Desmond M. Tutu (Archbishop Emeritus) in the preface to Van der Walt's (2003) work argues that Van der Walt's optimism is more than just wishful thinking. He makes the following remarks regarding Van der Walt's look at Africa's future: First, he asserts that Van der Walt assists us to understand the African continent's past and present. He helps us to think of how to rebuild its future, that is, not by shying from acknowledging its weaknesses, but by expressing optimism and not succumbing to Afro-pessimism. Secondly, he asserts that Van der Walt's remarkable understanding of Africa is intertwined with the understanding of the religion, world view and culture of black Africans. He is also versed with the Western culture that has drastically influenced Africa both positively and negatively. Third, and most fundamentally, that Van der

Walt's approach to solutions for Africa's problems is from a strongly Christian philosophical perspective. This Christian perspective sees the Gospel as relevant for all of life — moral, political, economic and so on. This perspective is holistic and based on a biblical world view, its consequence is human dignity, freedom, equality, tolerance and reconciliation (Van der Walt, 2003:vii).

The African reality, as Van der Walt points out, is impacted by the impact of slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and Christianity. These realities that have shaped contemporary Africa seem to eclipse the earlier realities of Africa, which include civilizations, powerful dynasties and kingdoms, and a powerful African philosophy and wisdom. If what is eclipsed is left to blossom, it may paint a different picture from gloom and doom. These earlier realities may be a good catalyst for working towards a brighter future for Africa (Van der Walt, 2003:1-37).

Van der Walt shows that contemporary Africa is shaped by the positive and negative impact of the past. This impact is felt in the African social, economic, and political situation (Van der Walt, 2003:37-58). The African past is not revisited to help Africa mourn. It is consulted for two main reasons: First to disallow a repeat of the past, and second to hope for a better Africa. The reality of hope for a better Africa is evident in examples of positive visions for Africa in spite of different perspectives on reality.

The past problems are not the only issues in Africa. The Eastern Africa RISP 2011-2015 identifies specific contemporary concerns in the African region. This agrees with what is identified by Van der Walt (2003:37-58). They include: the fragile nature of our continent, insecurity, cross-border conflicts, governance challenges, corruption, tribalism and ethnicism, as well as cross-cutting issues related to gender, the environment and climate change. Other concerns include inadequate and poor regional infrastructure networks, water scarcity and difficulty in managing shared water resources, weak institutions and weak human capacity, political instability and diversity across the economies and divergent country attitudes towards regional integration. These problems derail the consolidation of peace and security and the strengthening of democratic processes in the region (East Africa RISP — 2011 – 2015).

The story of Africa does not just end with problems. Van der Walt and the RISP identify a number of opportunities for Africa. Key among these opportunities is the availability of an abundance of natural resources. This offers opportunities for productive activities. Likewise, the COMMESA, EAC and SADC (CES[2]) Tripartite Arrangement, backed up by political commitment at the highest government level, also hold the prospect of a heightened infrastructure development and trade expansion effort in the region. Furthermore, enabling the flow of capital, management of know-how and technologies within the sub-region, and between the sub-region and the rest of the continent, is a priority outcome of the regional integration process. In this respect, the pattern of intra-regional investment, led by Kenyan private enterprises operating across the East African Community (EAC) market is an encouragement. It is an encouraging sign of an emerging footprint of pan-African financial institutions and the increasing presence of multi-country private equity funds in the region. These are positive developments that should be further encouraged and developed (East Africa RISP - 2011-2015).

6.2   A journey towards a brighter African future: The RISP perspective

It is important to relate what Van der Walt envisages for the African future with what others have done to enable us to appreciate his vision for Africa and his criticism of the contemporary view of African development. It is for this reason that the RISP is brought into focus, going by what it stipulates for Africa's economic development. We are meant to understand that regional infrastructure and capacity building are the two pillars of RISP. Regional Public Goods (RPGs), private sector development, knowledge management and networking are also covered in the RISP strategic framework, which conforms to the operational thrusts of the African Development Bank Group's Medium-Term Strategy, 2008-2012 (henceforth referred to as "Bank"). The Medium Term Strategy (MTS) constitutes a road map for the Bank and its partners at a critical time of Africa's development (Bank Group MTS, 2008-2012). In line with the vision and objectives of the region, the Bank's agenda for Eastern Africa is to create a well-connected, economically prosperous and peaceful region by

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[2] COMESA - Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; EAC- East African Community; SADC - Southern African Development Community; ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States

supporting both public and private sector actors engaged in the regional integration process.

In the medium to long term, the COMMESA, EAC and SADC (CES)[3] Tripartite Arrangement, launched in 2008, will define the vision and regional strategic objectives of both Eastern and Southern Africa. Support for the CES Tripartite Arrangement is therefore a major focus of the RISP. The Tripartite Arrangement, covering 26 countries that constitute 50% of the continent's population is a bold initiative aimed at promoting inter-regional economic collaboration and trade expansion. It extends the EAC and COMESA regional integration vision to a larger vision of a single Regional Economic Community (REC) by an undefined future date, which is in consonance with the long-term continental vision of a United States of Africa.

