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Toward Becoming Intercultural in Theological Education

Engaging with Calabash Breakers

Rosemary Bell Dewerse

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
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Abstract

This thesis explores a conviction that the purpose of theological education is to model and facilitate deep engagement with the o/Other, for transformation comes through relationship and the Christian life is about transformation. In a context like Aotearoa New Zealand that is becoming increasingly multicultural, but where theological education still operates out of an agenda largely dominated by those who are racially white, the argument is made for a kind of deep engagement that would realise truly intercultural theological education.

In order to ensure that this conviction is lived as well as discussed, the methodology for this research is shaped by the Buberian-derived idea of dialogical relation and seeks to pay careful attention to I, Thou, and It—subjective reflection, the voice of the other, and objective analysis. A combination of autoethnography and modified grounded theory is employed alongside semi-structured, reflexive interviews and a research journal to facilitate this. The critical hermeneutic of Jung Young Lee, who claimed that it is “new marginal” people—those who stand with their feet in two or more cultures and see “in-both,” “in-between,” and “in-beyond”—who hold the key to realising multicultural (or intercultural) theology for a multicultural context, undergirds and informs the choice of interviewees.

In total the voices of thirty-seven people are heard, people here named “calabash breakers” because they cross boundaries and break rules. They are drawn largely from Aotearoa New Zealand and the United States, a country that has some history in addressing diversity in theological education. The result of analysis of their interviews reveals that they are advocating formation, more than knowledge acquisition, as being the appropriate educational milieu. Between them, the calabash breakers identify four areas needing particular attention within that: caring for identity; listening to silenced voices; experiencing epistemic ruptures; and dismantling discrimination. A case study of McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, drawing on material collected in September-October 2009, helpfully illustrates the challenges and implications of a commitment to these areas, across structures, curriculum, pedagogy, and community life, for an institution willing to dedicate itself long-term to the journey of becoming intercultural.

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Mau tena kiwai o te kete, maku tenei

Each of us at a handle of the basket.

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To Roelant, my husband who knew I just had to do this PhD and believed I could before I did, and who, because he has already committed to sharing in everything, has not only helped to make it possible for me to finish in good time, but also modelled for me at home something of the richness that genuine intercultural engagement can bring, my heartfelt thanks. I love you. You're simply the best. For our children, Mereem and Jean-Luc, this PhD has been a major part of the landscape of their young lives. To it they have added laughter and light and the example of hearts that are unconditionally open to others. Arohanui.

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The calabash breakers, including the good people of McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, whose words grace these pages, issuing deep challenge and thoughtful vision, are people I have come to admire deeply. Named and anonymous, together they embody a hope and a reality whose time, I believe, is coming, will come, must come. Each one carries the imprint of Christ's expansiveness, honesty, care for justice, and shalom. I have been humbled and profoundly encouraged by their belief in the importance of this work and their willingness to be part of it. I will never be the same for having met you. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

The opportunity to attend conferences and to interview people overseas would not have been possible without the financial assistance given me by the University of Auckland and

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Korōria ki te Matua, ki te Tama, ki te Wairua Tapu;
mai i te tīmatanga, ki tēnei wā, ā haere ake nei. Āmine.

Glory to the Parent, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;
from the beginning to this time and henceforth for ever. Amen.

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Introduction

This thesis finds its roots in a conviction birthed in Central Asia. I twice went there with my husband to teach in an interdenominational seminary training local Christians for ministry. I hoped to be able to give something; I returned transformed by my relationships with people I came to call my friends. Out of this experience, and much reflection and research since, I have become convinced that the purpose of theological education is to model and facilitate deep engagement with the o/Other, for transformation comes through relationship and the Christian life is about transformation. In my experience of theological education in Aotearoa New Zealand, my home context, however, not enough attention is paid to the full scope and potential of this dialogical reality.¹ The “Other” has too often narrowly referred to God as perceived by Western eyes, particularly white male theologians from Europe or North America, and the “other” has too often been rendered voiceless. The rich possibilities of truly intercultural engagement of which I have caught a glimpse await realisation. Such a context sets me, as a young theological educator working within it, a challenge to find a way to better articulate and ground my conviction, to demonstrate its worth, and to offer practical and considered ways forward for me and for those who might agree with me towards realising it. This PhD is my attempt to do this.

Terminology

Before I explore in more detail why I believe this research is relevant for my context, who I have chosen to engage with and why, and how I locate myself in this research, it is important that I explain my use of a few key terms: the o/Other; culture; intercultural; the West; and theological education.²

¹ I have studied and lectured or tutored in New Zealand but also in the United Kingdom where my experience was similar. I am aware that the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in North America has, more than any other theological association in the West, committed itself to encouraging a more global theological engagement. Engaging with their learning will form a key part of this thesis. See the following journal issues detailing in particular their decade of globalisation in the 1990s: *Theological Education*, 26/Supplement 1, (Spring 1990); 27/2 (Spring 1991); 29/2 (Spring 1993); 30/Supplement 1 (Autumn 1993); 30/1 (Autumn 1993); 35/2(Spring 1999); and 36/2 (Spring 2000). As I will demonstrate the next section of this Introduction, however, even the ATS still has a way to go.

² “Calabash breakers,” as used in the thesis title, will be explained in the section in this chapter entitled “Engaging with others.”

The o/Other

In the context of this research, the “other” refers to a person or persons different from oneself while “Other” refers to God or, to borrow terminology that will be explained in chapter two, the *Thou* and the eternal *Thou*. I have chosen to speak of the o/Other because every relationship can teach us something of both. My desire to be able to acknowledge and distinguish both the human and eternal *Thou* has meant, however, that where I would choose to speak of human others using a capital ‘O,’ to match the capital of my ‘I,’ I am unable to. I intend nothing political by this. I am very conscious from another angle also, that in talking of the other, I tread on dangerous ground. The negative, exclusionary and complex history of othering has long been a topic of critique and discussion by postcolonialists, feminists and philosophers.³ My intention here is to try to model what Mary Canales, a Chicana nurse-scholar, has called “Inclusionary Othering... a process that attempts to utilize power within relationships for transformation and coalition building.”⁴

In attempting “to utilize power within relationships,” it is not my intention to try to “possess, grasp [or even claim to] know the other” for, as Emmanuel Levinas, the Lithuanian-born French Jewish philosopher, pointed out, if I could do so “it would not be the other.”⁵ Instead, by choosing to turn towards, engage with, listen to, and critically reflect on what the others who appear in this research offer me, I hope to document something of the transformation that I perceive they are requiring of me and my particular context as well as model the

³ See, for example, Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978). Also Michelle Fine, “Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research,” in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), 70–82, and Wendy Farley, *Eros for the Other: Retaining Truth in a Pluralistic World* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996). Emmanuel Levinas is one who has written extensively on the other. For an introduction to his thinking see Adriaan Peperzak, *To The Other: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue Research Foundation, 1993). For a particularly sobering account of the impact of othering on indigenous peoples see the introduction of Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1999), 1-18.

⁴Mary K. Canales, “Othering: Towards an Understanding of Difference,” *Advances in Nursing Science* 22, no. 4 (2000): 19. Canales herself is very clear that othering is highly complex and always involves varying degrees of inclusion and exclusion.

Letty Russell, a feminist theologian from the United States, objected to use of a “hermeneutic of otherness” and, at the time of her death in 2007 was beginning to explore the language and thinking of what she suggested should be instead a “hermeneutic of hospitality.” Ideally, this research would also move away from speaking about the “other” towards a more inclusive way of knowing but I am still on the way toward the stance that Russell herself took years to reach and, moreover, articulate. A worthy goal for the next project would be to begin to reframe what is here from an approach like that of her “hermeneutic of hospitality.” Letty Russell, *Just Hospitality: God’s Welcome in a World of Difference*, J. Shannon Clarkson and Kate M. Ott, eds. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 23–50.

⁵ Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*, trans. R. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987), 90.

potential that exists for coalition building with those, quite different from myself, who are more experienced, in the interests of seeking to realise truly intercultural theological education.

Culture

“Culture is a more or less coherent set of ideas (symbols, taxonomies, definitions, explanations, values, attitudes and rules) which are created and shared by a group of people.”⁶

My background in coming to this thesis is in practical and academic engagement in international cross-cultural mission and mission studies. In those circles the use of the word “culture,” while acknowledging such things as religious difference, invariably refers to race and ethnicity. In the opening months of this thesis I read many books and articles in the field of missiology and repeatedly encountered either people from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Pacific, and the Middle East expressing disappointment, frustration, and sadness about their engagement with the West, including their experience of Western theological education, because their skins were not white, their cultures not Western, or Caucasian people from the West attempting to better acknowledge the wisdom and scholarship of those racially and ethnically different from themselves, with varying degrees of success.⁷ Six months in I was challenged by a fellow student—a white man with a disability—about the lack of subtlety in, even exclusivity of understanding culture through the lens of race and ethnicity. Of course cultural difference is much more diverse and complex than an emphasis purely on race and ethnicity allows. Gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, economic status, class structures, and age, for example, also create fundamental cultural difference between people. What is more, the nuances caused by varying combinations of these are glossed over at our peril. It is definitely not my intent to deny the real impact of these things by choosing such an entry point. The diversity of people whose voices will be heard here will, I hope, at least go some way towards acknowledging the further complexities contained in the word

⁶ Charles Taber, *To Understand the World, To Save the World* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2000), 57.

⁷ For example, see Yung, Hwa, *Mangoes or Bananas? The Quest for an Authentic Asian Christian Theology* (Oxford: Regnum, 1997), ix; Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, *The Jesus of Asian Women* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2006), xi; Jenny Plane Te Paa, “How Diverse is Contemporary Theological Education? Identity Politics, and Theological Education,” *Anglican Theological Review* 90, no. (2008); and Fernando Segovia, “Racial and Ethnic Minorities in Biblical Studies,” in *Ethnicity and the Bible*, ed. Mark G. Brett (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 479. These frustrations and responses will be examined further in the following section.

“other,” even while it will not be possible do justice to them all.⁸ I also hope that something of what is written here may prove applicable for educators beyond considerations of race and ethnicity. A “map is not the territory” but it can be a helpful tool.⁹

Intercultural

My decision to use the term “intercultural,” rather than “multicultural,” “bicultural” or “crosscultural,” stems from a recommendation made by a faculty member of the School within which I am doing this PhD to look at the work of Emmanuel Lartey, a Ghanaian pastoral theologian. According to Lartey, to talk of interculturalism is to value diversity and creatively affirm contextuality, multiple perspectives, and authentic participation. Moreover, “it speaks of living in the intersection” between cultures and between the spheres of individual experience, cultural context, and universal realities.¹⁰ It also, Lartey claims, offers opportunity for the researcher to inhabit that space of intersection alongside those contributing to his or her research for it is an inclusive place.

By contrast, Lartey contends that the term multiculturalism is a static label that has been used in the West by the dominant group and that it has been subject to stereotyping and reductionism.¹¹ As Clive Pearson, a New Zealand theologian, has pointed out, another result of its use is that it allows “cultures to remain relatively confined in their own ethos, in effect, circling one another.”¹² In her PhD thesis looking at realising bicultural theological education in Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori theological educator Jenny Te Paa’s observations about the term multiculturalism further explain the need to avoid it:

Multiculturalism has in the past been simplistically applied... as meaning the situation arising from having people of many different ethnic backgrounds and ‘cultures’ coexisting in the same territory. While this definition is superficially true enough, it fails to take account of the power issues at stake as people struggle

⁸ In the introduction to her published research looking at educating people from privileged groups, Diane Goodman, a diversity consultant from the United States, explores her dilemma as one who has chosen a particular entry point into a very difficult and complex topic. It provides a useful resource here: Diane J. Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2001), 6–11.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰ For the quote and ideas mentioned in this paragraph see Lartey, *In Living Color*, 32–33, 36–37.

¹¹ Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counselling* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2003), 31–32.

¹² Clive Pearson, “Making Room,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 140.

for position, agency, resourcing, recognition and rights within the civic boundaries of ordinary human co-existence.¹³

For her own work Te Paa chose to use the term bicultural. This was partly because, she argued, all relationships at their simplest level are an engagement between two people, but also because her particular focus was on realising bicultural theological education between Māori and Pākehā.¹⁴ Although I want to acknowledge the important specificity the word bicultural brings, not least because of its call to recognise indigenous voices, the cultural complexity that can be found in our classrooms today and the cultural hybridity to be found even within individuals today suggests to me that intercultural is the better term here. There is also a sense in which “inter” (between) contains a very organic, varied, and active call to engagement.

Jon Humphries, an Australian theologian, is one who has argued for the term crosscultural. According to him one of its great appeals is its Christological resonance (“cross”) but also, in his words, there are within it “no centres and margins” because it speaks of movement.¹⁵ While the Christological resonance is useful, I am not convinced that it is possible to operate as if centres and margins do not exist. I am also not sure that we can claim an ability to cross into other cultures, even if invited, because of the implication that we are to some extent able to leave behind our own. I do believe we can commit, however, to deliberately interacting *with* those of other cultures with genuine “curiosity, and respect,” to borrow a phrase from Susan Fries, an American assistant professor of intercultural communication in France.¹⁶ In addition, as María Pilar Aquino, a Latina theologian has pointed out, the very fluidity, flexibility, and democracy embedded within the term interculturality, which she believes invites people to join as subjects as well as actors in a process of dynamic transformation, helps move us away from kyriarchal modus operandi, something we need to be very wary

¹³ Jenny Plane Te Paa, “Contestations: Bicultural Theological Education in Aotearoa New Zealand” (unpublished PhD thesis, Graduate Theological Union, 2001), 43.

¹⁴ Māori: Pākehā—refers to non-indigenous New Zealanders. It has, historically, been used to especially describe those descended from British and Irish settlers.

¹⁵ Jon Humphries, “Crossing into the Unknown,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson, (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 170–171. In the same book, Clive Pearson, argues for a more partial crossing while still himself talking of crossing *into* another’s culture, “Making Room,” 140. I like his assertion that we are called to “step out beyond what [we] know” but for the above reasons reject the term crosscultural.

¹⁶ Susan Fries, “Cultural, Multicultural, Cross-Cultural, Intercultural: A Moderator’s Proposal,” (2002), <http://www.tesol-france.org/articles/fries.pdf> (cited 23 August, 2010).

of.¹⁷ Also, echoing a point made above, speaking of interculturality includes in this conversation those whose very cultural make-up exemplifies this reality in a way that the term crosscultural simply cannot.

The West

My use of the term “West” or “Western” plays, unfortunately, directly into the trap of stereotyping. I find it very difficult, even impossible, to avoid. While acknowledging the many and inherent complexities which make the label deeply problematic, my use of the term in this thesis will generally refer geographically to Western Europe, Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and, where semantic context suggests, ideologically and politically to the hegemonic power exercised particularly by Caucasian people in those lands.¹⁸

I have chosen to direct my research toward theological education in Aotearoa New Zealand while drawing from wisdom to be found there and in other Western countries because this is my home context and the one I know best and therefore the one I feel I have a right to speak into. While there may be ideas here that are useful for all I am aware that conversations around interculturality in theological education in Aotearoa New Zealand are nascent compared, particularly, with those in the United States. I am also very conscious that past attempts on the part of “Westerners,” particularly those within the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in North America, to expect educators in Asia and Africa to adopt their intercultural, or “globalization,” project met with indignant protest over the threat it represented of being recolonised by Western ideas and agendas.¹⁹ I want to respect such objections.

¹⁷ See, María Pilar Aquino, “Feminist Intercultural Theology: Toward a Shared Future of Justice,” in *Feminist Intercultural Theology: Latina Explorations for a Just World*, ed. María Pilar Aquino and Maria José Rosado-Nunes (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2007), 14. I explain in chapter two why I have decided to use plain type for words from languages other than English.

¹⁸ For a paper discussing the historical marriage of politics and Christianity in the West and the resulting hegemony see Jonathan Bonk, “Followers of Jesus, Neo-Christendom, and the Clash of Civilizations” (Asbury Theological Seminary, 2007). For a view of the impact of this on the rest of the world see the seminal work by Said, *Orientalism*.

¹⁹ See William Leshner and Barbara Brown Zikmund, “Resistance to the ‘Globalization’ Emphasis in ATS Schools from Other Parts of the World,” *Theological Education* 35, no. 2 (1999): 181; Fumitaka Matsuoka, “The Changing Terrain of ‘Globalization’ in ATS Conversations,” *Theological Education* 35, no. 2 (1999): 17–18.