The MTS Bank will enter into a dialogue with the regional and country stakeholders on a number of issues crucial to enhance regional integration efforts. These include a need to balance national and regional commitments, to ensure synergy between regional and national priorities, harmonisation of policies, regulations and standards. It also ensures the need for better commitments to quality implementation of Regional Operations (ROs) at Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and country level. Others issues include the need to strengthen multinational operations, monitoring teams and to put in place an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism for regional operations at both the Bank and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) level, as well as in Regional Member Countries (RMCs).

To mitigate the potential stumbling blocks to successful implementation of the RISP, the Bank will play a supportive role and coordinate closely with relevant international and regional institutions, whose core mandate focuses on the promotion of peace and security. It will be done through a number of opportunities offered by the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and other Development Partners (DPs).

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[3] Acronyms and abbreviations—CES-COMESA-EAC-SADC; MTS - Medium-Term Strategy; RO - Regional Operation; REC - Regional Economic Communities; RMC - Regional Member Country; RISP - Regional Integration Strategy Papers

In conclusion, the Bank's strategic goal and agenda of creating a well-connected, economically prosperous and peaceful Eastern Africa will require the support of public and private sector actors engaged in the regional integration process. This will require regional infrastructure development in transport, energy, Information Communication Technology (ICT) and shared water resources, capacity building, with an emphasis on support for the COMESA, EAC and SADC (CES) Tripartite process, sustainability of the strategy's infrastructure focus; selective institutions, undertakings and stakeholder platforms that augment public and private capacity towards regional integration. The Bank will also promote cross-cutting issues (gender, environment and climate change), and knowledge management and networking (Eastern Africa regional Integration Strategy Paper 2011 – 2015, Regional Departments – East I & East Ii (Orea/Oreb) September 2011).

With this vision for Africa by the RISP now in place, the effort should not be geared towards countering it, but is rather needed in understanding the spirit behind it and its shortcomings. An attempt should be made to envision what may be a better alternative. This, as has been observed all through this project, is what Van der Walt's third way is working towards.

6.3   Van der Walt's third way look at Africa's future

Before we look at what Van der Walt recommends for rebuilding Africa — what I think is a better alternative in comparison to what is provided in the two documents discussed above — he discusses certain painful realities that must be dealt with immediately, let us discuss them.

6.3.1 We must minimise further destruction on African social structures

We need to minimise the destruction of social, political, economic and educational structures by the forcible imposition of alien structures rooted in an alien culture. Van der Walt seems to agree with Fowler that the functioning institutions of today's Africa, namely state, church, school, university, news media and commerce should be modelled on the African culture and world view (Fowler, 1995:42-48). First, we must appreciate that we have the African people, their cultural values and world

view. This is a great asset that Africa has. The African people have deep roots in African history and culture and this is paramount (Fowler, 1995:12-23; Bediako, 1995:6, Mutua, 2010:40-56). What is celebrated at grassroots level — the traditional African cultural values and world view — should be provided with functional social structures to support a workable and acceptable basis for a good life and development (Van der Walt, 2006:6-8; Fowler, 1995:42–48).

Providing functional institutions with functional structures to support them may help to overcome the identified African dilemma.

A solution must be sought for the divided soul of Africa. This soul must be re-united by an effective cultural structure that negates the false dilemma and provides an alternative through which the African people may fully experience reality as God provides. This experience provides a journey towards reforming the traditional African cultural values and world view to give an ideal framework that supports functional institutions by offering authentic social structures for Africans in today's Africa.

6.3.2 We must minimise the division between cultures

The criticism of Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism by Van der Walt (2006) is not meant to divide the two cultures. It is meant to provide the basis for enriching and uniting the two cultures. It is also meant to provide the basis for Africans to interact not only with Western culture, but also with all other cultures that Africa interacts with because of increasing globalisation. Africa can no longer be isolated from the rest of the world. Africa needs now more than ever to communicate effectively cross-culturally.

6.3.3 We must minimise the loss of opportunities

Van der Walt (2006:19-22) agrees with Mutua's article "What is that in your hand? Realising Africa's potential", on some of Africa's lost opportunities. These lost opportunities include First, failure to process their raw materials, meaning that Africa imports at exorbitant prices what it exported at throw-away prices. Africa should

process its own raw materials. Second, the problem of brain-drain means that Africa's human resources is not utilised in Africa. After exploiting Africa's resources through education, feeding, health services and security, the African continent is denied opportunity of enjoying the fruit of its labour through the brain drain. Africa's brains only benefits other areas ready to over-utilise them. Africa needs to encourage her talented people to see the continent as a place of choice to stay and work instead of running to other destinations. In order to do so Africa must provide hospitable conditions for her talented people (Mutua, 2010:40-55).