Theological education

Although much of this work, I have happily realised, is of relevance to any situation where theological education is being undertaken, my use of the term “theological education” in this thesis specifically applies to tertiary departments or institutions and their faculty, whether operating in secular universities or colleges, seminaries, theological colleges or Bible schools. This is simply because I needed to put some boundaries around this research to make it manageable and circumstances and conversations conspired to focus it here.

Exploring why

My reason for believing that, as a theological educator, I need to grapple in my context with the conviction I expressed in the opening paragraph originates in some very factual realities about our church and world and in some critical questioning—by myself and others. There are five reasons that I particularly want to draw attention to here.

The first reason arises out of my initial literature review. It is now forty years since the centre of gravity of the world church in numerical terms shifted away from the West.²⁰ The landscape of the world church has irrevocably changed and theological education cannot afford to ignore this. By 2008 seventy-two percent of Christians were living in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.²¹ Despite this, however, there continues to be a lot of frustration expressed about a general lack of genuine engagement by Western theologians with people and scholarly writing coming from those regions.²² A good illustration is provided by the story of the groundbreaking book *Voices from the Margin*.²³ Edited by R. S. Sugirtharajah, a Sri Lankan biblical scholar, it drew on theological voices from beyond the West in interpreting scripture. First published in 1991, it went through subsequent revisions and expansions in 1995 and 2006, but the title was retained because it was considered still relevant. Tellingly, in 2008, Sugirtharajah published another book entitled *Still at the*

²⁰ This date was obtained from Harvey Cox, “Christianity,” in *Global Religions: An Introduction*, ed. M. Juergensmeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17.

²¹ David B. Barrett, Todd M. Johnson, and Peter F. Crossing, “Missiometrics 2008: Reality Checks for Christian World Communion,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 32, no. 1 (2008): 27. Worth noting also is that two-thirds of the church today are said to be women. See Dana L. Robert, “World Christianity as a Women’s Movement,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 30, no. 4 (2006): 180–88.

²² See footnote 8.

²³ R. S. Sugirtharajah, ed. *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (London: SPCK, 1991).

Margins.²⁴ In 2007, thirty-six years after Kenyan theologian John Mbiti pleaded that what had become a now truly universal church not be limited to “provincial” theological expression,²⁵ West African theologian Tité Tienou, Dean of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in the United States, accused the West of continuing to hold a “dialogue of the deaf” with the rest of the world.²⁶ It is not insignificant that such senior figures still find it necessary to say such things. Here is an opportunity being wasted and injustice being perpetuated.²⁷

The second reason relates to the first but has grown out of a concern arising from mission studies. I have noticed that some of those who are keen to encourage engagement with theological voices from beyond the West because of the new world church reality can actually be guilty of inadvertently promoting a more subtle kind of deafness. Some of the most recent publications introducing global theologies to theological students in the West, silence voices by paraphrasing them, impose Western categories on ideas, and filter their choices as to who is heard using their own particular sources or biases while claiming to cover the globe.²⁸ While activities such as paraphrasing, categorising, and filtering are normal in Western scholarship, that even some experienced missiologists choose to use them in this context makes me wonder how many of us from the West actually know what is required in order to model and facilitate genuine engagement with those whose voices and worldviews are different from our own. It also raises questions about who constitute the best advocates.

²⁴ R.S. Sugirtharajah, ed. *Still at the Margins: Biblical Scholarship Fifteen Years after the Voices from the Margin* (London: T & T Clark, 2008).

²⁵ John S. Mbiti, “Theological Impotence and the Universality of the Church,” in *Mission Trends No. 3: Third World Theologies*, ed. G. H. Anderson, and T. F. Stransky (New York: Paulist, 1976), 9.

²⁶ Tité Tienou, “Christian Theology in an Era of World Christianity,” in *Globalizing Theology: Belief and Practice in an Era of World Christianity*, ed. Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland (Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), 46. These words are actually borrowed from Ali Mazrui, a Kenyan political writer and academic: Ali A. Mazrui, *Cultural Forces in World Politics* (London: James Curry, 1990), 116.

²⁷ Compare: Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996), 15. Also, Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002), 72–82.

²⁸ For examples, see Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007); Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Christology: A Global Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003); Kärkkäinen, *The Doctrine of God: A Global Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004); Kirsteen Kim and Sebastian C.H. Kim, *Christianity as a World Religion* (London: Continuum, 2007). By contrast see William A. Dyrness, *Emerging Voices in Global Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994). A joint work by Dyrness and Kärkkäinen is another good example: William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, eds., *Global Dictionary of Theology: A Resource for the Worldwide Church* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008).

A third reason for this research is that not only are Western Christians in the minority in the world church, but our own societies are becoming increasingly multicultural. It has been predicted that the United States of America will have no ethnic majorities by the year 2030.²⁹ In 2006, I heard a Radio New Zealand news announcement that said that more “brown” babies were born in Auckland that year than white and the trend was set to continue. The census of the same year showed that in Waitakere city where I live, population 186 444, there were 178 different ethnic groups residing.³⁰ While it has long been common for Western theological institutions, including those in Aotearoa New Zealand, to be multicultural in their make-up these external realities will eventually add a profound weight to the call for the deconstruction of the “Western hegemony postulate” and “the West’s self-perception that it is ‘the center.’”³¹ I personally would prefer to be part of a pro-active reconfiguring rather than waiting stubbornly, or ignorantly, for possible nemesis.

A fourth reason sits within the developing context described above and concerns the younger generations, our future theological students. At this point I want to tell a story:

September 2009

“Oh good, maybe you can help us,” was the greeting my mother-in-law gave as Steve and I joined her and my children for morning tea. “Mereem has a question that needs answering.”

My four-and-a-half-year-old daughter looked at Steve and asked him, “How did God make our bodies?”

Steve, an African mission leader, began his reply to Mereem acknowledging their very different skin colours.

I found myself shaking my head with a smile on my face. Sotto voce, hoping Steve could hear me but that my daughter, distracted by the playdough in front of her, might not fully register, I said, “She doesn’t notice skin colour.” Steve, I think, was surprised. I explained that so far, while she can see that people have different coloured skins, it does not seem to have penetrated her consciousness

²⁹ Marvin Cetron, quoted in Lee, *Marginality*, 1.

³⁰ “The West is Colour Blind,” *Waitakere News*, August 2010.

³¹ Tienou, “Christian Theology,” 46.

that that might affect relationship. It therefore does not need to be the starting point of a story, yet.³²

Mereem goes to Olive Shoots, a multicultural Christian early childhood education centre. It is a place full of people of different ethnicities and multiple ethnicities: children, teachers, and parents. It is a wonderful, mostly happy place, where difference is celebrated and enriches the pedagogy and the learning environment, and where curiosity and a strong sense of belonging are fostered. Among other things, the children are learning Māori and Spanish and Mereem often tells me new words she's been learning from her Korean friends.

This is the world my daughter inhabits; the outlook on life and friendships she is learning.

Across the car-park is a theological college. It is multicultural too but its atmosphere is subtly different. One cultural paradigm dominates the teaching and the institution. This reality is true of most degree-offering theological institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand, even despite work done in bicultural relations with Māori over many years, especially in secular fields.

If we were to better prepare for the young adults that Mereem and her friends will grow up into, what might Olive Shoots Theological College look like?

A fifth and final reason for believing it is important to grapple with the implications of my stated conviction in my context is drawn from the story of the ATS. In the 1980s, but more particularly across the 1990s, the ATS had a deliberate focus on helping schools develop multicultural, multidimensional methods of engagement. A lot was invested in the project, with the 1990s particularly designated the “decade of globalization.” Despite all the good work that was done, the conclusion at the end of the twenty-year process by two key Anglo American educators asked to reflect on it was that “at almost every point it has been easier to describe what we hope will be, rather than how to achieve it.”³³ Such a conclusion would have been no surprise to Jung Young Lee, a Korean American theologian who died in 1996.

³² Compare bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 53. “No one is born a racist. Everyone makes a choice. Many of us make the choice in childhood.”

³³ William Leshner and Donald W. Shriver, “Stumbling in the Right Direction,” *Theological Education* 35, no. 2 (1999): 8.

In a paper he wrote in 1995, halfway through the decade of globalisation, Lee observed that those operating from “centralist approaches” find it nearly impossible to remove their epistemological prejudices from their attempts to interact with those who are different from themselves with the result that potential conversation partners are marginalised before conversation has even begun.³⁴ A comment once made by the Caribbean American writer and activist Audre Lourde adds further food for thought: “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.”³⁵

While the work of the ATS proves that the conviction driving this thesis is not unique, the outcome at the end of the decade of globalisation shows that there is still work to be done. The other four reasons given for undertaking this research also affirm that genuinely deep engagement on the part of those in power in theological circles with others has yet to be achieved. Even further, it is clear that such engagement will not be possible without a more concerted effort on the part of those having the dominant voice to move beyond their epistemological prejudices, give power away and thereby create space for the other to speak and be truly heard.

In the light of all this, obviously a deep contradiction could exist here if I myself fail to enact in this work the words of my conviction that “the purpose of theological education is to model and facilitate deep engagement with the o/Other.” I, too, could be guilty of describing rather than achieving. It thus becomes imperative that I make that effort to try to move beyond my own epistemological prejudices in such a way that the other is freed to speak to and transform me. Chapter two will detail the methodology I have chosen in my attempt to do this.

Lee, meanwhile, had a particular suggestion to make regarding the best kind of “other” to engage with in order to realise truly “multicultural” theology—to use his preferred term for a moment—and its practical outworking in such contexts as theological education. It was his belief that the creative nexus lies with those whom he called “new marginal” people; those born into one culture, living and working in another, and able to live reflectively “in-both,”

³⁴ Jung Young Lee, “Multicultural and Global Theological Scholarship: An Asian-American Perspective,” *Theological Education* 32, no. 1 (1995): 45. According to Fumitaka Matsuoka, a Japanese American theologian, even in 1990—the midpoint of globalisation work in the ATS—a “Protestant Anglo-American male idea of assimilation” was driving policy-making within the ATS. Fumitaka Matsuoka, “Pluralism at Home: Globalization within North American,” *Theological Education* 26, Supplement 1 (1990): 39.

³⁵ Audre Lourde, *Sister Outside: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing, 1984), 99.

“in-between,” and “in-beyond.”³⁶ Determined to enact my conviction, and also to heed Lee’s critique, I decided to begin by listening to and engaging with an other (Lee), follow his thesis, and see what “new marginal” people—certain others—might have to say about what it would take to realise truly intercultural theological education.

Engaging with others

The discovery of Lee’s work, particularly his book *Marginality: A Key to Multicultural Theology*, was serendipitous. It offered a way forward for my research; it also offered terminology free of the stereotypical and dichotomising senses of “us” and “them” with which I was struggling at the time.³⁷ Lee’s hermeneutic was also strongly underpinned by the life of Jesus and so deeply connected to scripture.

Lee’s theological work drew particularly from his own learning to value his location on the margins of two cultures, Korean and American.³⁸ He proposed that a marginal location—born in a context of living in-between and in-both of two or multiple worlds—gives those located there a transcendence, an ability to see into the positives and negatives of each world, and yet also beyond them, if they have the eyes to see. Here, Lee claimed, exists “a new and creative core” for theologising that is inclusive and welcoming of diversity because of its own intrinsic inclusiveness and diversity.³⁹ Jesus, Lee argued, is the marginal person *par excellence* whose example of love as the bridge between death (neither/nor) and life (both/and), the past and the future, marks new marginal people as liberating reconcilers.⁴⁰ They are familiar with powerlessness, sacrifice, and suffering but also with the divine irony that life in all its fullness is to be found there.

As I looked for such people in order to invite them to share their wisdom with me, I discovered that they have certain qualities: they are deeply reflective and visionary at the

³⁶ Lee, *Marginality*, 29–76.

³⁷ Lee used the terms “margins” and “centres” and allowed others to locate and label themselves—quite a contrast to such labels as “Western” and “Majority World” so often chosen and used by scholars. Thus he invited inclusion, honest and self-aware dialogue, and the opportunity to redefine oneself again and again for, as he acknowledged, in any given situation whether one locates at the margins or the centre can change. *Ibid.*, 30–33.

³⁸ As a North Korean migrant he no longer fits into in Korean society nor does he count as truly American because he is not Caucasian, the dominant voice.

³⁹ Lee, *Marginality*, 60. Note: This does not mean a new centre is created for the core is at the “margin of marginality.”

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.

same time; they are quietly tenacious in realising their ideas and often outspoken in their naming of injustice but also extremely hospitable, open, and welcoming people; they have known suffering, what it is to be underestimated, overlooked, and misunderstood but are determined, creative, and generous people comfortable in their own skins.

A poem by Selina Tusitala Marsh, a Samoan/Tuvaluan/English/French poet and academic, aptly describes these big-hearted, boundary crossing people and our need of them. Subsequently, I have borrowed its title for when I want to refer in the plural to those I have interviewed because of its relevance and evocativeness:

Calabash Breakers

we all know
the calabash breakers
the hinemoas
the mauis
the younger brother
the only sister
the orphan
the bastard child
with rebellious blood

we all know
the hierarchies
the tapu
the boundaries
always crossed
by someone
petulant

we all know
the unsettled
the trouble makers

the calabash breakers
 they sail the notes of our songs
 stroke the lines of our stories
 and reign in the dark hour

we should know them
 we now need them
 to catch bigger suns⁴¹

Refining the concept of “new marginal”

Interestingly, the calabash breakers I found and interviewed alerted me to some limitations of depending too much on Lee’s thesis alone.⁴² For some of them, Lee’s talk of margins and centres suggested an understanding that was too polarised. As a North Korean migrant to America, Lee had come to realise he had no homeland, so life was for him very much located on the margins as opposed to the centre.⁴³ However, those born in the West but with family roots beyond it are finding themselves in a space they choose to name as “liminal,” “interstitial,” “hybridity,” “heterogeneity,” “translocal” or “living the hyphen.”⁴⁴ To borrow

⁴¹ Selina Tusitala Marsh, *Fast Talking PI* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2009), 8. Hinemoa and Maui are key figures in Maori storytelling. Hinemoa, a chief’s daughter fell in love with the illegitimate Tutanekai. She defied expectations and swam a great distance to be with him. Resting in a pool she smashed the calabashes Tutanekai’s servant had brought to fill with water, thereby drawing Tutanekai out to discover the new life on offer to him. Maui was the son of a woman and a god who never accepted that things had to be as they were, though his family often rejected his ideas. One story tells of his taming of the sun that was racing across the sky to sleep longer in its bed, making the days impossibly short for getting work done. He convinced his very reluctant brothers to help him catch the sun and beat it until it became so weak that now it forever travels slowly across the sky.

⁴² While the term “calabash breakers” will refer specifically to those I interviewed, there will be many times when the published work of others who could also rightly deserve the term will be woven into the discussion.

⁴³ Jung Young Lee, “A Life In-Between: A Korean-American Journey,” in *Journeys at the Margin: Towards an Autobiographical Theology in American-Asian Perspective*, eds. Peter C. Phan and Jung Young Lee (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 39.

⁴⁴ “Liminality” here is drawn from, “Marginality as Coerced Liminality: Toward an Understanding of the Context of Asian American Theology,” in *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans*, ed. Fumitaka Matsuoka and Eleazer S. Fernandez (Danvers, MA: Chalice, 2003), 11–28.

“Interstitial” was drawn by one calabash breaker from Rita Nakashima Brock, “Cooking Without Recipes: Interstitial Integrity,” in *Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Religion and Theology*, ed. Rita Nakashima Brock et al. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 125–43. “Hybridity” as a concept has been most recently explored in Carmen Nanko-Fernandez, *Theologizing En EspanGLISH: Context, Community, and Ministry* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2010). “Heterogeneity” is used by Frank M. Yamada, “Constructing Hybridity and Heterogeneity: Asian American Biblical Interpretation from a Third-Generation Perspective,” in *Ways of Being, Ways of Knowing*, ed. Mary F. Foskett and Jeffrey Kah-Jin Kuan (St Louis, MO: Chalice, 2006), 171–72. “Translocal” is the term preferred by Matsuoka, one of the named calabash

from a metaphor that Lee had used of watching fish jumping in a pond and finding himself reflecting on the jump of the fish (the centre) and the effect of the ripples hitting the edge (the margins), these people also want to include the ripples moving in both directions between and find themselves embodying the whole metaphor with its tensions and complexities rather than locating at one point within it.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, I discovered that the calabash breakers who are Caucasian know a different kind of complexity. Technically, they should be Lee's centre, and in some ways they are, but they also spoke of experiencing the margins and, further, of living in the movements towards and away from the centres and margins. They embody, if in a different way, the whole of Lee's metaphor as well.