Third, relying on imported human resources to extract Africa's natural resources means that Africa's human resources is not adequately prepared for such endeavours. This could be due to the irrelevance of Africa's institutions or lack of resources to provide quality training for relevant skills. African institutions should be empowered to be relevant. They also have be provided with resources to enable them to produce relevant skills. Mwenda Ntarangwi, the IAPCHE Executive Director points to Africa's inherited educational programmes as the root cause. He notes that these educational programmes were developed and meant for other societies. He is disappointed that Africa has not had time to rethink through the content and practices of her education (Ntarangwi, 2013:10). Ntarangwi's observation echoes Dan Izevbaye's (2007:118) remark that the 'idea' of the African university has to take into account the environment in which African universities function at the present time. It has to consider the specific historical and cultural circumstances of the countries in which they are located and which they are meant to serve. In this way Izevbaye thinks Africans will correct the existing structures and traditions of the African universities that were intended to produce a Western-educated middle class for the public service. These structures and traditions as they are today will not provide the skills that are needed.

Fourth, too many of the African resources go unutilised or underutilised, or even unextracted due to political instabilities resulting from poor leadership, negative ethnicity and tribalism, religious intolerance and animosity and so on. Africa needs a better democratic space that acknowledges the values of both unity and diversity (Mutua, 2010:40-55).

Van der Walt (2006:19-22) mentions that wonderful resources can be found in Africa. He also argued that wonderful opportunities for developing and Christianising Africa have been lost. Warped development and secularised Christianity characterises Africa. As we move towards the future we need to seize opportunities to properly develop and even Christianise Africa. A critical look at all the structures of today's African societies should encourage effective participation by Africans to promote development appropriate for today's Africa and the world in general. This will entail a critical investigation of all available resources in Africa and seek mechanisms of extracting these resources without disregarding norms for development. Africa's development should not be driven by the current thirst for profit and total disregard for other concerns for creation.

This critical look helps to counter the overdependence on Western economism that exploits Africa's abundant resources. A cooperative approach should instead be fostered that will seek to utilise the best from external cultures by making it compatible with the African world view. It should encourage the participation of Africans from all walks to appreciate God's cultural mandate to his people as taught in Genesis 1:28: "Then God blessed them and said, be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground". This understanding counters the secularisation propagated by the Western influence. It helps Africans to seek wisdom to engage with their context in a manner that will provide Africa's liberation and help to seize the lost opportunities as seen above. The cultural mandate accords to mankind the tasks of making tools, doing justice, producing art, pursuing scholarship and so on (Wolters, 1985:14). In the next section we shall see how Van der Walt addresses the way forward.

6.4   Van der Walt's third way case for the look at Africa's future

Providing the way forward for Africa calls not only for Africans creativity in all their areas of calling, but it also calls for critical thinking in relation to this creative activity so that their creativity does not become destructive. Currently Africa is undermining itself by either looking to the East or to the West. Africa does not look within itself to see its uniqueness as it takes advantage of the creation mandate. The contemporary

generations of Africa should think big, begin small and act now. Procrastination will only mean a burden to the coming generations. Let us examine Van der Walt third way to see if it provides solution for Africa's problem.

6.4.1 Identification of the problem

In rebuilding Africa, Van der Walt (2003:218-551) has in mind important areas such as African morality, authority and power, religion, politics, human rights, reconciliation, religious diversity, equality, freedom, tolerance, corruption, stewardship, the concept of development and economy. He envisages Africa's new hope as an integral biblical world view which then provides the key to the rebuilding of Africa.

Van der Walt's handling of the above realities is not accidental. The RISP, developed eight years after the publication of Van der Walt's (2003) book, aptly captures Africa's problem as emanating from the issues Van der Walt also addresses. The RISP only mourns that these problems can be blamed for the derailment of peace and security and the democratic process in the region. RISP looks at the UN, the AU, IGAD and other Development Partners to mitigate these problems. Van der Walt, however, chooses to look in another direction to practically deal with the problem. He tackles the issues head-on.

Van der Walt considers the gravity of each of the problems listed, and looks at how the problem is handled from both the African and Western world views. He then criticises both alternatives and provides what he believes to be an alternative, a third way.

6.4.2 Rebuilding and reforming Africa: Providing a reformational framework

First and foremost, one should consider that in establishing his third way as an effective alternative, Van der Walt's evaluates Western and African cultures and world views. He shows the flaws of Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism. He also establishes that each society has cultures that have world views. These world views are the souls of cultures and provide a comprehensive framework of basic beliefs

about things. The cultural presuppositions, either known or unknown in society, determine the societal character. In rebuilding Africa's social institutions, it is good to critically examine the basic assumptions or presuppositions of the existing structures and traditions to provide an effective alternative.

The mainline reformational framework argues that God imposes his laws on the cosmos in two ways: Either directly without mediation, or indirectly, through the involvement of human responsibility. God's rule of law can thus be seen as immediate in the non-human realm and mediated in culture and society. In the human realm, human persons become co-workers with God as his viceroys in creation, since they are made in his image (Wolters, 1985:14).