As I have reflected on the complexities these people add to Lee's hermeneutic, I have realised that Jesus, the new marginal person *par excellence*—who was so important for legitimising Lee's work—also actually embodies the whole metaphor. As one who had given up his glory to walk in another world,⁴⁶ homeless and illegitimate, caring for the poor and oppressed, misunderstood, and eventually the crucified Son of God, he certainly knew the margins. But as a Jewish man and respected rabbi, as well as the Son of God, he knew the centre also. The four gospels together tell us the stories of his journeying between. To know that Jesus is there in the complexity provides encouragement to continue a conversation which, for me, Lee inspired but which I recognise, if I am committed to engaging with the o/Other, needs to be open to expansion. I also realised in the midst of this that I am part of it too. I am not simply an outsider holding a conviction seeking the opinions of others. My own story and location in this research are also illustrative of the complexities that my conversation partners between them have highlighted. As a result, I feel the invitation to join with them in considering what it might take to realise truly intercultural theological education. This thesis is about me as well as them.

Locating Me

I know the centre

I also know the margins

but I am most familiar with the tensions and journeys between

breakers. The idea of "living the hyphen" has been usefully explored in Pearson, *Faith in a Hyphen*, with a Sub-Version by Jione Havea.

⁴⁵ For Lee's metaphor see Lee, *Marginality*, 30.

⁴⁶ See Phil. 2. (New Revised Standard Version)

I am white
(Pākehā)
Protestant
grew up evangelical⁴⁷
have been soaked in Western culture,
history
and ways of thinking.

And yet,
sitting in a zoo
in heartland Ohio
alone on a bench,
watching a group of
Anglo American mothers and children
eating their lunch
I suddenly realised
that as a New Zealander I live
(in the world scheme of things)
on the margins of the West,
geographically,
politically,
ideologically.

The reference point,
the centre,
is the United States, Britain, and Europe –
in books, media, politics, God-talk...

New Zealand falls
off
the
edge.
No one takes us that seriously.
We are the “antipodean colonials”⁴⁸
Location: Down Under.

Mind you...
Flashback:
Philippines 1992.
“Hello Americano!”
I turn around, and say
“Taga **New Zealand** akó.”
It mattered deeply to me to be marginal then.

I am also a woman

⁴⁷ Evangelicalism in Aotearoa New Zealand bears a close resemblance to that found in England, as opposed to the kind of evangelicalism found in the United States.

⁴⁸ This is a label my husband and I were given while living in Chesterfield, England in 2000.

young
petite
a mother
who has been faculty
in evangelical theological education.
I was one of the 20%
in my particular school.
I have been underestimated.

(These are some of my marginal experiences.
I know they are minor compared to many.)

Mostly
I live in a tension between:
attracted to the power of the centre
called by the Isaiah Christ⁴⁹ to value the margins
moving towards
turning
moving towards
turning...

Life in Central Asia epitomised this.
We chose to go there, my husband and I;
we wanted to serve.
We were “privileged others”⁵⁰
but found ourselves deaf and dumb
in a strange culture and language,
subject to the whims of those holding power.
I wanted to do something significant,
I was a Lecturer, M.A.
My students were persecuted and poor.
Their faith shook my presumptions
deeply humbled me
taught me to listen
transformed me.

In Central Asia I learnt that taking risks,
letting go of fear, ignorance, and pride
in order to try to truly meet and understand people
all people
no matter where they are located
in order to be changed for the better
in order to grow
is following Christ.

⁴⁹ Lk. 4:16–21.

⁵⁰ Eleazer S. Fernandez, “Confronting the White Noise: Mission from the Experience of the Marginalized,” in *Beyond the White Noise: Mission in a Multicultural World*, ed. Tom Montgomery-Fate (St Louis: Chalice, 1997), 96.

I also learnt that centres and margins
are not always quite what they seem
even in me
That's another complexity to add to complexity.

Summary

In this introductory chapter, I have set the scene for this thesis by stating the conviction that drives it: that the purpose of theological education is to model and facilitate deep engagement with the o/Other, for transformation comes through relationship and the Christian life is about transformation. I have provided five reasons to explain why I believe those of us involved in theological education in my context should especially pay attention to this conviction. Arising out of those reasons I have noted the continuing and fundamental inability of dominant voices within Western theological education generally to deeply listen to the voices of others. Mindful of this, I stated my decision to enact—not just talk about—my conviction. Listening to an other has meant for me choosing to begin with the hermeneutic of Jung Young Lee and his proposal that it is new marginal people who hold the key to realising truly multicultural theology. I have briefly described his reasoning and also a necessary expansion of it which conversation with others has alerted me to. I finished by locating myself within this research, noting the invitation I believe it is extending to me to be involved in it as more than an outsider.

Having set the scene I will turn now to detailing the methodology (chapter two) and, beyond that, to writing up the findings of the resulting research. After a brief chapter (chapter three) introducing the four specific areas for attention that have arisen from the research, chapters four to seven will present and develop each area in turn. Chapter eight will provide a case study of an institution in the United States that has already been committed to the intercultural project for a number of years in order to illustrate what the implications may be for institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand that decide to take this path and chapter nine will present my conclusions.

Chapter Two: Methodology

Pondering the journey on which the engagement with, first, Jung Young Lee, and consequently various calabash breakers has taken, it has become important that the commitment to authentically working out the fundamental conviction with regard to the purpose of theological education as deep engagement with the o/Other bringing transformation, is not only practical but necessarily philosophical. Mindful of this, the writings of Martin Buber, a Jewish philosopher deeply concerned with the ethos of dialogue, first encountered in the opening weeks of this PhD have proved helpful. His work has provided some philosophical glue between the underpinning conviction, the methodology, the engagement with the calabash breakers who are part of this project, and the approach to the final presentation of the research. This chapter, therefore, will begin by discussing Buber's work before introducing the chosen methodological approach. It will then detail the more specific decisions made regarding the instruments and procedures used in data collection, before finishing by describing the process of analysis that has been undertaken and the decisions made around its presentation.

Martin Buber and dialogical relation

In 1923, in the wake of the upheavals of the Industrial Revolution and the evils and moral dilemmas of the First World War, Buber published a small but significant existential work entitled *Ich und Du*. Its first translation into English, as *I and Thou*, came fourteen years later.⁵¹ Philosophical and poetic, it explored the essence and nature of deep and transformative engagement with the o/Other. Said to be “one of the most influential works in modern philosophy,” *I and Thou* offered a way to realise and recognise genuine dialogue between individuals toward greater understanding.⁵²

According to Buber, there are two primal attitudes or ways of speaking that are in constant interplay in human life: the relation *I-Thou* and the relation *I-It*. *I* do not exist in and for myself. The relation *I-Thou* occurs when *I* turn my whole being toward the o/Other, and is ultimately realised when we meet in a moment of grace. This moment, a point of openness,

⁵¹ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1937). This thesis will draw from the second edition published in 1958.

⁵² Kenneth Paul Kramer and Mechthild Gawlick, *Martin Buber's I and Thou: Practising Living Dialogue* (New York: Paulist, 2003), 6. It has also been criticized for reducing human relations down to two but this suits my purpose here as I seek to model deep engagement with the o/Other as a starting point for further change.

deep bonding, and mutual reciprocity, is fleeting, for as soon as one moves to observe the moment and its attendant experience, the attitude becomes that of *I-It*, subject and object. The *I-It* relation is monological and objectified, a “one-sided experience of ‘knowing,’ ‘using,’ and putting things in ‘categories.’”⁵³ While more time is often spent in the relation *I-It*, *I-Thou* is, according to Buber, the relation that brings personal wholeness. *I* become, not through distanced knowing of the o/Other, but through my relation to the *Thou*. According to Buber, “all real living is meeting”⁵⁴ and so it is important that we learn how to turn meaningfully and more frequently towards the *Thou*, the one who is o/Other.

We could diagram these ideas in the following way:

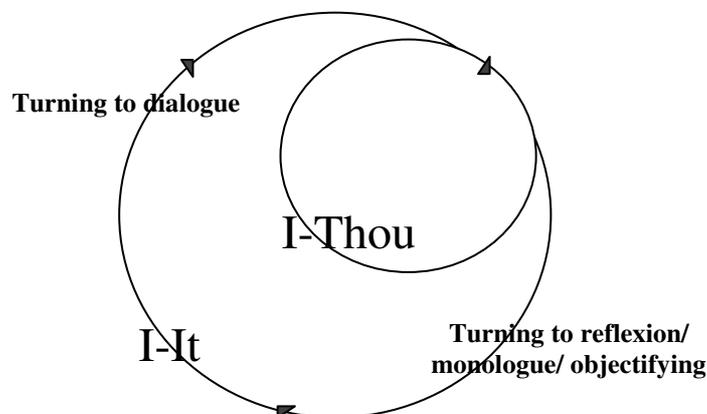


Fig. 1 Martin Buber’s Living Dialogue

Kenneth Kramer, a professor of religious studies from the United States who, in 2003, published a book interpreting the ideas and philosophy of Buber, chose in his own illustrating to diagram the relations around a single circle.⁵⁵ Upon reflection, however, a spiralling figure seems to be more apt as it can better represent not only the convoluted nature of relations across a life or within individual conversations—the relation *I-Thou* does not tend to exist regularly and rhythmically as Kramer’s circle seems to suggest—as well as the fact that we typically turn towards the *I-Thou* relation much less often than to *I-It*.⁵⁶

⁵³ Ibid., 26.

⁵⁴ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith, Second ed. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958), 11.

⁵⁵ See Kramer and Gawlick, *Martin Buber’s I and Thou*, 44, in particular.

⁵⁶ It is important to note that the smaller circle in the diagram is in no way meant to imply that the *I-Thou* relation is a subset of the *I-It*. They are, rather, circles of focus at any one point. As has already been

The exact nature of the moment of “meeting” in the *I-Thou* relation so crucial to Buber’s concept of genuine dialogue is problematic, however. His own first discovery of a deep spiritual communing with another that went beyond words occurred with a horse which, he claimed, “confided itself to me, placed itself elementally of *Thou* and *Thou* with me” before he broke the moment by becoming an observer to it.⁵⁷ It is interesting that this fundamental discovery was not in the context of a genuine *I-Thou* relation human to human. Perhaps this is indicative of a difficulty in ascertaining claims to mutuality and reciprocity because perspective on “meeting” is always told from the viewpoint of *I*.⁵⁸ If this is the closest we can hope to get, Kramer has proffered a useful example of how a sense of genuine *I-Thou* relation might feel from one side of the story: a woman turns towards an other, finds herself lost in a conversation unwilling for it to end then becomes aware when it has finished that something has shifted inside her.⁵⁹ Experience of “meeting” in this thesis will be related with this qualification in mind: it will only be possible here to provide the researcher’s (*I*) perspective on her engagement with the *Thou* and the resulting sense of challenge and needed change. Thus, “dialogical relation” will be spoken of, rather than “genuine dialogue” as Buber claimed.

While perception of a moment of meeting may ultimately be subjective, it is important to note that dialogical relation involves a clear commitment not only to allowing the *I*, but also the *Thou*, their own voice. This challenges current priorities in scholarship. Objectivity, the priority of most Western academic research, is unable on its own to engender and present dialogical relation because it rejects as illegitimate the embodied presence of the *I* and has tended to bury the voice of the o/Other under universalising statements, paraphrasing, and third-person pronouns in its concern to give precedence to *It*. Subjectivity, on the other hand, is also unable to bring about or document its own dialogical relation because it operates out of, and focuses on, the *I*. Together they address only two-thirds of Buber’s equation; the embodied *Thou* is missing.⁶⁰ If we are going to realise and model dialogical relation in scholarship, therefore, a way must be found to clearly and substantively hear the personal

mentioned, it was Buber’s contention that *I-Thou* and *I-It* cannot happen at the same time as the latter involves a turning away from the former.

⁵⁷ Buber, *I and Thou*, 26–27.

⁵⁸ Consider the claim of feminist standpoint epistemology, which argues that “knowledge is always situated.” Douglas Ezzy, *Qualitative Analysis: Practice and Innovation* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 2002), 20.

⁵⁹ Kramer and Gawlick, *Martin Buber’s I and Thou*, 20.

⁶⁰ The critique of missiological scholarship on page 8 of this thesis provides a situated example of this.

voice of the *Thou* alongside objective analysis (the *It*) and subjective reflection undertaken by the *I*.

A methodology to match

At the macro level, quantitative research approaches are irrelevant here, focusing as they do solely on the objective collection and analysis of numerical data in response to predetermined, fixed questions in order to test a theory.⁶¹ Qualitative research, on the other hand, is interested in exploring and participating in the rich data of peoples' lives and relationships, the functions of social movements and organisations, and "interactional relationships," asking what makes them meaningful.⁶² Theory is then allowed to arise inductively. In contrast to quantitative research, as data is gathered it is allowed to influence and shape subsequent questions and thinking, giving significant weight to the voices of the researched.⁶³ With such emphases, qualitative research is the more appropriate macro methodological context of the two.

Until the advent of postmodernism, however, both quantitative and qualitative researchers have had one thing in common that is problematic: "they have privileged a more distanced form of knowing."⁶⁴ Intellect, structure, and rationality have been favoured over the emotions and the embodied self of the participants as well as the researcher. Also, the researcher is expected not to intrude: "researchers do their best to leave their preconceived notions at home" in order not to bias the data.⁶⁵ Priority rests with the data contribution of the researched, although ironically, ultimately there is more interest in the presentation of the researcher's analysis of the data than the data itself. The presentation is expected to report the primary data in objective terms. Such distancing of the embodied self from the intellect,

⁶¹ James Neill, "Qualitative Verses Quantitative Research: Key Points in a Classic Debate," <http://wilderdom.com/research/QualitativeVersusQuantitativeResearch.html> (cited 9 October, 2009).

⁶² See Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (Newbury Park: Sage, 1990, 17; Ezzy, *Qualitative Analysis*, xii. "Rich data are detailed, focused, and full. They reveal participants' views feelings, intentions, and actions as well as the contexts and structures of their lives": Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis* (London, Thousand Oaks, CA, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 14. For a table providing a more thorough comparison of quantitative research with qualitative research see Carl Davidson and Martin Tolich, eds., *Social Science Research in New Zealand: Many Paths to Understanding* (Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand, 2001), 120.

⁶³ Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 14.

⁶⁴ Lynn Davidman, "Truth, Subjectivity and Ethnographic Research," in *Personal Knowledge and Beyond: Reshaping the Ethnography of Religion*, ed. James V. Spickard, J. Shawn Landres, and Meredith B. McGuire (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 20.

⁶⁵ Davidson and Tolich, eds., *Social Science Research*, 97.

the personal voice from the reported, and the researcher from the researched are dualisms that silence opportunities for authentic dialogical engagement at its deepest levels.

Interestingly, contemporary theory within qualitative circles has recently been arguing that in order to provide more nuanced, sensitive, and honest accounts, we must work “with, and through our knowing selves,”⁶⁶ and in doing so acknowledge the complexities of subjectivity and insider/outsider understandings as well as grappling with the impact of researcher identity and issues of power.⁶⁷ A key result of this has been a growing dis-ease in recent years over the excision of the “I” from academic research and an increasing promotion of a “‘purposeful trespassing of boundaries’ between the ‘subjective’ and supposedly ‘objective.’”⁶⁸

Such trespassing and sneaking out from under the “mantle of [scholarly] omniscience” has been criticised as “nouveau solipsism,” and “self-serving and superficial.”⁶⁹ Ruth Behar, a Cuban American Jewish anthropologist, who has been a significant pioneer in the area of reflexive anthropology and the concept of the “vulnerable observer” has argued, however, that “a personal voice, if creatively used, can lead the reader, not into miniature bubbles of navel-gazing, but into the enormous sea of serious social issues.”⁷⁰ Exploring that potential role, though one step beyond Behar, Carolyn Ellis, a professor of communications from the United States, has pioneered autoethnography. This method leans heavily on what could be described as the perspective of the vulnerable researcher, something of great interest for this project. Autoethnography shifts the spotlight onto the subjective experience of the researcher

⁶⁶ Davidman, “Truth, Subjectivity and Ethnographic Research,” 20.

⁶⁷ James V. Spickard and J. Shawn Landres, “Introduction: Whither Ethnography? Transforming the Social-Scientific Study of Religion,” in *Personal Knowledge and Beyond: Reshaping the Ethnography of Religion*, ed. James V. Spickard, J. Shawn Landres, and Meredith B. McGuire (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 5.

⁶⁸ Diane P. Freedman and Olivia Frey, eds. *Autobiographical Writing Across the Disciplines: A Reader* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003), 18, citing Simon Gottschalk, “Postmodern Sensibilities and Ethnographic Possibilities,” in Anna Banks and Stephen P. Banks, eds., *Fiction and Social Research: By Ice or Fire* (Thousand Oaks: AltaMira Press, 1998), 209.

For a discussion of this growing “dis-ease” see the whole book, particularly the introduction.

⁶⁹ The criticism of “nouveau solipsism” comes from Daphne Patai, “Sick and Tired of Nouveau Solipsism,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (1994): page unknown. The other quote is from Ruth Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 14. For a biting early critique of the critics of autobiographical writing see the Introduction to Nicole Ward Jouve, *White Woman Speaks with Forked Tongue: Criticism as Autobiography* (London: Routledge, 1991), 1–14.

⁷⁰ Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer*, 14.

in his or her socio-politico-cultural context and employs novel-writing techniques to capture both immediate and reflective responses.⁷¹

A more “distanced form of knowing” not only removes the self but also privileges language and analysis that writes *about* the other, thereby denying them their own voice.⁷² bell hooks, an African American feminist scholar, once wrote, “It is not just important what we speak about, but how and why we speak...Often...speech about the ‘Other’ annihilates, erases: ‘no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself.’”⁷³ Language that erases also allows the researcher and reader to avoid engaging personally with the challenges and contradictions that exist in the relationships between self and others.⁷⁴ Priority for this kind of distanced knowing has, at its worst, been guilty of legitimating what Linda Tuhiwai Smith, a Māori academic deeply concerned about the treatment of indigenous peoples in research, has called dirty research, “implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism,” robbing people of their right to self-determination and to their turangawaewae and reducing them to the level of specimens.⁷⁵

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Kaupapa Māori research, concerned about the ways in which an emphasis on reporting and writing *about* the other disempowers the tāngata whenua, directly challenges it by, among other things, drawing upon the justice imperative and commitment to partnership embedded in the Treaty of Waitangi.⁷⁶ Kaupapa Māori underpinned a recent piece of research into the experience of Māori youth in secondary schools, which is outlined in the book *Culture Speaks: Cultural Relationships and Classroom Learning*.⁷⁷ In this research, Russell Bishop, a Pākehā professor of Māori education, and Mere Berryman, of Ngāi Tūhoe descent and director of the Poutama Pounamu Māori Education Research and Development Centre, began by noting how most education studies discuss young people and

⁷¹ Carolyn Ellis, *The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel About Autoethnography* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2004).

⁷² See Fine, “Working the Hyphens,” 72.

⁷³ bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South End, 1990), 151–52. It is bell hooks’ choice to use lower case letters for her name.

⁷⁴ Fine, “Working the Hyphens,” 72.

⁷⁵ Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 1. Turangawaewae are “places where we feel especially empowered and connected.” See <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/papatuanuku-the-land/5> (cited 16 August, 2010).

⁷⁶ Māori: tāngata whenua—people of the land or indigenous people.

⁷⁷ Russell Bishop and Mere Berryman, *Culture Speaks: Cultural Relationships and Classroom Learning* (Wellington: Huia, 2006), 2. For further principles of Kaupapa Māori see <http://www.rangahau.co.nz/research-idea/27/> (cited 6 August 2010).

their issues—that is, talk *about* them rather than listen to them.⁷⁸ Bishop and Berryman decided in their research to instead authorise “students’ perspectives on education” by quoting extensively from interview narratives they recorded with Māori youth and their whanau, trusting the voices of these others to help analyse, teach, “re-inform existing conversations,” and point towards reform.⁷⁹ It was an approach unusual in academic circles but it produced a powerful and constructive critique that resulted in the establishment of a national professional development programme for teachers and principals, Te Kotahitanga, supported by the Ministry of Education. Such a result of a decision to give the researched their own voice in the final presentation of a project is not insignificant.⁸⁰ While it may be true that in life we spend more time in the relation *I-It*, a commitment to deep engagement with the o/Other requires us to treat *Thou* as no less important. *Culture Speaks* offers a vital and useful precedent for how that might be done, with indigenous peoples certainly, but also with others.

These critiques, commitments, and developments placed alongside discussion of Buber’s philosophy, suggest that it is possible to construct a methodology that takes not only the *It* but also the *I* and the *Thou*—the objective, the subjective, and the voice of the o/Other—seriously across data collection, analysis, and the final write-up. In this thesis the choice has been made to combine semi-structured reflexive interviews and a research journal with the qualitative methods of autoethnography and modified grounded theory towards realising this. The figure below indicates something of the perception of their “fit”:

⁷⁸ Ibid., 3–4.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 4, 5. Māori: whanau—family/families

⁸⁰ The only other known context in which the voices of the researched have been significantly prioritised and authorised to speak with little commentary by the researcher is the work and legacy of the American Jewish oral historian and broadcaster Studs Terkel (1912–2008). In his books, evidence of his critical acumen is in the careful listening and questioning he has done in interview and then in the underlying and extensive analysis which has determined the final presentation of the work, including the grouping and juxtaposition of ideas. The power of his approach was evidenced in the words of a reviewer in the Chicago Sun-Times who said of one book exploring race issues which became a national bestseller: “shattering, devastating and an eloquent lament.” Studs Terkel, *Race: How Blacks and Whites Think and Feel About the American Obsession* (New York: Anchor, 1992), back cover.

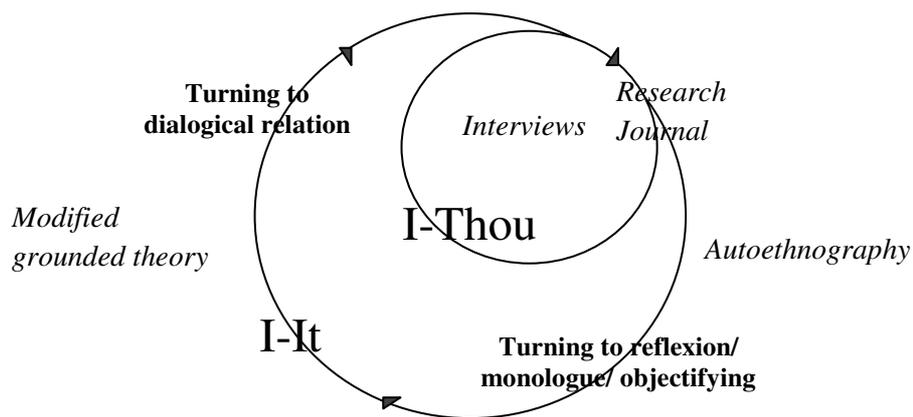


Fig. 2 Research Methodology in the Context of Martin Buber's Living Dialogue

Interviews and a Research Journal

In order to try to facilitate *I* turning to *Thou* and moments of “meeting,” as well as inviting the embodied engagement of calabash breakers willing to participate in this project, the decision was made to conduct interviews.

A semistructured format was chosen and retained because it guaranteed a certain consistency of conversation framework.⁸¹ The set questions themselves always invited responses grounded in autobiography, assuming theological thinking and praxis were intrinsically connected with a person's story. This emphasis was initially drawn from the thinking of Lee who, when he described the process of theologising, said:

Theology is autobiographical...It is my story of how God formed me, nurtures me, guides me, loves me, allows me to age, and will end my life. It is my story of seeking who I am in relation to the community, the natural environment, time, and history, and the ultimate reality of my existence which I accept by faith. It is my story of seeking to understand how God acts in my life and in the lives of those who are part of my life. It is a faith-reflection on my life, whether it is told in poetry, in parable or in narrative.⁸²

Lee's words also happen to echo something of Buber's thinking. There is a definite sense of *I-It* about these words but, as well, they contain the essence of *I-Thou*, drawing attention to

⁸¹ This is described in more detail under “Procedures for Data Collection.”

⁸² Lee, *Marginality*, 7.

the importance of dialogical relation with the eternal *Thou* as well as the *Thou* of nature and humans.⁸³

According to Buber, there is largely a “technical” nature to interview dialogue, that is, the focus of the exchange is the need to learn or understand something.⁸⁴ However, more and longer moments of “meeting” were experienced, from the perspective of the researcher, in the interviews for this thesis after a reflexive element was added. Adding a reflexive element also increased the level of participation by the researcher in interviews which, at times, became more conversational. A research journal was also kept. The latter soon helped to also facilitate meeting written text as *Thou*, something Buber claimed is possible.⁸⁵ According to him, by meeting text receptively, allowing it to reflect our presuppositions, reflecting ourselves on its meaning, and applying the text to and in a wider community setting, the spiralling figure of dialogical conversation in *I-Thou* and *I-It* relation can continue beyond the initial *I-Thou* event; even, if necessary, without it.⁸⁶

Autoethnography

As has been noted, a commitment to trying to live out the conviction stated on the opening page of this thesis has required acknowledging the embodied presence of the researcher. The demand for personal integrity embedded within the decision to practice dialogical relation has emphasised this requirement. From another angle, while it was hoped that discoveries made in these particular contexts of *I-Thou* and *I-It* relation might be of wider relevance, from the outset it was clear that it was not right to here “disconnect...personal experience from scholarship; disconnect... heart from brains; disconnect...a faith journey from the task of teaching, and confuse...what may be true for [the researcher] with universal truth.”⁸⁷ *I* am, and have to be, inextricably bound into this work and so because of this the decision was made to employ autoethnography.

⁸³ Interestingly, Lee’s thinking here is directly comparable to Buber’s three spheres of relation: nature, persons, and spiritual beings. Buber, *I and Thou*, 6.

Lee’s inclusion of “parable” here as a means of expressing one’s faith-reflection brings to mind a fascinating observation made by Buber. In pondering the life of Jesus, Buber was intrigued by Jesus’ use of parables, to which he rarely gave explanation. He considered that this open-endedness in a speech act extended an invitation to living in unconditional dialogical relation—a useful model for engagement, perhaps? See Kramer and Gawlick, *Martin Buber’s I and Thou*, 117.

⁸⁴ Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 19.

⁸⁵ Buber, *I and Thou*, postscript.

⁸⁶ This was very useful given that, as will be described, it was not possible to meet with most of the calabash breakers beyond their initial interviews.

⁸⁷ N. Lynne Westfield, *Dear Sisters: A Womanist Practice of Hospitality* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2001), 8–9.

Autoethnography, according to Ellis, is “research, writing, story, and method that connects the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political.”⁸⁸ The autoethnographer moves back and forth from use of an “ethnographic-wide lens” to deep self-critical reflection, exploring the multiple ways in which the outward social, political, and cultural world, and the realm of personal experience, influence, are impacted by, or resist each other. Exploration of the intricacies of this relationship is crucial; so much so that the lines between can become blurred.⁸⁹

Autoethnography resembles what some have called reflexive ethnography or reciprocal ethnography but goes one step further by paying attention to the personal thoughts and emotions of the researcher as they engage with participants, acknowledging that their own story has shaped, is shaping, and is being shaped by the research. This is partly achieved by the employment of poetic and novel-writing techniques, particularly the use of dialogue to reveal the different voices, and the use of “I” to clearly identify the researcher within the conversation.⁹⁰ The result is that autoethnographic writing showcases “concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality, and self-consciousness. These features appear as relational and institutional stories affected by history and social structure, which themselves are dialectically revealed through actions, feelings, thoughts, and language.”⁹¹

For this research, autoethnography facilitates not only a recording of *I-Thou* “meetings” from the perspective of *I*, but also the turning toward the embodied reflective response that is a necessary element of the *I-It* relation within Buber’s dialogical process. Its acceptance of poetic forms of writing opens possibilities beyond prose for presenting this relation. It also enables an acknowledgement that the subjective perspective is the lens through which this research is being presented beyond the actual words of the calabash breakers. Moreover, autoethnography, because it accepts poetic-writing techniques, allows a present-tense capturing of the “meetings” experienced across the research. This is significant, for academic scholarship prefers to speak in some form of the past tense and yet Kramer, explaining Buber, notes that “the living actuality of meeting always takes place in the present moment.

⁸⁸ Ellis, *The Ethnographic I*, xix.

⁸⁹ Carolyn Ellis and Arthur P. Bochner, “Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject,” in *Handbook of Qualitative Research, Second Edition*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2000), 739.

⁹⁰ Poetic and novel-writing techniques are also familiar tools for feminist scholars. Rebecca S. Chopp, *Saving Work: Feminist Practices of Theological Education* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 36.

⁹¹ Ellis, *The Ethnographic I*, 38.

That is, meeting *Thou* happens, and only after *Thou* becomes *It* do we speak of meeting in other verb tenses, as “having happened” or “had happened.”⁹²

James Spickard and Shawn Landres, both sociologists of religion, pointed out in 2002 that ethnographic work in religion in particular had barely begun to engage with methodological ideas such as autoethnography.⁹³ The dearth of books engaging specifically theological work with recent thinking in qualitative research suggests that this is also the case in Christian theological circles in the West.⁹⁴ Two studies that begin to approach it are American English professor Elaine Lawless’ *Holy Women, Wholly Women* and womanist theologian N. Lynne Westfield’s *Dear Sisters: A Womanist Practice of Hospitality*. Lawless developed what she calls “reciprocal ethnography” and Westfield specifically employs her poetic voice to reflect on material gained through participant observation.⁹⁵

Interestingly it is in the field of biblical studies that the closest work to autoethnography appears. Autobiographical biblical criticism has existed since at least the mid-1990s.⁹⁶ Words from Ingrid Kitzberger, an Austrian hermeneutist working in the field, who has justified, if rather hopefully, a dialogical relation with the biblical text approached from the perspective of the *I*, tie helpfully into the approach taken here:

Listening to each other’s voices and daring to speak with one’s own personal voice calls forth and engenders equality, justice, and respect...By acknowledging the subjectivity and otherness of oneself and of the others, speaking *with* others becomes possible and speaking *for* others is overcome in the process.⁹⁷

⁹² Kramer and Gawlick, *Martin Buber’s I and Thou*, 43.

⁹³ Spickard and Landres, “Introduction: Whither Ethnography?” 4.

⁹⁴ One of the only available books is: John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM, 2006).

⁹⁵ Elaine Lawless, *Holy Women, Wholly Women: Sharing Ministries through Life Stories and Reciprocal Ethnography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993). Reciprocal ethnography, it must be noted, draws from regular meetings with participants in the context of growing relationship. While the recording of “I” resonates with this research, it was just not possible to meet the participants more than once during the research period. Westfield, *Dear Sisters*.

⁹⁶ See for example, the seminal work: Janice Capel Anderson and Jeffrey L. Staley, eds., *Taking it Personally: Autobiographical Biblical Criticism*, in *Semeia: An Experimental Journal for Biblical Criticism* 72 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1995). Also, Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger, ed., *The Personal Voice in Biblical Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1999).

⁹⁷ Kitzberger, ed., *The Personal Voice*, 4. Autobiographical biblical criticism’s contention that it is possible to operate a dialogical relation with the biblical text complements Buber’s thinking around textual *I-Thou* relation briefly noted on page 27 of this thesis.

There is a caveat to the use of autoethnography. Autoethnography, as already mentioned, reflexively focuses on the place, story, and socio-politico-cultural context of the researcher within the research, on *I*. According to Buber, however, *I* always exist in relation, *I-It* and *I-Thou* (including, importantly for the Christian perspective, recognition of the relation to the “eternal *Thou*”) and so it is not sufficient to emphasise *I* over and above *It* or *Thou* as autoethnography prefers. Reality is fully dialogical.⁹⁸ The picture is thus more one of an active improvised counterpoint or a fugue: stories weaving together, equal elements relating one to the other in a developing conversation, just as individual melodic lines, harmonically related if often in a tensioned way, interweave to create an integrated musical piece.⁹⁹ Autoethnography enables a recording of the present “meetings” in the *I-Thou* relation from the perspective of *I*, and poetic and subjective reflection on them in the turning to the *I-It* relation, but it is unable to easily facilitate a (re)-turning to the *I-Thou* relation because that requires a committed focus on the other as well. At this point the emphases of grounded theory redress the balance in their concern to prioritise the voice of the *Thou* by allowing the researched, via their interview text, to speak again and again to the researcher through inductively derived codes.