Corresponding to the two ways of God's rule there are two kinds of laws, namely laws of nature and norms. Laws of nature provide regular order in the realm of physical things. God's laws for culture and society are known as norms. Societal institutions for instance have norms governing them that must be discovered, discerned and observed. God is sovereign over all he has created and he exercises control over them. His statutes and ordinances are over everything, including the wide domain of human affairs (Wolters, 19985:14-15). Humans are responsible to execute God's commands and are subject to God's judgement when they violate his norms for culture and society (Wolters, 1985:15).

Norms are complex: They can be violated and have been violated in many ways. However, they also leave a good deal of resourcefulness and responsible imagination to the human person who is called to implement them. Human persons are called to positivise the norms and apply them to specific life situations. All of human life in all its vast array of cultural, societal and personal relationships is normed in this sense. The Creator, the universal Sovereign, lays down his laws for his creation, expecting and even requiring them all to be discerned (Wolters, 1985:15).

To the Western secularised mind, the distinction between the laws of nature and the norms is so great that they do not appear to be different varieties of the same

category. They are seen as different categories altogether and as such cause great confusion in the Western secularised mind (Wolters, 1985:16).

If the same Western mind is uncritically allowed to determine the direction of African functional institutions, the same confusion ensues. That is why Van der Walt presents a third way that is not locked in either the Western confusion or in the African confusion.

6.4.2.1   Working for a non-reductionist development

A look at the future whether, by means of a proposed development espoused by the RISP or Van der Walt or others, denotes certain cultural positions that are world view directed. It is for this reason that we must allow a critical evaluation of cultural values and world views that play significant roles in setting up the agenda for socio-political and economic development and all forms of societal development. What is meant here is that the journey towards the African future clearly engages us in evaluating the competing interests of different cultures and world views. If we are not equipped with tools to help us critically engage these competing cultural interests, we may end up falling for anything that comes along. Lack of these tools or laxity on the part of the African people is in fact a major problem on our continent.

We have made it clear that Van der Walt's approach is reformational. This approach tries to give an integral Christian perspective on all realities. The approach clearly indicates that all of reality is in fundamental need of salvation and a turn toward what God intended it to be. Van der Walt's approach challenges the Western belief in an autonomous human rationality that shapes human life in the Western society. His approach also challenges the African belief in an immanent spirit world likewise shaping human life in traditional African society. His approach questions the contemporary development agenda. Through this approach we may for instance get to the root of the RISP agenda and discover the negative influence of the Western world view (say economism) that should be purged.

Just as we investigate the negative influence of the Western world view in commerce, we need to do the same to institutions or fields such as the state, church,

school, university, news media and so on. We should do this because the functioning institutions of today's Africa are all modelled on a Western culture that entertains reductionism. It also champions the belief in autonomous human rationality.

African people find themselves in a serious dilemma: Firstly, Westernism with its reductionism does not assist the African culture and world view to function in a holistic way. Secondly, it does not provide an ideal framework that supports functional and authentic African social structures for Africans. Van der Walt's journey towards the future revisits the past and the present to provide a framework that can support African social structures. This look at the future then sees a possibility of overcoming the status quo and reforming the African functional institutions by providing them with what Westernism robbed from them.

For instance, Van der Walt observes that the development concept is actually a foreign concept in Africa, as it originated from the West within Western cultural values. These values espouse a belief in the human ability to control and improve the natural environment through science and technology. The idea of progress and economic growth portrays a belief in the human ability to take care of human salvation. Opting uncritically for the development idea, as possibly adopted by the RISP for African people, then means uncritically accepting Western culture as point of reference and thus robbing Africans of their cultural point of reference (Van der Walt, 2003:438).

In his projection for the future Van der Walt cautions us to consider motives and presuppositions behind the idea of development, its agenda, and the models advocated (Van der Walt, 2003:439-441). It is in this context that even the RISP should be evaluated. Development, as seen in the RISP, is just a pre-occupation with the improvement of economic circumstances, a one-sided belief that economic development is the key to full human development. We may need to ask what, in case of RISP, happens with other forms of human development. Human life is all round, which means development must also be all round. This development must be founded on a non-reductionist ontology.

Van der Walt cautions that development presupposes cultural interaction and seeing culture and development as separated portrays a flawed way of thinking. A culture is not a mere facet of economic development, but culture and economic development have equal but reciprocal relations. For this reason we must be critical of different development paradigms that spearhead only the improvement of economic circumstances to the exclusion of all other aspects. A clearer view of development understands development as interaction between the interests of different aspects of cultures (Van der Walt, 2003:441). We need to develop all aspects of human experience. It is wrong for instance to be highly developed economically, but poorly developed in terms of human relationships. This unbalanced development characterises the West. If Africans adopt — and in fact they are adopting — this mode of development, it will lead to impoverishment in important areas of life. It will lead to a paradox of impoverishment in the context of overdevelopment.

The future holds for Africa if a non-reductionist approach to development is adopted. It has to be closely linked with African cultural values and social structures. In this way African culture will be enriched and new development potentials opened. If this is the case, cultural identity will ensue and as a result the African future will be seen to be filled with self-respect, esteem and confidence. This will replace a poor self-image and esteem and a lack of self-confidence, resulting in the current dependency syndrome, inert and static culture of passivity. If Africa develops in a non-reductionist way, circumstances may develop where paradoxes of scarcity amid plenty, a health crisis amid improved medical care, a lack of time amid more time saving, poverty amid increased wealth, unemployment amid greater need for workers, and a crisis of care amid increased facilities of care, may be averted. If Africa manages these paradoxes, authentic development will ensue and Africa may share with the Western world what they lack. But if Africa follows a reductionist Western model of development and fails to subject itself to critical scrutiny, then these paradoxes will be a full reality on the African continent. In Africa therefore we do not need a mode of development that only improves economic welfare, but one that improves human wellbeing (Van der Walt, 2003:441-444).

In the envisioned African development, the profit motive should be balanced by an entrepreneurial spirit, consumption patterns by techniques of production, the

acquisitive appetite by a creative spirit. The point is: Everything in the African culture and world view that is a stumbling block[3] to this non-reductionist development must be resisted and eliminated (Van der Walt, 2003:445-446).

6.4.2.2   Non-reductionist development for functional institutions

We should not get tired of mentioning that postcolonial Africa still lives with the reality of political colonialism and neo-colonialism. The destruction of the political, social, economic and educational structures of the African people (structures that were deeply rooted in African history and culture) by the forcible imposition of alien structures rooted in an alien culture, is a profound reality in Africa (Fowler, 1995:12–23; Bediako, 1995:6). However, we should not keep mourning about this in Africa. We should get past this and transform Africa in a non-reductionist way. What was forcibly imposed on us should not continue to stick to us. We must attempt a bold step to get beyond it by making a paradigm shift.

Functioning African institutions, namely the state, church, school, university, news media and commerce modelled on Western culture with the associated world views, need a non-reductonist reformation. This development must not only retain valuable traditional African cultural values and a world view that provides functional social structures to support them, it also needs a non-reductionist ontology where all aspects of experience are considered, appreciated and understood. This is what Van der Walt provides us with as an alternative to an ontology spearheaded by the reductionist secularist outlook (Van der Walt, 2003:512-527).

While Van der Walt (2003:237-267) gives a sketch of what is entailed in this ontology, Clouser gives it much elaboration. It is worthwhile to listen to Clouser, who gets into more detail when explaining this ontology. For Clouser the term 'aspect' refers for instance to a basic kind of properties-and-laws in reality experience. Clouser argues that an aspect is basic when it cannot be subsumed by any other aspect without resulting in antinomies, contradictions or other serious incoherencies. Clouser further argues that to call properties and laws an aspect of reality is to say that it is true of both our subjective acts of experience and of their objects. It infers

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[3] These negative features of African cultural values and world view were outlined in section 2.4

that these aspects are abstracted from our pre-theoretical experience of things, events, relations, states of affairs, persons and so on. Clouser brings to our attention that the objects of ordinary experience exhibits both the properties and the conformity to laws that, in turn, exhibit meta-properties that qualify each aspect (Clouser, 2007:6).

In this non-reductionist ontology, several sorts of law are distinguished, and together are recognised as comprising a distinct side to created reality. The "law" means the source of the order, which accounts for the orderliness we observe in the cosmos. The laws governing the cosmos, however, should not be understood to precede or cause the existence of things subject to them, nor should the things be seen to precede or cause the laws. Instead, both the laws and the entities subject to them should be taken to have been created simultaneously by God, and to exist in an unbreakable correlation (Clouser, 2007:6-7).

The theory then elaborates this idea of a framework of laws under which all created things exist and function, by distinguishing aspectual laws, from type laws, and type laws from causal laws. Aspectual laws hold for the properties of each aspect, type laws determine which properties of different aspectual kinds can combine to form things of a particular type. But neither of these should be confused with the causal relations we observe to hold between events. Those relations are themselves multi-aspectual, and are not to be thought of as having only one kind of property (Clouser, 2007:7).

African institutions need a balanced unfolding. It is good to observe that there are other functions or ways of development than developing the economic function. These other functions of development (sensitivity-psychical, justice-juridical, morality-ethical, clarity-logical etc.) that need to be developed are surprisingly qualifying functions of the suggested institutions (family, state, schools etc) in Africa and across the globe. These institutions in turn display also functions-aspects other than those that provide their qualifying functions. When we speak of a qualifying aspect we mean the aspect central to a thing's nature. Saying then that a thing is qualified by a particular aspect may mean three things: First, that the qualifying aspect is central to its nature, second, the laws of the qualifying aspects govern the

internal relations of the thing taken as a whole, and third, for the natural things it is the highest aspect in which these things function actively (Clouser, 2007:11).