Modified grounded theory

The pioneers of grounded theory, developed in the late 1960s, were Barney Glasser and Anselm Strauss. They eventually parted company and, because Strauss continued to explore the qualitative aspects of the method (as opposed to Glasser’s quantitative interests), his understandings and approach have proved more appropriate here than Glasser’s.

“A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the phenomenon it represents.”¹⁰⁰ Thus, data gathered teaches the researcher, rather than confirming or disproving a theory the researcher already holds. Similarly, literature referencing is not allowed to overwhelm the

⁹⁸ The hope in autoethnography is, however, that while the research focuses on the experience of the researcher, the reader, at least, will be drawn into the story and will thereby discover new meaning for him- or herself in a kind of passive dialogue. Ellis, *The Ethnographic I*, 135–38.

⁹⁹ The implications of this picture for realising genuine dialogue have been explored in much greater and more sophisticated depth by the Palestinian philosopher and critic, Edward Said. See especially: Kiyoko Magome, “Edward Said’s Counterpoint,” in *Paradoxical Citizenship: Edward Said*, ed. Silvia Nagy-Zekmi (Oxford: Lexington, 2006), 68–74. Compare Ruth Behar’s work of “contrapunteo” described in Ruth Behar, “Foreword,” in *Autobiographical Writing Across the Disciplines*, eds. Freedman, and Frey, xiv.

¹⁰⁰ Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 23.

research process.¹⁰¹ “Grounded theory questions...tend to be oriented towards action and process,” affirming reflection and praxis.¹⁰² Meanwhile, data collection and data analysis are seen as tightly woven processes, influencing each other and thereby causing a conversation that continually evolves from the data. That grounded theory offers a very systematic approach to these processes provides a valuable sense of rigour. Together, these features sit well with Buber’s underpinning interest in lived speech and its role in relation, the particular interest here in privileging the data of spoken communication, and Buber’s belief that *I* become through my engagement with *Thou*. They also rest well with Buber’s suggestion that dialogue can continue dialogically and imaginatively with “texts” as well as in the lived relation, yet, even more that, “the particular *It*, by entering the relational event, *may* become a *Thou*.”¹⁰³ Affirmed in the diagram of the spiralling figure is thus the notion that a continuing re-entering of the *I-Thou* and *I-It* can bring to light further dimensions of “meeting” and conversation. Grounded theory usefully helps to facilitate the turning to dialogue and mutuality but also contributes to the turning to the *I-It* relation in its concern for objectivity.

Grounded theory as promoted by Strauss does have its limitations, however. First, scientific objectivity on the part of the researcher is of paramount concern. However, as has been explained, it is important that *I* be present in an embodied sense within this research. Second, while grounded theory is committed to listening very seriously to the voices of the researched, in the presentation the expectation is that *It* will predominate. It is important here, however, that the researched be allowed their own voice in the write-up, and significantly so, not that they largely be written *about*. Grounded theory has much of value to offer, including its commitment to listening very seriously to the voices of the researched and asking questions of action and process, its penchant for interviews as a key instrument for data collection, its close interweaving of data collection and analysis with each able to inform the other across what is seen as an evolving process, its fundamental belief that theory should arise inductively from the data, and its rigorous process of analysis but

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 50ff.

¹⁰² Ibid., 38.

¹⁰³ Buber, *I and Thou*, 33.

because it also has limitations it has been necessary to employ it in a modified form and combined with other approaches.¹⁰⁴

Instruments and procedures for data collection

Primary data necessarily plays a significant role in this thesis, shaping the chapters that follow and determining the nature and scope of the literature consulted. The instruments and procedures used for data collection—alongside those for analysis and presentation—have been the result of a carefully evolving attempt to work authentically with the stated conviction of this thesis and the philosophical underpinning provided by Buber. This section (as well as the next two) provides a history of the practical decisions made.

In the very early stages of this research, most of the focus was on a commitment to hearing the voices of “others,” and so semi-structured interviews became the main instrument of data collection; that is, interviews consisting of three set, yet very open, questions and then following where the conversation led. The ethics application revolved around this decision and also a desire to conduct case studies of three institutions that were known to be committed to trying to be intercultural in their approach and who therefore offered a model to others. It soon became apparent, however, that conducting a formal case study was going to be impossible with one of the institutions, and also that the practicalities of operating what was being proposed—interviews with faculty and students and viewing documentation—would be too time-consuming. In a thoughtful moment a key advisor observed that new marginal people of the deeply reflective kind are actually quite rare. At that point the decision was made to interview only individuals and the already approved ethics application was suitably adapted.¹⁰⁵

As was mentioned in the previous section, the challenge of including the embodied presence of the researcher resulted in the addition of a reflexive element to the interviews—easily done within a semi-structured format—and the commencement of a research journal. Semi-

¹⁰⁴ This research will also not attempt to produce a particular ‘grounded theory’ as such as only the early stages of the method will be used here in the interests of allowing the interview material to raise questions and challenges pertinent for the context alongside evidence of the transformation they are beginning to inspire in the researcher.

¹⁰⁵ The paperwork covering the case study elements was not removed, partly to keep options open and partly because of the complicated nature of the ethics application process. In the event, however, just a few pages of the overall document remained relevant to the research actually carried out. These are included in Appendices I, II, and III.

structured reflexive interviews and a research journal have therefore comprised the “toolkit” for data collection.¹⁰⁶

While chapter eight’s study of McCormick Theological Seminary did not use the originally proposed case study approach, the thirteen individual interviews of faculty and staff that were undertaken, some written material received, and reflexive observation made of four classes and three chapel times do together offer a case to illustrate and discuss some of the implications of the thesis for an institution.¹⁰⁷

Ethics application

The Ethics Application submitted in the first year of the research was originally a substantial document, covering sixty-one pages. It was necessary to provide information to and obtain consent from the academic deans of the proposed case study institutions and then consent from nominated faculty and students to interview them after viewing the appropriate Participant Information Sheet. Also included were the information and consent forms for conducting interviews with individual academics not associated with the identified theological schools. These forms for individual academics subsequently became the only forms used across the research, including the McCormick interviews.

Anticipated ethical issues were that interviewees, henceforth identified as “calabash breakers”:

1. Not be pressured but voluntarily opt to participate in the research;
2. Be given the opportunity to opt to remain anonymous in the research and write-up and to this end understand that the transcriber would be the researcher herself and the recordings would be stored in a locked or password-protected place and destroyed upon submission of the PhD;
3. Be assured that their participation would not affect their position (if faculty) or their grades (if a student);

¹⁰⁶ Davidson and Tolich, eds., *Social Science Research*, 115.

¹⁰⁷ A “case” simply describes “an examination of a specific phenomenon such as...an institution...selected because it is an instance of some concern, [or] issue.” It is concerned to ask the “How” and “Why” questions. Sharan B. Merriam, *Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988), 9–10.

4. Have the right to refuse to be recorded, ask to have the recording stopped without needing to give a reason, and/or withdraw their material anytime up to two months after the interview
5. Indicate their desire, or not, to see the summary of findings, and
6. Feel free to respond using their mother tongue where it would be most appropriate for them, and Māori participants in particular be given all appropriate written information in Te Reo in order to respect the university's commitment to honouring the Treaty of Waitangi.¹⁰⁸

Ethics approval was granted on 11 March 2009, for three years.¹⁰⁹ A small amendment broadening some of the scope of the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form for the Individual Academic was sought in June 2009 in the light of the decision to use these forms only. The amendment was granted that same month. Appendix I contains the Participant Information Sheet for individual academics, Appendix II the Consent Form for individual academics, and Appendix III a copy of the original Interview Schedule.

Locating participants

According to Creswell, “purposeful selection of participants represents a key decision point in qualitative study.”¹¹⁰ This was certainly true here as the result of pre-reading, and especially the discovery of Lee's work, was the decision to specifically look for calabash breakers. As it proved, considerable effort was required to identify calabash breakers who were deeply reflective and appropriately experienced. The original hope was to interview students fitting this description as well as faculty, but after several such attempts fell through due to practical reasons, this was abandoned. That the interviews have all been conducted with people working as faculty members in various institutions has made it possible to consistently consider the thesis from the perspective of educators. Further work in this area could include listening to the voices of those on the receiving end of the educational enterprise.

Purposive sampling and snowballing techniques were employed to identify all of the individual academics that were interviewed, other than those from McCormick Theological

¹⁰⁸ Māori: Te Reo—the language. The one Māori who was interviewed decided to forego this option.

¹⁰⁹ Reference number 2009/040.

¹¹⁰ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions* (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998), 118.

Seminary. Some who were approached were heard presenting at a conference, had published in the area, or were academics of long-standing acquaintance. Others were recommended, most often by participants themselves, while a few were contacted on the suggestion of the academic dean or head of school of the two theological schools that did not end up participating as a case study. In the case of the two theological schools not participating as a case study, those recommended by the academic dean or head of school, and who indicated they were willing to participate, were approached. Initially, those who were judged by the researcher to have exhibited the characteristics of calabash breakers were approached by email or phone to inquire whether or not they would be willing to participate.¹¹¹ The majority of participants overall opted to be anonymous in the write-up, partly to enable a more honest response. A number of others chose not to remain anonymous and thus have been identified by name in the text.

Before the decision was made to abandon the institutional case studies, Professor David Esterline, the then Dean of Faculty and Vice Principal for Academic Affairs at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, extended a kind invitation to spend time there as a visiting scholar. He had been approached as a result of reading *Shaping Beloved Community: Multicultural Theological Education*,¹¹² edited by Esterline and his colleague Professor Ogbu Kalu, which told the story of McCormick's journey. It contained contributions from several faculty members. The later decision to interview only individual academics, which Esterline accepted, proved, as it turned out, more convenient and realistic. The visit, lasting from 21 September until 16 October, 2009, was kindly hosted by Esterline's successor, Professor Luis Rivera-Rodriguez. Rivera-Rodriguez recommended people on the faculty as possible participants, including himself. A description of the research and researcher was then emailed to those people. All responded positively. The first McCormick faculty member who was interviewed asked to be identified by name in the research and subsequent ones were also either keen or willing to be identified.

¹¹¹ Unfortunately in this research only one indigenous scholar was interviewed. The reason for this was due to a reliance on people who were willing to participate to recommend others and at that point parochialisms came into play. It is acknowledged that research beyond this thesis must seek out more indigenous voices, especially if it is to become even more useful for the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

¹¹² D. Esterline and O. Kalu, eds., *Shaping Beloved Community: Multicultural Theological Education* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006).

A total of thirty-seven individuals participated in this project. Thirteen of them were faculty from McCormick Theological Seminary in 2009. Of these, five were women and eight were men. Two were African American, two Latino, two Asian American, and the remainder were Americans of varying European descent.¹¹³ Of the other twenty-four participants, ten were women and fourteen were men: nine were of European descent¹¹⁴ and the others were Māori, Tongan, Indian, Ugandan, Egyptian, Lebanese Canadian, Korean Canadian, Latin@, Hispanic, African American and Asian American.¹¹⁵ Of all the calabash breakers interviewed, eight were Roman Catholic and twenty-nine were of varying Protestant persuasions from evangelical to liberal, mainline denominations to Pentecostal. The participants at the time of the interviews were located across England, Australia, Canada, the United States, and Aotearoa New Zealand. The majority of participants were drawn from the latter two countries because, in the case of the United States that is where most of the literature and discussion in regard to realising intercultural theological education is coming from and in the case of Aotearoa New Zealand it is the particular context this research is directed toward.¹¹⁶

Below is a more specific introduction to the calabash breakers whose voices are heard, by way of interview, in this research. It tries to respect the request by a number to remain anonymous. All the labels of those who are anonymous were self-chosen with some being deliberately vague, that is, not descriptive of the person's race or ethnicity, for varying reasons.

- Jenny Harrison—a “South African Pākehā” (her chosen title) who immigrated as an adult to Aotearoa New Zealand where she worked for many years as a midwife, nurse, and nurse-trainer. After attending theological college, she became a theological field education co-ordinator before serving as a parish priest. Harrison died of cancer in June 2010.
- Fumitaka Matsuoka—born in Japan, he immigrated to the United States when a young man. After theological training he spent three years teaching in a seminary in

¹¹³ Italian American, Anglo American, and German American.

¹¹⁴ South African, New Zealand Pākehā, Italian American, Anglo American, and English.

¹¹⁵ Use of Latin@ in this thesis is deliberate. This was the term used by several calabash breakers and McCormick Theological Seminary to denote Latino and Latina scholars in one word.

¹¹⁶ The journals of the ATS provide a particularly significant record of some discussion in the United States. See footnote 1. In Aotearoa New Zealand the Anglican and Methodist training colleges have, since the early 1990s, been wrestling with the question of realising particularly bicultural theological education.

Ambon, Indonesia, before returning to the United States where he has been involved on the faculty of various schools. He is also a significant voice in the ATS.

- Jenny Plane Te Paa—a Māori of Te Rarawa tribe, she is Te Ahorangi o Te Rau Kahikatea, the head of a Māori theological school within a denominational theological college in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her PhD thesis focused on realising bicultural theological education between Māori and Pākehā.
- Michel Andraos—born in Lebanon, he is a citizen of Canada and has lived and worked in six different countries. Currently an associate professor of intercultural studies and ministry in a large seminary in the United States.
- HyeRan Kim-Cragg—born in Korea, she did her post-graduate theological study in Canada and is currently a professor in pastoral theology in a seminary there.
- Anthony Gittins—born in England, he is a professor of mission and culture in a large seminary in the United States. Has conducted anthropological work for many years in Africa and the Central Pacific.
- Christopher Honoré—a Pākehā priest who lectures in a denominational college in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- John Hitchen—a New Zealander of European descent. A former principal of a theological college in Aotearoa New Zealand, where he continues to work as a lecturer, he also has extensive experience in theological education in Papua New Guinea.
- Latina—an experienced pastoral theologian in a seminary in the United States.
- Asian American man—a widely published scholar-theologian currently working in a theological school in the United States.
- Ugandan man—a biblical scholar who has studied at post-graduate level in several theological colleges in the West and has worked in a senior leadership role on the faculty of a theological school in Africa.
- Asian American woman—a theologian currently teaching in a seminary in the United States.
- Tongan man—a church planter and pastor who has studied in two countries in the West. Has also held leadership positions in theological colleges in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia.

- Pākehā woman—a practical theologian and ordained minister who has held various teaching and leadership positions within two theological schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- American woman—an associate professor in a seminary in the United States with many years of mission experience.
- Egyptian man—an ordained minister working in the area of multicultural ministries who completed his theological studies in the United States where he now resides.
- Latino—an associate professor of spirituality in a seminary in the United States.
- Italian American man—an associate professor of Islam in a seminary in the United States.
- wannabe Tongan man—a biblical scholar and ordained minister who has studied in Western institutions and currently lectures in a theological college in Australia.¹¹⁷
- Laywoman—a professor in the United States with extensive experience with the ATS.
- New Zealand woman—a missiologist with leadership experience in theological education in Aotearoa New Zealand and the United Kingdom.
- Indian woman—a biblical scholar who completed her post-graduate studies in the West and now is a professor operating between India and the West.
- Puerto Rican man—a theologian with extensive leadership experience in Western theological institutions across the United States.
- African American woman—an assistant professor in spiritual formation at a seminary in the United States.

McCormick Faculty (October 2009)

- Lib Caldwell—Associate Dean for Advising and Formation; Professor of Pastoral Theology
- Anna Case-Winters—Professor of Theology
- Robert Cathey—Professor of Theology
- Laura Cheifetz—Director of the Common Ground Project
- David Daniels III—Professor of Church History

¹¹⁷ This was the title the man asked be used in this research. It indicates something of his own sense of liminality.