Clouser rightly underscores that every individual thing or event in the cosmos ought to be understood as "an individual structural assemblage of properties, parts, or sub-wholes, determined by a type law and qualified by aspectual laws that regulate its internal organization" (Clouser, 2007:13). An individual thing is not just a collection of parts and properties. It is also not something over and above the individual law-structured combination of all the properties, parts, or sub-wholes comprising it (Clouser, 2007:13). This reality has implications for our functional institutions. It means that each institution for instance has a structural assemblage of properties determined by a type law and qualified by aspectual laws regulating its internal organisation. A type law should not be confused with aspectual laws and vice versa, or one type law with another. In an attempt to develop any institution these laws must be respected in their order.

A balanced view of development or transformation of institutions leads to an interesting scenario, following the above understanding. Qualifying functional aspects are not absolutised, but are nourished and checked by other aspects displayed by these institutions. Van der Walt notes that God granted human persons an awesome historical power when he gave the cultural mandate to them, namely to subdue the earth and rule it (Gen.1:28 and repeated in Gen. 9:1-3). This cultural mandate is wrongly understood by many — even Christians — as implying exploitation of the rest of creation for the benefit of human beings (domination), rather than service to God's creation. A clear view of the cultural mandate guides our development. Harmonious development that is envisioned by the Creator is not just economic development, but the development of all aspects simultaneously. The human person is given the task to develop such aspects as the emotional (psychical), logical, lingual, aesthetic, juridical, ethical and so on. In all these aspects, the human person — through the awesome historical power — is called to unfold and open God's creation to reveal its richness and diversity (Van der Walt, 2003:424,450).

Coming back to developing functional institutions, particularly in Africa, it means that though attention may be placed on the qualifying aspects of these institutions, all

other aspects should be developed as well. If this does not happen, the result is a one-sided and distorted development. Overemphasis on one facet becomes detrimental to the others. This illustrates the importance of the Christian view of an integrated reality.

As we envision this transformation, it is vital that we capture clearly that many wholes are not just analysed by distinguishing their parts, but that we also recognise that they are capsulated wholes that include sub-wholes. This becomes evident when dealing with social communities that include human beings who are never merely their parts. Human beings have no qualifying functions, as do a community. In the theistic view pursued in this project, a human person's existence is centred in his or her heart or the soul, the unity and identity of each person. The human heart is not identical to any of its functions. It is the source of all of them and all else that comprises human life (Clouser, 2007:14).

Clouser makes a difficult, but important assertion, namely that human beings are not parts of a marriage, family, state, school, business, church and so on. I think he is right in making this assertion because if they are, it means they are qualified by the qualifying functions of these institutions. Clouser has already denied that any aspect qualifies human nature. He notes instead that human beings are not sub-wholes who include themselves in greater, capsulate wholes (Clouser, 2007:14). This same point, Clouser says, could be made about the major social institutions. None of these communities are subparts or parts of any other, as most of them have distinct leading functions and all display a distinct type of law. A family for instance cannot be part of the state because no major community can be encapsulated within another. When, for instance a sub-whole is capsulated, the leading function of the capsulate whole overrides the qualifying functions of the sub-wholes. With regard to major social institutions; if we subsume one major institution into another it would mean that the subsumed institution would serve the leading function of the capsulate whole — the one into which it is subsumed (Clouser, 2007:14). For example, subsuming business, school, or church under the state will result in deliberate or outright cancellation of the leading functions of these subsumed institutions in favour of the state's leading function — justice (Clouser, 2007:14). This is not supposed to be the case.

Looking at the same point from another angle: Is there one supreme source of authority in human social life? If that authority is there, what kind of authority is it? Can it be located in any one of the human social institutions? Clouser asserts that attempts have been made to answer this from a reductionist perspective. Some theories have claimed that the source of authority is power, reason (or reason and virtue), wealth or superior will. But a truly theistic view of reality must reject this, for authority comes from God, who has it built into human life in plural forms. For instance, God has placed the authority of parents in family, the authority of owners in business, likewise the authority of elected members in the state, of teachers in a school, clergy in the church, mosque or synagogue, of doctors in a hospital and so on. These institutions are meant to promote, preserve and perpetuate aspectually distinct facets of life: Ethical love for family, economic life for business, public justice for state, religious belief for church, synagogue or mosque, biotic health for hospital, and the list continues. Each institution has its own distinct function that cannot be fulfilled by the other in a harmonious way because it has its own distinct type of authority (Clouser, 2007:15).

The idea of different kinds of authority, each with its own proper sphere of domain, was called "sphere sovereignty" by Abraham Kuyper. This idea stresses that no one kind of authority — and thus no single social institution — is the source of all authority in life. Each institution has its own sphere of competence responding to its leading function. This ensures that each social institution retains relative immunity from interference by authorities of different types. In practice this therefore means that parents are the ones who set rules for a family and not judges, churches set requirements for their members, not governments, courts render verdicts, not churches, schools set educational requirements, not parents, and businesses decide what to produce, not courts, and so on (Clouser, 2007:15).

The implication of this social norm for Africa and any other region of the world is that its idea of distinct and limited authorities honours the integrity of all types of social communities. It checks totalitarian authority in governments and also in all non-governmental communities and institutions relative to one another. Sphere sovereignty is therefore the principle that embodies a non-reductionist view of

society, leading to a non-hierarchical view of the institutions that exercise those differing kinds of authority (Clouser, 2007:15).

6.4.2.3 *The Pauline teaching on unity in diversity: Different kinds of spiritual gifts*

Let us explore the biblical teaching on unity in diversity in the Pauline epistles.

In the exploration of spiritual gifts Paul raises significant questions or issues which, if looked at carefully, will help us in the discussion of a non-reductionist view of society. Paul shows that different gifts come from the same source to provide different kinds of service in different ways. This ties in with the idea of "sphere sovereignty", the idea of different kinds of authority, each with its own proper sphere or domain. Paul brings out the idea of how the many parts complement the whole and how absurd a reductionist view of reality is. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! He finally shows how harmony is maintained in the unity in diversity. This is clearly visible in the following biblical quote.

> *"There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us… The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ ... But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit ... But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body ... So God has put the body together such that extra honour and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honoured, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it" (1 Corinthians 12:3-26).*

Even though each institution exists in its own right, institutional difference is a blessing rather than a problem. Institutional uniqueness is fully realised in diversity, not in isolation, each institution strengthens the other as they are webbed together. The strength of a web depends on the number of strands linked together. When one strand in the web is doing something for which it is well qualified, the others do not compete with it by duplicating the same, but do that which they are uniquely qualified for, engaging in works that will undoubtedly serve other strands in the web. In doing so, a community is established and resources are properly utilised (good stewardship).

6.5   Chapter summary

This chapter began by noting the need to prevent future damage to African culture as it interacts with other cultures. It also indicated the need to critically engage some of Africa's development strategies to reveal the need for Van der Walt's third way. The discussion showed that most of Africa's strategies of development are influenced by a reductionist ontology. This ontology does not provide a good development model for Africa and accepting it uncritically will perpetuate Africa's unwarranted dilemma. The argument posed a case for a non-reductionist ontology that is propagated by Van der Walt in his third way. This then presents a case for a paradigm shift in the development of Africa. It will mean that the destruction of the social structures and loss of opportunities for Africa will be minimised. Van der Walt's third way provides an alternative to Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism as it looks towards the future. It presents a reformational framework that shows how God imposes his laws on the cosmos. A non-reductionist ontology presents an opportunity for Africa's functioning institutions to be enriched by functional structures that support them. These functional structures have to be opened and enriched to maintain harmony in the functioning institutions as each of them does what it is qualified to do.

The chapter did not just propose a non-reductionist ontology, it developed this ontology. In this development it gave a clear description of the term 'aspect' and emphasised that an aspect cannot be subsumed under any other aspect without resulting in antinomies, contradictions or other serious incoherencies. The nature, properties and laws of aspects of reality were articulated, distinguished and clarified.

The theory of non-reductionist ontology elaborated the idea of a framework of laws, under which all created things exist and function, by distinguishing aspectual laws, from type laws, and type laws from causal laws. This theory cautions that neither of these should be confused with the causal relations we observe between events. Those relations are themselves multi-aspectual, and are not to be thought of as having only one kind of property.

The chapter emphasised the idea of different kinds of authority, each with its own proper sphere of domain referred to as "sphere sovereignty". This idea stresses that no one kind of authority — and thus no single social institution — is the source of all authority in life. Each institution has its own sphere of competence responding to its leading function. This ensures that each social institution retains relative immunity from interference by authorities of different types.

Finally the chapter illustrated a non-reductionist ontology by the biblical truth from the epistle of 1 Corinthians 12:3-26. Paul in this illustration shows that a reductionist ontology is typically ridiculous.

Concluding remarks

This project began with an orientation by means of a study of the background of postcolonial Africa and the reality of the impact of political colonialism and neo-colonialism. The argument showed how this has impacted the African socio-economic-political structure. The investigation established how the functioning institutions of today's Africa are all modelled on Western culture with their associated world views, and that the African people have adopted the Western cultural patterns as key to the good life.

The examination established that at grassroots level, the African people retain much of the traditional African cultural values and world view, but lack relevant functional social structures to support these. This results in what Van der Walt refers to as a "divided soul" of the African people, and it represents probably a false dichotomy prompting him to propose a third way as a viable alternative for Africa.

What propagates Westernisation in Africa is the notion that Western culture, with its associated world views, is superior in every respect to the African culture and world view. This catches the African people between the two horns of a false dilemma: Either retain a unique African cultural identity to develop a society that can only be a primitive backwater in today's world, or abandon all traces of African culture to embrace wholeheartedly the cultural values of modern Western societies so as to remain in the mainstream of today's global society.