- David Esterline—Director of the Institute for Cross-Cultural Theological Education; Associate Professor of Cross-Cultural Education and Ministry
- Ted Hiebert—Professor of Old Testament
- Deborah Mullen—Director of the Centre for African American Studies and Black Church Studies; Associate Professor of Ministry and Cultural Studies
- Gary Rand—Director of Worship
- Luis Rivera-Rodriguez—Professor of Theological Education; Dean of the Faculty; Vice-President for Academic Affairs
- Daniel Rodriguez-Diaz—Director of the Centre for Latin@ Theology and Ministries
- Christina Vogel—Dean of Students; Vice-President for Student Affairs
- Frank Yamada—Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible; Director of the Centre for Asian American studies

The interviews

Important to this research has been the collection of rich data. However, as most of the participants were very busy people, the decision was made to limit the interviews to one hour in length in order to enable them to participate. In the end, some gave more of their time than this. It was decided to trust that they would respond at profound levels from the outset because, even amongst the large group who have chosen to remain anonymous, many of these people have published in this area or related areas and are trained academics. Where possible, interviews were conducted face-to-face. Often published information about them or their own relevant research was read beforehand to facilitate a more personal focusing of the questions. With all those that could not be interviewed this way, there was an initial face-to-face meeting before a phone or Skype interview.

Each interview was recorded on a digital recorder to enable the conversation to flow easily and allow the researcher to note down further questions. The researcher alone worked on their transcription, maintaining the confidentiality agreed to in the ethics consent forms.

It quickly became apparent that those whose heritage was thoroughly Western would approach the topic differently from those whose heritage lay in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Oceania or a mixture.¹¹⁸ Accordingly, two separate sets of basic

¹¹⁸ See Appendix III for the original Interview Schedule.

questions corresponding to these two ethnic groups were developed out of the Interview Schedule approved by the Ethics Committee. The latter group was asked:

1. Could you please briefly tell me the story of your experience of Western theological education as a student and/or as faculty? What have been some key ways in which you have experienced marginalisation either in that context or in general life?
2. In what ways have those experiences influenced your theological thinking, spirituality, and praxis as an educator?
3. What is your vision for realising truly intercultural education in the West? What do you see are some of the challenges and how might they be addressed?

The questions to the former group were:

1. Could you please tell me your story of becoming conscientised to the margins? (personal experiences of marginalisation, key interactions with those marginalised)
2. In what ways have those experiences influenced your theological thinking, spirituality, and praxis as an educator?
3. What is your vision for realising truly intercultural education in the West? What do you see are some of the challenges and how might they be addressed?

As more and more interviews were conducted, further questions to those above arising from conversations with earlier participants were added as appropriate and as the conversation suggested. Sometimes comments that had been made by one participant were tested on another while still maintaining confidentiality. Assertions made by Lee were similarly tested as a way of checking the validity of his claims. There was thus a definite sense of evolution and of increasingly deeper engagement with the themes that seemed to be arising as further interviews were completed. Participants were offered the opportunity to comment on or edit their transcripts, something that few chose to do though most commented on the summary of findings and their part in it prior to submission of the completed PhD.

Whilst the compressed nature of the interview timetable was such that it was often not possible to transcribe whole interviews and begin analysis on them before conducting another, as grounded theory ideally requires, the fairly close proximity of most interviews to others—especially so in the case of the McCormick participants—kept the questions, reflections, and arising themes current. This was helped by noting in the research journal key

comments for evaluating or commentary by the next participant whose responses deemed whether they were appropriate to raise or not. The research journal also came to contain personal reflections on the interviews and on classes attended at McCormick. To a degree therefore, yet in a more informal manner than grounded theory would normally require, data collection and analysis were interweaving processes. The exact form that analysis has taken in this research is described below.

Process of analysis

In grounded theory, there are explicit and rigorous steps for the process of analysis that revolve around specific types of coding. Here open coding and axial coding have been employed. According to Strauss and Corbin:

Open coding...fractures the data and allows one to identify some categories, their properties, and dimensional locations. Axial coding [then] puts those data back together in new ways by *making connections between a category and its subcategories*...Here, we are not talking about the relating of several main categories to form an overall theoretical formulations [sic]...but the development of what will eventually become one of several main categories.

In axial coding our focus is on specifying a category (*phenomenon*) in terms of the conditions that give rise to it; the *context* (its specific set of properties) in which it is embedded; the action/interactional *strategies* by which it is handled, managed, carried out; and the consequences of those strategies. These specifying features of a category give it precision, thus we refer to them as *subcategories*.¹¹⁹

Ideally, this coding process would happen between one interview and the next, the categories arising from one informing the shape of the unstructured questions asked in the next. As has already been mentioned, this was not possible in this project due to the availability of academics; the inability to extend the time available for arranging interviews within the time constraints of the research trip to the United States, and hence the need to take advantage of as many interview opportunities as possible; and also because of a lack of understanding of grounded theory procedure in the very early stages of interviewing around what was required and therefore delay in conducting formal analysis.

¹¹⁹ Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 97.

In August of 2009, having conducted four interviews, time was spent gaining familiarity with grounded theory analysis procedures. The remaining interviews were therefore conducted with a greater appreciation of the process by which categories are enabled to inductively emerge from the collected data. Toward the end of the interviewing period four categories, or “areas,” emerged. All of the interviews—except those from McCormick—were then transcribed. In the process, further informal open coding was conducted that confirmed those four categories. Once the interviews had been transcribed, open and axial coding were formally conducted. During transcription and the coding process, autoethnography was also formally employed. Material from a literature review drawn from the writings and further recommendations of the calabash breakers, as well as some further reading inspired by the categories and subcategories—or areas and subsections—that had emerged during analysis, was then woven around the quotes chosen to appear in the final presentation. The whole process was then repeated with the McCormick interviews.

Presentation of the material

Conscious of the stated commitment to pay good attention not only to objective analysis but also to subjective reflection and the voice of the *Thou*, as argued for above, some key stylistic decisions were made concerning the final presentation of the research. At the macro level, it was decided that this thesis would weave together: analysis that drew on further reading as inspired by the coded interview data and that would be written in the generally accepted academic style of objective reporting and critique; subjective reflection that would be written in a more poetic form; and the voice of the *Thou* in the form of material directly quoted from the interviews. Within these presentation styles, micro decisions were then made. Words coming from other languages were written in plain type throughout the thesis to reflect the commitment to treating others with equal respect. Words of calabash breakers from the United States appeared in American spelling. Subjective reflection was written with single spacing and for the most part was indented in order to clearly indicate where this occurred.¹²⁰ It also followed the more flexible rules of poetic convention with regard to formatting, grammar, and punctuation. Material directly quoted from the interviews of the calabash breakers appeared within quotation marks. In order to continue the desire to treat

¹²⁰ An exception to this is the poetic piece at the end of chapter one. There the format works to visually complement the subject matter.

them as equal partners in this research, it was decided to format their words in plain type with no indenting. To respect the integrity of the calabash breakers, and to allow something of their personas to appear in these pages, it was decided not to correct any grammatical issues in their responses, though as scholars in their written work they would normally do so. Any changes that occurred were the result of their specific request to do so.¹²¹ Finally, the use of dots was used to indicate either places where a person trailed off or left a sentence incomplete, or places where text was removed in order to strengthen the impact of points made, or because its presence would have compromised the anonymity of the speaker.

Summary

This chapter began by exploring the work of Buber, which provides useful philosophical glue for the chosen methodological approach. The reasons for the choice to work in the macro setting of qualitative methodology and, more specifically, the reasons for the decision to use semi-structured reflexive interviews, a research journal, autoethnography, and modified grounded theory alongside each other, were then given. While grounded theory provides a valuable privileging of the voice of the researched, autoethnography empowers the voice of the researcher: together with interviews and a research journal, they offer a context in which Buber's dialogical relations *I-Thou* and *I-It* can be facilitated and modelled and thus the afore-stated conviction of this thesis enacted and embodied. The instruments used in data collection were then detailed before a description was given of the process of data collection itself. The analytical method was next described. Finally, the stylistic decisions made around presenting the research were noted.

The following chapters will detail the findings arising from the use of this methodology. Chapter three begins by mapping the terrain.¹²²

¹²¹ Each of the calabsh breakers was given the opportunity to check and, if necessary, edit their comments.

¹²² "Mapping the terrain": a phrase drawn from bell hooks, in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 130.

Chapter Three: Mapping the Terrain

Words from bell hooks usefully open the discussion:

It is fashionable these days, when “difference” is a hot topic in progressive circles, to talk about “hybridity” and “border crossing,” but we often have no concrete examples of individuals who actually occupy different locations within structures, sharing ideas with one another, mapping out terrains of commonality, connection, and shared concern with teaching practices.

To engage in dialogue is one of the simplest ways we can begin as teachers, scholars, and critical thinkers to cross boundaries...

Teaching to Transgress, 1994.¹²³

I read these words
words of transgression
seventeen years old
and want to tell
bell hooks
that here am I
today
doing my small part
to try to seek out individuals
(the calabash breakers)
cross boundaries
map out terrains
by hearing
ideas and concerns
plotting connections
theme by theme
and exploring concrete practices
as a learner
a dialogical teacher
scholar
and critical thinker.
I'd love this
to be fashionable.

¹²³ Ibid.

Words on sketching the first lines

hooks' vision is for a community of scholar-practitioners, committed to working with the rich possibilities of difference, to be deliberately and carefully documenting their sharing of ideas, mapping out terrains of common values and experience, and thereby resourcing for all the crossing of boundaries. The research presented here, a small contribution to this vision, is the result of one individual approaching experienced educators across a range of contexts and locations, becoming, for a moment, their point of connection, engaging dialogically (if in a limited way) with their convictions.

Many of these educators have never met each other. Several of them are part of collegial networks of their own, though not always within the same institution.

The topics covered ranged far beyond the scope of the basic interview questions and it quickly became apparent that the ideas and concerns being entrusted were deeply personal and often political and needed to be handled with respect and care. The Latina theologian agreed:

“Basically you are dealing with those who have been minoritised, that are not necessarily minorities but they've been minoritised and treated as minorities. So you're probably getting way more than you thought you'd get in part because nobody asks, alright? Part of what you're getting is because we don't get asked. And these are conversations that if folks are talking to you and they're being brutally honest with you—”

“They are being honest.”

“So in some sense it's like sacred stuff that gets privileged and entrusted. In that way it's like, okay what are you going to do with it all? And part of it is not necessarily to knock the socks off of whomever, but even that those sort of voices are giving permission in an act of trust, that's kind of key.”

it is sacred stuff then
even today
not the sort of thing
the majority are yet concerning themselves with
enough
and it is right that I take care

“Points of commonality, connection, and shared concern”¹²⁴

Analysis of the primary data has revealed a common theme running across the interviews: the calabash breakers are all concerned to see that formation is prioritised in education.¹²⁵ Any education that values deep engagement with the o/Other and, moreover, seeks to bring transformation as a result, must be concerned not so much with the accumulation of factual knowledge—what one *knows*—but with whom one *becomes* in the process of learning and therefore what one does with what one knows. This kind of thinking is found in the work of such influential educationalists as the Brazilian Paulo Freire and Jack Mezirow from the United States.¹²⁶ It is also important in feminist scholarship.¹²⁷ In this context, however, reflection on, and initial informal analysis of the interviews of the calabash breakers revealed four areas of particular concern that impact the individual (faculty member or student), classroom pedagogy, professional practices, curriculum, and institutional structure, and colour the kind of formation they consider is needed if theological education is to become truly intercultural. These areas are: caring for identity; listening to silenced voices; experiencing epistemic ruptures; and dismantling discrimination.

It happened that
 as I drove away from
 meeting my supervisor,
 who had said
 “Write me your thesis plan,”
 though I had objected and said
 my head was too full of
 the things I had heard
 and I couldn’t possibly
 sort it,
 at the first red light intersection
 Identity
 suddenly
 came into my mind
 and I grabbed for a scrap of paper

¹²⁴ To borrow from hooks’ quote.

¹²⁵ The structured questions developed for this research assumed, like the hermeneutical approach of Lee, that one’s formation (evidenced in autobiography) gives rise to one’s theology and praxis. Consequently it may seem that the particular emphasis on formation described here was pre-determined but it was noticeable across the full texts of the interviews how often the calabash breakers themselves returned to this.

¹²⁶ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (London: Penguin, 1993). Mezirow pioneered Transformational Learning Theory. See especially, Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

¹²⁷ For examples from feminist scholarship see “Engaged Pedagogy,” from hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 13–22. Also feminist theologian Chopp, *Saving Work*, 110f.

and quickly jotted it down
before the light could change.
At the second
Listening to Silenced Voices
at the third
Epistemic Ruptures
at the fourth
Dismantling Discrimination.
There.
The o/Others have spoken
and this is what I have heard.
Four red lights
asking that I stop
and take notice
if I am to live
at the crossings.

Chapters four through seven of this thesis will, in turn, closely explain and examine each of the four areas of commonality, connection and concern for the calabash breakers. Chapter eight will explore and discuss the issues of their application as experienced by a particular theological institution, McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. It is important to note that while chapter divisions give the impression that these areas are discrete from each other, they in fact spiral in and out, informing each other and together speaking to all levels of institutional life.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ It is very important to note here the work of Jack A. Hill, Associate Professor of Religion at Texas Christian University. He conducted a year-long collaborative research project looking at teaching for diversity and justice across 2006-2007 using a method he called “autocritical liberatory ethnography.” This involved conducting in-depth, open-ended interviews with faculty of colour and class observations in twenty universities across the United States, as well as assembling a peer group of scholars who were “other” as part of an ongoing interactive reflection process on the themes arising. In this work a priority for caring for identity and social location, and helping students acknowledge the reality of oppression and prejudice are spoken of as being vital. While Hill’s work is specifically asking what can be done in the classroom to address these things in pedagogy and assessment (whereas the calabash breakers in this research considered contexts ranging from the individual to the institutional and beyond) it provides an important affirmation of some of what will be said in this thesis: “borderlands” or “new marginal” people beyond those interviewed here are thinking similarly. Jack A. Hill, “Fighting the Elephant in the Room: Ethical Reflections on White Privilege and Other Systems of Advantage in the Teaching of Religion,” *Teaching Theology and Religion* 12, no. 1 (2009): 3–23.

Chapter Four: Caring for Identity

“I’m the other for the other. Can I recognize myself?”

Luis Rivera-Rodriguez, in an interview

“If we cannot make something out of what we are, out of what we know, how shall we cease to colonize others? What else today but whatever wisdom we discover in our own lives do we have to give them?”

Nicole Ward Jouve, *White Woman Speaks with Forked Tongue*.¹²⁹

Caring for identity, one of the areas that emerged from the interviews of the calabash breakers as a means towards realising truly intercultural theological education, is here presented first. This is because of the essential nature, theologically and anthropologically, of the question “Who am I?” It is argued that attempting to answer this question will help a person not only to appreciate and empower him- or herself but to also, out of that, grow a grace margin that welcomes the other in all honesty and justice. Never lived outside of our relationships with others, identity is complex, fluid and political. Ensuring that we care for it involves continually challenging our assumptions and prejudices, our theologising, and our way of living. It is, however, in the opinion of the calabash breakers interviewed here, as well as of others speaking through published material, an area to which not enough attention has been paid in Western theological education over the years.

Discovering identity

Three of the calabash breakers, in particular, pondered long the importance of discovering and knowing one’s self and of having that acknowledged and encouraged in the theological educational setting. Their reflections resonated with the work of several writers. Drawing from their thinking, this section considers the question “Who are you?,” the statement “Where you stand is what you see,” and the assertion that identity always exists in relationship.

¹²⁹ Jouve, *White Woman Speaks with Forked Tongue*, viii.

Who are you?

With a body bent by the cancer which would, only a few months later, claim her life, but with eyes that were clear and a voice that was warm and steady and sure, Harrison firmly declared, “My first question is ‘Who are you?’ Tell me who you are.”

It is immanently justifiable to give priority to this question. According to Clive Pearson, himself calling on the work of the German martyr-theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “Who are you?” is the counter question inside the “pivotal Christological question” of the synoptic gospels that Jesus asked of his disciples: “But who do you say that I am?” (Matt. 16:15; Mk. 8:29; Lk. 9:20).¹³⁰ The response to Jesus’ question will reveal not only the depth and breadth of a person’s understanding of and faith in him but also tell much about his or her own sense of identity, self-understanding and willingness to engage. In this particular incident, the disciple Simon Peter revealed with the help of the Spirit, his understanding that Jesus was the Son of God—a significant insight for a Jew—and thereby his developing identity as one following a new path. Jesus’ response, according to Matthew’s gospel, was to congratulate him and give him responsibilities that called him to deepen his understanding further.¹³¹ “This core question is [therefore] not one you or I have imagined out of nowhere. It is embodied: it is particular. [And, Clive Pearson notes,] Its location lies inside a doctrine of the Incarnation.”¹³² It is therefore not only an obvious anthropological question but also a crucial theological question-within-a-question.¹³³

This question-within-a-question has not, however, been a common one in theological education in the West because the personal voice has generally been denied in favour of universal statements. Truth, it has been believed, is supra-cultural, value-free and able to be objectively known. Personal human experience, past and present, as it informs our response to Jesus’ question to us, has by and large been considered irrelevant to the theological

¹³⁰ Clive Pearson, “Si(Gh)Ting Christ,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson, (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 53, 57.

¹³¹ Matt. 16:16–19.

¹³² Pearson, “Making Room,” 128.

¹³³ For a work exploring identity from an anthropological perspective see Anthony P. Cohen, *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1994). This book, interestingly, grapples with the expectation that anthropologists only ask the question “Who are you?” of those whom they research and not of themselves. It presents an interesting and complimentary study to this work here, not least in its acknowledgement of the importance of understanding identity formed in the context of relationship (q.v. 50ff of this thesis).

enterprise.¹³⁴ Daniel Patte, an Anglo American biblical scholar, is one who has mourned the loss of the “personal voice I was trained to silence in my...work” in the interests of becoming “as ‘critical’ and ‘objective’ as possible [in order to offer an]...appropriation of the biblical teachings for today that would be...legitimate and...relevant.”¹³⁵ While he came to accept and believe in this silencing as necessary for good biblical scholarship, it did leave him conscious that potentially valuable passions, questions and concerns he brought from his Huguenot heritage were thereby being lost. According to the Dutch Catholic priest and writer, Henri Nouwen, losing contact with such sources produces people who are “strangers in our own house” and alienated from the real issues of life.¹³⁶

This separation of personal experience from scholarship, and a preoccupation with the universal over the particular, has been challenged in the last forty years by the rise of contextual theologies. However, as Anglo American theologian, Kevin Vanhoozer, noted in 2007, the belief in the West that there is “one rule to rule them all” still persists and so the cultural monopoly of an approach to theology that universalises, and in that totalises, continues in the life of colleges and seminaries.¹³⁷

The failure to ask “Who are you?” has not only resulted over the years in a silencing of personal voice but also, as Malaysian theologian, Hwa Yung, has noted, in the disappointing experience of having the deep questions of one’s context ignored and left unaddressed. In the experience of Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, a Puerto-Rican American assistant professor of religious education, it has resulted in finding the gifts of one’s person rendered invisible and thus impotent, unable to engage with or influence others for good.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ On truth, see Nancey Murphy, *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism: How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 11–13. On personal human experience, see Stephen Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Revised and expanded ed. (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002), 3–4.

¹³⁵ Daniel Patte, “The Guarded Personal Voice of a Male European-American Biblical Scholar,” in *The Personal Voice in Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger (London: Routledge, 1999), 13–15.

¹³⁶ Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Creative Ministry* (New York: Image, 1971), 11, also 9–10.

¹³⁷ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “One Rule to Rule Them All? Theological Method in an Era of World Christianity,” ed. Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland (Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), 91. For more on the challenge of contextual theologies see, for example, Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1998), 1–4. Schreiter’s definition of “totalizes” is that it “entails a suppression of difference and a claim to be the sole voice” (ibid., 4).

¹³⁸ Hwa, *Mangoes or Bananas? The Quest for an Authentic Asian Christian Theology*, ix. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, S. Steve Kang, and Gary A. Parrett, *A Many Colored Kingdom: Multicultural Dynamics for Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 26–27.

The denial of identity has been a particularly acute experience for second generation migrants, already struggling to know where they belong culturally—whether the culture of their immigrant parents or the dominant culture of the land of their birth. They can subsequently feel ill-equipped to answer Jesus’ question at all and, at least within Oceania, have only recently begun exploring this theologically. The pioneering work of Risatisone Ete, a New Zealand-born Samoan, is a good example.¹³⁹

The question “Who are you?” is not, therefore, only important for speaking faith in Jesus Christ, but also for validating personhood, the questions arising from context, and the potential contributions individuals can offer. To this Harrison, from her experience as a white person whose childhood context was apartheid in South Africa, would add that it is also a crucial ingredient in growing one’s ability to engage with others. “When you know who you are then you can imagine that someone is different to you.”

Where you stand is what you see

“It goes back to a statement I make, ‘Where you stand is what you see.’ I’d grown up with where I stood was what I saw. I didn’t notice injustice...If I don’t know who I am I don’t even look beyond myself...And if I am looking beyond myself I don’t know how I’m looking or what I’m looking with.

“You know, [as a child] I looked with eyes that had grown-ups saying Black people were inferior and so anything I did to help was because they were inferior...It was because I had something that they didn’t, which is a model of working that exists and I think unless that model changes the system is stuffed. You know, yes I may have something more than you but I need to see that I have something I can offer you. You don’t have to accept it from me.

“It’s different if I’ve looked at who I am. I know my boundaries. I know where I begin and end. And then I also know how I interface with you, as a woman, as a person of another culture, as a person of other faith, as a person of other lived experience...I’m not going into a situation thinking that I’m okay and you’re not. I’m going into a situation as a formed identity meeting another formed identity—or forming identity...I think the more we get to know ourselves and where we stand the more open we become to others.”

¹³⁹ Risatisone B. Ete, “A Bridge in My Father’s House,” (unpublished B.D. dissertation, University of Otago, Dunedin, 1996). Also Ete, “Christ the Vale,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 80–87.

Harrison's words, and the life story that underpins them, finds echoes in Buber's statement. that the "great treasure, which may be called the fulfilment of existence," is to be found in "the place on which one stands."¹⁴⁰ For him such treasure was not simply a case of learning one's own story but of self-discovery and thence fulfilment in the context of dialogical relation with the *Thou*. Harrison commented that her own understandings came about through a number of direct challenges from marginalised others across her life that taught her that speaking or acting on behalf of or even for others, even with the best of intentions, in fact silences them. Hers was the responsibility to get to know her own forming identity intimately and that, in turn, enabled her to meet and join with others in humility and justice, aware of her own limitations and thus actually more open to engaging with theirs.

This attitude is familiar to feminist standpoint epistemologies, which reject any assumptions that "there is a single ideal knower and that [they]...can know or describe one true and final correct representation of reality."¹⁴¹

For feminists
 however
 "he" is guilty of such monologue.
 Harrison's words and story remind me that
 I, a woman,
 can be guilty too.
 I also need to embrace
 the humility of self-knowledge.
 Eye-of-God monologue
 spoken on behalf of, or to, whomever is
 a temptation to scholarly sin.
 We are not God.
 I am not God.

But wait a minute
 as I read scripture
 not even God-in-Christ
 operated an omniscient monologue
 and he was all about justice.¹⁴²

It is worth noting that Harrison's prioritising of the question "Who are you?" is explained from her perspective as one who comes from a dominant cultural paradigm and who has personally discovered the lessons that particularity and concrete experience of it inspires.

¹⁴⁰ Buber, *The Way of Man*, quoted in Kramer and Gawlick, *Martin Buber's I and Thou*, 1.

¹⁴¹ Ezzy, *Qualitative Analysis*, 20.

¹⁴² See, for example, Mk. 7:24–30; 10:46–52; Lk. 7:1–10.

She also has asked it of others as an educator holding power.¹⁴³ For those with their roots in a marginalised, powerless or relatively powerless paradigm, however, “Who are you?” is an important question for other reasons. Gary Riebe-Estrella, a Latino theologian, offers the following from his perspective:

Why has identity been so important to U.S. Latino/as? Because personal agency begins with the ability to name oneself and so to define who one is in the face of the other...Latino/a theologians have to be securely planted in their own sense of who they are. Otherwise our reflections are reactions to a world framed by the dominant group.¹⁴⁴

This suggests then that while asking “Who are you?” as the first question within theological education could, for those of the dominant paradigm, as Harrison discovered, inspire humility, honesty and justice in one’s interactions with others, for those who are pushed to the margins and/or powerless, it can empower them to define themselves, and to define themselves positively.

Identity formed by relationship

An important further consideration recalling Buber is suggested by Riebe-Estrella’s use of the plural “our”: identity needs to be defined in the context of relationship. For the Asian American woman this concept was crucial. “Far from being an isolated individual, our identity is really in our relatedness. So then [you need to ask] how do you relate to each other, both similar[ities] and difference?” This emphasis of hers is not surprising for, according to Jung Young Lee, “In Asia...‘I’ and ‘we’...are synonymous. I am is ‘pluralistic’...It is pluralistic because it is relational. The story of my life is the story of many lives. In Asia we-are takes precedence over I-am, because the latter is always relative to the former.”¹⁴⁵ Likewise, in Africa a saying puts it: “I am because we are.” Similarly, in Oceania, fa’a Samoa teaches Samoans responsibility to the community, its values and traditions, over personal interests.¹⁴⁶ Meanwhile in Māori culture the frequent reciting and

¹⁴³ Across these chapters “educator” will be used to describe the faculty member, as opposed to “teacher,” quotes excepting. While “educator” is problematic in that an argument is being made that students are also to be seen as educators, the egalitarian nature of the term is more in keeping with the stance of this thesis.

¹⁴⁴ Gary Riebe-Estrella in Nanko-Fernandez, *Theologizing En Espanglish*, ix.

¹⁴⁵ Lee, *Marginality*, 8.

¹⁴⁶ Risatisone B. Ete, “Ugly Duckling, Quacking Swan,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 46.

ownership of whakapapa—geneology and accompanying stories—that includes connection to features in the landscape of one’s birth as well as to ancestors, spiritual and human stretching back generations, is a significant means for developing a deep sense of connection. Thus for many cultures, the notion of identity being defined in relationship is embedded in their thinking.¹⁴⁷ An outcome of this basis for identity is the development of a collective memory, which is the particular starting point the Asian American woman uses as she discusses identity with her students and seeks to help them engage interculturally. “Some people say you have a collective memory, but you don’t *have* one, you’re part of one. It’s bigger than you. It’s not something that you can control and contain. [So] how do you relate to your collective memory? Or how do you recognize that you are part of a collective memory?”

The sense of being part of a community, history and memory that is bigger than you or your immediate family and that cannot be contained is not something Western individualistic thinking necessarily understands, appreciates, or promotes in its preference for the independent and immediate.¹⁴⁸ It is something it must grapple with however, if true appreciation leading to meaningful intercultural engagement with all is to be achieved.¹⁴⁹ Standpoint epistemologies, in arguing that all knowledge is situated, meanwhile defy any suggestion that is possible to know, say, or act upon anything divorced from context and heritage and their political implications.

Identity defined in relationship and situated in collective memory brings with it responsibility. At this point, as one seek answers to the question “Who are you?” the metaphor of pilgrimage, offered by the Asian American woman, and long a part of Christian journeying, is useful. As she put it, “Pilgrimage has a lot to do with meaning, memory, practice, solidarity.” She went on to add that, “whatever gift you’re given in that experience then calls forth a promise in you. You don’t just go [into it] to get something for yourself.” In other words, pilgrimage calls for a promise to act on what we discover as our engagement,

¹⁴⁷ See Shinobu Kitayama and Hazel Markus, “Culture and Self: How Cultures Influence the Way We View Ourselves,” in *People: Psychology from a Cultural Perspective*, ed. David Matsumoto (Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole, 1995), 18–19.

¹⁴⁸ For an examination of the contrast between independent thinking, typical of Western cultures, and interdependent thinking, typical of the majority of world cultures, see *ibid.*, 17–37.

It is important to recognise that there are cultural groups that would technically be described as Western which, it can be argued, operate more of a collective understanding of identity—Irish Catholics, for example.

¹⁴⁹ This call to a broader understanding of identity is not a renewed call to a kind of universality but simply recognition that particularity is embedded in, and shaped by, historical and cultural community.

particularly with our historical others, challenges our understanding of who we are in the present. This was true for at least one other interviewee, Honoré, as, in search of his identity, he took his own pilgrimage into the collective memory of his family and particularly their stories of encounters with Māori others. His narrative offers a useful illustration.

Honoré said, “When I got in my thirties...I began to ask myself ‘Where do I belong as a New Zealander?’ I’m Pākehā, I’m male and yet I live in a place where there is a whole other culture and a whole other language system...I’d always been described and described myself as a European. But I’m not a European. I belong somehow in the Pacific. So how does one get to be whole and complete and planted here? That was a big quest. So I started a degree in history...and that degree had a minor of Māori studies...Having a missionary heritage, knowing that there had been people in my family for several generations that had been Māori speakers, kind of impelled me to just make the decision to belong here...[However] I had to try to create for myself a sense of what is the story that is attendant upon my family’s arrival here, and of course there were many families so there are many stories. Some of them were Māori-friendly and others are so totally settler it’s a bit embarrassing to remember them. At least...one set of families came because they were part of the Imperial Army that was called in for the Taranaki Wars [fought against Māori].” As he wrestled with these complex contradictions in his family’s past, Honoré decided that in his own story it was his responsibility, in the context of a country and church trying to be better at being bicultural, to claim the Māori-friendly side of his wider family’s collective memory, learn Te Reo, and become more intentionally crosscultural in his ministry.

As I listen
 I am intrigued by
 the effect of this man’s pilgrimage
 for it seems to have gifted him
 a certain internal spaciousness
 an ability to make room for the other
 precisely because
 he knows who he is.
 He is comfortable in his own skin
 despite of
 because of
 the complexities of his story.
 He has grappled with them
 acted on the responsibility
 they called for

and grown home.

This is true, in fact,
of all whom I have interviewed
and
I feel they are offering me a welcome
a shared power and presence in conversation
as a result.
There is space for me
precisely because they know who they are
and where they stand.
Even more intriguingly
spending time with them
is calling this same generosity
out in me.

Harrison is a case in point
though to her sense of self
has been added
a further pilgrimage as she walks the liminal space
between mortality and eternity.
It lends her speech
poignancy
power
urgency.
I hear Christ in her
and walk the streets afterwards
with a bigger heart
noticing others
interested
no longer fenced in by a need to protect my small self
from others
who do not look like me.

The grace margin

It is worth pondering further this link between an acknowledgement and exploration of identity, and growing an internal spaciousness that welcomes the o/Other. Eric Law, a Chinese American priest and consultant in multicultural leadership, has called this space the “grace margin.”¹⁵⁰ His writing focuses on organisations but easily translates to the individual. As Figure 3 illustrates, if a person does not have a strong sense of his or her identity, their need to feel safe will result in them growing a very strong exclusion

¹⁵⁰ Eric H. F. Law, *Inclusion: Making Room for Grace* (St Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000), 43.

boundary.¹⁵¹ Immediately lying beyond the exclusion boundary that encloses the perceived safe space, will be the “fear zone:” a place we do not want to go; a place of perceived threat.¹⁵² “This narrow space between the safe zone and the fear zone provides little room or time to negotiate, explore or engage in dialogue” with others.¹⁵³

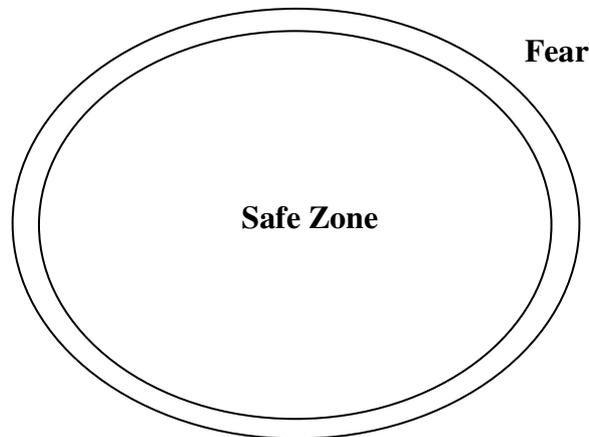


Fig. 3. Exclusive Boundary Function

In the opinion of Amartya Sen, an Indian economist, if we choose to reinforce the exclusion boundary the solidarity that we feel with those who are like us will help to feed discord with those who are not.¹⁵⁴ By contrast, if an individual is given (or takes) the opportunity to have his or her boundary extended and stretched, Law says that time and space is then created “in which to consider other points of view, assumptions and values” and grow the distance between the safe zone and the fear zone, what he calls the grace margin (Figure 4).¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 19. Figure 3 has been adapted slightly from that presented by Law.