Van der Walt has demystified this false dilemma by showing that we need not to be yoked in it, for there can be a workable alternative that he calls a third way. Van der Walt exposed a Western myth, the myth of the superiority of the Western culture. Given the account that the Western societies are plagued by "isms" such as economism, individualism, rationalism and so on, it shows some deficiencies of Western culture. Because of this there is no justification for the Western claim on cultural superiority. Van der Walt shows that because of Africa's uncritical adoption of Westernism, the Western deficiencies have been imposed and continue to be imposed, and this implies that the process of deformation, and not reformation, is taking place in Africa.

To counter this, Van der Walt's third way provides what Africa needs for reforming or transforming itself. It is established in this project that Van der Walt's third way is founded on Christian "reformational" philosophy. It rejects the secular dualistic synthesis between Christian and secular approaches by providing an integral Christian perspective on reality. This means that all of reality is seen to be in need of salvation and a turn toward what God intends it to be.

At the core of Van der Walt's third way is his criticism of the Western belief in an autonomous human rationality that shapes human life for good and the African belief in an immanent spirit world believed to shape human life. Van der Walt has criticised both cultures in the light of the Word of God revealed in creation and in the person of Jesus Christ, as testified to in Scripture. The discussion evaluates how Van der Walt articulated his third way by using the views of man, society and culture developed in reformational thinking to evaluate the African culture and world view.

In order to establish his third way, which is reformational in nature (as seen in chapter 4), Van der Walt wrestled with the complexity of culture and world view (discussed in chapter 1 of this study); compared and evaluated the African and Western cultures (discussed in chapter 2); established the impact of a world view clash between African and Western cultures on African societies (discussed in chapter 3).

In order to validify Van der Walt's third way, this research critically evaluated it. Van der Walt's weak points include firstly, his failure to establish what is in control, a world view or the heart (as pointed out in subsection 5.2.1). He notes that a world view takes possession of the heart, but in the real sense it is the heart that takes possession of the world view, thus shaping it. Secondly, his confusion of facts when he explains world view claims that world views are pre-scientific, and yet not unscientific (as pointed in subsection 5.2.2). This (as was explained in subsection 5.2.2) is meaningless. Thirdly, his definition of world view contradicts his articulation of world view. He sees a world view simply as "the network/framework of confessional convictions which determines how one understands and experiences reality". This does not tie in with his admission that a world view does not only originate in confessional convictions and that many factors play a role in its

formation. Fourthly, his lack of clearly relating naïve experience, world view and philosophy (as seen in subsection 5.2.3) makes his relationship he sees between culture, world view and religion confusing, as can be seen in his five layers of cultural analysis (as can be observed in subsection 5.2.4). It also leads to his lack of attention to what may be viewed as confessed versus real world views (in subsection 5.2.6). His problem with cultural analysis (subsection 5.2.3) also leads to other problems, such as implying that religion is an aspect of culture, and also denoting several cores in one body. Finally, Van der Walt's generalisation of the comparison of Western and African cultures (as elaborated in subsection 5.2.7) causes him to overstretch his argument and this denies him the opportunity to delve into transcendental ideas about what he compares and this somehow robs his work of the philosophical appeal that he intends.

The research did not stop at just pointing at Van der Walt's weak points. It also pointed to what he needs to work on to better his third way. As for the first and second problems cited above, Van der Walt is recommended to re-check and reformulate his argument to align it with mainstream reformational thinking and to not force meaning on words such as "pre-scientific" and "unscientific" and others to what they do not depict. In case of the third problem, Van der Walt has been asked to reconsider his definition to check it for contradictions with his beautiful articulation of the world view concept.

As for the fourth problem cited above, Van der Walt is requested to re-consider Herman Dooyeweerd's (1984:1, 156-157) argument on the relation of naïve experience, world view and philosophy. Regarding his five layers analogy with respect to cultural analysis, it is recommended to Van der Walt that he discards it because it contradicts mainstream reformational thinking. In place of five layers of cultural analysis, Van der Walt should deal with culture as a concrete entity that displays at least fifteen aspects.

Regarding the final problem cited above, Van der Walt is asked to delve into transcendental ideas about what he compares in the African and Western cultures so as to establish the directional dimension of the two cultures.

The research has, however, established that amid some weak spots in Van der Walt third way, Africa can appeal to his alternative to resolve the main problem of Africa's divided soul. His third way seems to provide an effective basis for reuniting the "divided soul" of the African people. This he has done by attempting to provide ways of reforming the traditional African cultural values and world view to give an ideal framework that supports functional and authentic social structures for Africans in the Africa of today. In doing this Van der Walt has recognised the validity of cultural diversity and the need for a non-reductionist ontology. He has subjected every culture to critical analysis in the light of the Word of God.

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