¹⁵² Mezirow has observed that “Experience strengthens our personal meaning system by refocusing or extending our expectations about how things are supposed to be. We allow our meaning system to diminish our awareness of how things really are in order to avoid anxiety, creating a zone of blocked attention and self-deception. Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, 5.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 19.

¹⁵⁴ Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006). See also Letty M. Russell, *Just Hospitality: God’s Welcome in a World of Difference* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 21. She adds that in order to create safe havens churches can be guilty of “misusing theological teachings” to justify their exclusion of “those who don’t fit.”

¹⁵⁵ Law, *Inclusion*, 42–43. Figure adapted slightly from that presented by Law on page 43 of his book.

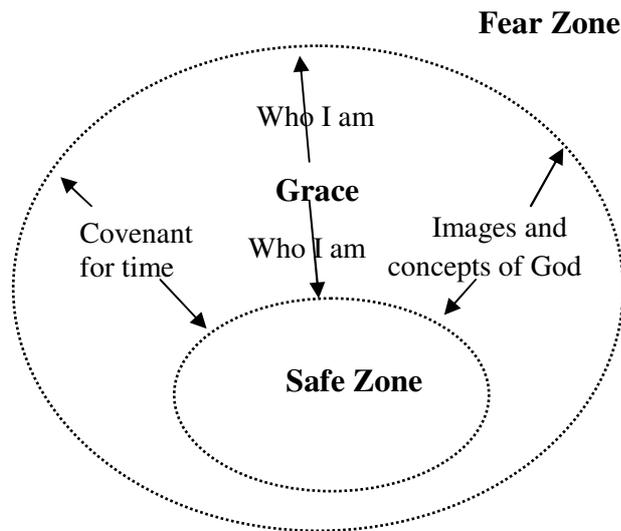


Fig. 4 Inclusive Boundary Function

One of the means by which we can grow the grace margin, Law suggests, is by carefully articulating who we are and who we are not. To this, he adds exploring and enlarging our images and concepts of God by praying, storytelling and studying scripture with others. As well as affirming that identity is lived in relationship, this reminds us that we cannot afford to leave the eternal *Thou* out of our collective memory-making, past, present or future. This is a very important point to signpost here. All talk in this chapter of identity and identity-in-relation must not be considered apart from the bigger faith story that we inhabit. As stated earlier in the chapter, the question “Who are you?” is set inside Christ’s question “But who do you say that I am?” We are in the business of *theological* education and our interaction with God, as individuals and communities, needs to be foundational.

Law points out that praying, storytelling and studying scripture with others are methods that Christ himself used as he invited people into fullness of life (for example, Jn. 4:1-30; Lk. 10:25-37; Jn. 17).¹⁵⁶ As a result of practising these, Law says that our exclusion boundary will gradually become more permeable and inclusive, allowing greater space for grace. The paradox that people often do not understand until they experience it, however, is that increasing the permeability and flexibility of this boundary does not result in loss of identity but a strengthening of it. As for the grace margin, it “keeps us from moving into the fear zone too quickly and making judgements without considering any other perspectives. The

¹⁵⁶ Another method worth adding to the list is actions like those Christ practised, most notably table fellowship.

grace margin provides time and space for us to maintain an openness to explore—to listen, discover and reflect.”¹⁵⁷

These words bring to mind an observation made by Kim-Cragg in interview: “in the Western culture something uneasy is not really welcomed.” If this is correct, there would be a need for those institutions whose culture is Western to deliberately commit to providing caring opportunities for faculty and students to extend their grace margins. This would involve encouraging them to ask “Who are you?,” to undertake the pilgrimage it will require and accept the attendant responsibilities, to engage in deep and self-critical reflection, and to risk more. A rigorous, formational subjectivity-in-community would therefore be required if theological education is to become truly intercultural.

The logical next quest then becomes to facilitate care for identity with a view towards growing the grace margin in the classroom, an obvious site for connection and engagement in a theological institution.

Growing the grace margin in the classroom

First of all
I know
that I cannot ask of another
what I am not prepared to do myself
especially in the classroom.
I am learning not to hate
the vulnerability of it.

When I choose to be
true to who I am
open
transparent
there
I am discovering
is grace
...but
it is often to be found
hanging on a cross.

Facilitating care for identity in the interests of growing the grace margin must begin with the educator because it will require a shift away from the approach to knowledge still typically

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 43.

taken in theological institutions in which educators are the key protagonists. Particularity challenges universalism. The all-knowing banker-dictator, to borrow words from hooks and Freire, will need to become a vulnerable learner-educator willing to explore the idea that identity in relationship fundamentally shapes and influences their whole approach, including their epistemology and their hermeneutics.¹⁵⁸ This will require of educators not only that they be actively committed to growing their self awareness but also that they be willing to be transparent about their own particular worldview and identity and thus the elements that contribute to their agenda. In his own research looking at diversity in the classroom, Jack Hill, a lecturer in religion from the United States, reflected that it is vital that educators become people who know their social selves if they are to model critical pedagogy for their students.¹⁵⁹ Westfield has noted that modelling in this way constitutes a risk but it is necessary because, she believes, it is vital to ensuring “responsiveness and reciprocity.”¹⁶⁰ If, therefore, in the bid to realise intercultural theological education, an educator is going to demand from his or her students the personal honesty that taking care for identity requires, it is best, as hooks has suggested, if they go first, exemplifying their expectations of engagement and vulnerability.¹⁶¹

The Latina is upfront with her students about the influence of her identity on their classes. “Automatically I’ve had to always situate my theology. So that is my assumption from the beginning. I’m not coming to you blank and here’s [a particular theologian]...untouched by anybody’s hands. These are the things that have influenced and have shaped this class because I’m your teacher and this person...When I am teaching you I am coming out of a certain interpretive lens that has shaped what I’m doing but I can show you that I’ve listened to these other lenses.” Honesty about that lens models what she then asks of her students: a concern for their own story and context as well as for those of the authors with whom they are engaging.

“So...there are certain starting points I will have: ‘What’s your context? What’s your story? [Then] every class...always begins with...‘What’s your social location? What grounds it? What shapes how you will engage the materials in this class?’...[And] you have to demonstrate you knew, or thought you knew what the person was saying but then

¹⁵⁸ hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 18. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 53.

¹⁵⁹ Hill, “Fighting the Elephant in the Room,” 8.

¹⁶⁰ Westfield, *Dear Sisters*, 125.

¹⁶¹ hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 21.

[explore]... ‘So how does this relate to your context, and might relate by not relating? ...They’ll say ‘Let’s talk about the text.’ And I’ll say, ‘What’s the social location of the author of the text? You’ve just read this whole thing. You didn’t bother to find out he was like born and raised in Germany during the Holocaust?’ It’s like how do you understand Benedict if you don’t understand World War II?...[It’s recognising that] part of it is like an autobiographical piece that doesn’t say one story is meaningless but recognizes every time we’re telling it we’re making another interpretive move, what we tell, how we tell it...There’s no such thing as totally objective scholarship. All scholarship is subjective and autobiographical at some level.”

For both students and educators, a turn towards contextual and personal particularity places more responsibility on their shoulders as they engage with the subject material. The fundamental challenge, as the Latina said, however, is “getting students to be able to realize that they too come from contexts [that influence them], and to get some faculty to realize that [also].¹⁶²...Here in the United States if you ask somebody who’s not coming from some ethnicized or minoritized community who they are, they’re going to tell you, ‘I’m white and middle class and, you know, I come from Philadelphia.’...So how do we get our students who are thinking that their lives are just white bread and boring [to understand] that they have as much context and are as complex and complicated [as the rest of us]...and that those factors influence how they are relating to a reading?”

The Latina has found using a piece by Fernando Segovia, an Hispanic American biblical scholar, particularly helpful toward effecting an answer to this question, though it comes with a philosophical challenge. In it Segovia announced that “the time has come to introduce the real reader, the flesh-and-blood reader, fully and explicitly, into the theory and practice of biblical criticism; to acknowledge that no reading, informed or uninformed, takes place in a social vacuum or desert.”¹⁶³ It is not possible, he claimed, for readers to be disinterested, impartial and neutral. After exploring his own social location and the ways in which it influences his thinking, he suggested a way of reading the biblical text that respects both its

¹⁶² The African American woman was another who particularly mentioned the difficulty of getting the educators to “to really see that all theology comes out of context. And what makes this experience better than this experience?...Who made those decisions about that? Whose story is being told? But some places, you know, that’s very dangerous for people. Don’t touch that.”

¹⁶³ Fernando F. Segovia, “Toward a Hermeneutics of the Diaspora: A Hermeneutics of Otherness and Engagement,” in *Reading From This Place: Volume 1*, ed. Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 57.

otherness and our own otherness as readers, each of these being different. The Latina noted that Segovia's arguments, including his plain-speaking presentation of them and implicit call to let others speak uninterrupted and without judging them, "drives students crazy!"

Therein lies the difficulty. Segovia has moved far from the apparent safety, certainty and authority of the "one rule to rule them all." In fact, he suggests that on the critical spectrum, intercultural work sits on the side of reader-response, which claims that readers in their particularity are vital to reading and drawing meaning from, in this case, the biblical text.¹⁶⁴ Their identity in relationship matters. To borrow words from Vanhoozer, albeit slightly taken out of context, such thinking "is an important and timely prophetic blast against...the reign of the sovereign knowing subject...[reminding] us that no language or culture has a monopoly on God."¹⁶⁵ It is, however, proving very difficult to have this generally taken seriously in the West. For one thing, particularity raises many questions because, as will be discussed in the next section, identity is fluid, complex and political. Where then is truth to be found and who determines it?¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile, for those on the more conservative side of the theological spectrum, the elevation of the reader to being on a par with scripture is an alarming development, for it suggests relativism. It is, however, important to note, without denying its revelatory authority, that too high a view of scripture disregards the tensioned link between divine truth and situated human identity that Christians wrestle with in believing in a Word who is the God-man Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁷ The risk of eisegesis is another concern, though the invitation by Christ to answer "But who do you say I am?" suggests that our story should not be divorced from his. To add to all this, José Cabezón, an Hispanic professor of religious studies, and Sheila Davaney, an American professor of theology, have pointed out that in recent years scholars of religion have been playing down their identities in order to be accepted and respected within the wider academy even while, ironically, "the identity and subjectivity of the scholar and their relation to the knowledge and scholarship he

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 68.

¹⁶⁵ Vanhoozer, "One Rule to Rule Them All?," 91. He is referring to calls like Segovia's as they affect theological method.

¹⁶⁶ José Ignacio Cabezón and Sheila Greeve Davaney, eds., *Identity and the Politics of Scholarship in the Study of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 7.

¹⁶⁷ For further discussion see Peter Hicks, *Evangelicals and Truth: A Creative Proposal for a Postmodern Age* (Leicester: Apollos, 1998). Also Robert E. Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002). Nancey Murphy has identified as key a reaction to foundationalism in its drive to find the basis for universal knowledge which forced theologians into a polemical choice between either scripture or experience – truth above us or within us. Murphy, *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism*, 2.

or she produces are now firmly established as central theoretical concerns” in the human sciences.¹⁶⁸

This is the crux point.
If I
as educator
or student
whether for theological,
political
or pragmatic
reasons
seek truth
divorced from my situated self,
separate Jesus the man
from Christ the Lord,
then theological education
will
forever
live to enforce
a monocultural chimera.
To be intercultural means
caring for
individual identity
individual cultures
and in caring
growing grace
to hear
and engage with
ourselves
others
even the Text
in all honesty
fullness
and respect
bringing our perspectives to bear
together
on Truth.
This is not a call to mindless relativism
but to forging a new catholicity¹⁶⁹
because if we can't live this
we won't be able to realise
truly intercultural theological education.
The classroom is waiting...¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Cabezon and Davaney, eds., *Identity and the Politics of Scholarship*, 1–12.

¹⁶⁹ For the thoughts of one scholar on this see Schreier, *The New Catholicity*, 116–34. He is of the opinion that a new catholicity can offer a new kind of universalising within theology that respects and values difference.

The complexity, fluidity, and politics of identity

In the midst of this call to care for identity, some of the calabash breakers warned that it is dangerous to conceive of it in simplistic terms. The temptation to reductionism in the interests of working with simple, quantifiable truth because it is easier must be resisted. Identity by its very nature is complex, fluid and political; certainly not neutral, static or easily assumed. If our classrooms and educational systems are to take identity seriously as the first step towards becoming truly intercultural, as the calabash breakers suggest, then we need to acknowledge these three characteristics and permit them to shape our pedagogies and to colour our theological discourse.

Complexity

In chapter one it was noted that Jung Young Lee's hermeneutic in regard to new marginal people had been influential in helping to find those who could answer the thesis question. In his understanding of how identity plays out he suggested that people are located either at the margins of societies or at the centre and that these places are discrete if mutually influencing. His own life experience, he readily acknowledged, shaped this understanding. North Korean-born, forced to speak another language and change his name under Japanese occupation, he fled to South Korea as a young man. Finding himself unwelcome there, he emigrated to the United States where right up until his death in 1996 he felt a racial exile.¹⁷¹ For Lee, the centre was by nature an exclusive place and he, an immigrant, was a "victim of centrality," condemned over the course of his life to the margins of several centres.¹⁷² It was very much the case that external forces helped to forge his internal sense of identity and consequently his hermeneutic.

But I no longer think it's that simple for everyone.
Because...

In reading other diaspora theologians than Lee, not all life stories have created such an acute sense of exile and hence a relatively stark view of identity creation and location. Sisilia

¹⁷⁰ Chapter five, assuming that the decision to care for identity in all its particularity has been made, will explore a number of ways in which the calabash breakers have suggested that interculturality can be practised in classroom pedagogy.

¹⁷¹ For his story in full see Lee, "A Life In-Between," 23–29.

¹⁷² Lee, *Marginality*, 30.

Tupou-Thomas, a Tongan theologian who married a Māori but who now lives in Australia has, for example, spoken of a reality which she chooses to call liminal:

I am neither in the centre nor on the margin, neither at the top nor at the base, neither a true-blue Aussie nor a pure Tongan. I am in between the past and the present, the centre and the margin, the core/norms and the fringes/borderlines, the local and the global.¹⁷³

Matsuoka spoke in interview of his identity as being “translocal,” encompassing life in the United States with a growing family but also the “impact of the formation that I received in Asia [as a boy, which] is in some ways becoming much stronger in the recent years.” He went on to talk of “amphiboly,” a concept which he is currently exploring that speaks of a positive holding together of both the Japanese and the American, the Buddhist and the Christian parts of his identity in simple coexistence without feeling the need for exclusion of one or even of resolution.¹⁷⁴

And then...
A few months ago I was sitting
staring with half-seeing eyes
at the autumnal trees
outside my bedroom window
trying to put my finger on something.
My interview with the Asian American woman
had been different
again
somehow.
It started
and ended
in a different place.
Was it her church background being different?
Her place on the theological spectrum?
I puzzled over it
as the kaleidoscopes of colours
dipped and trembled in the wind.

“The interculturality is inside of me.”

¹⁷³ Sisilia, Tupou-Thomas, “Telling Tales,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 2.

¹⁷⁴ An initial public foray into the idea of amphiboly occurred in the GTU Distinguished Faculty lecture which he gave on 3 April, 2009: Fumitaka Matsuoka, “Learning to Speak a New Tongue: Imagining a Way That Holds People Together,” (San Francisco: Graduate Theological Union, 2009).

She is
the second generation of her family
born
in a land
far from their ancestral home.

“The interculturality is inside of me.”

My vision shifted,
the leaves
suddenly
coming into focus.
None were one colour only...

Are any, in fact?

Those born to immigrants, and therefore standing with their feet rooted in the new land while breathing the cultural air of both their parents and that new land, further challenge any assumptions that situating identity is a simple matter of margins and centres. Both are part of their very make-up, something that produces at times complexities difficult to reconcile. Robin Yang, a second-generation Korean Australian theologian, has described the collision of the two worlds as at times “painful,” isolating and frustrating.¹⁷⁵ Ete, taking the story of the Ugly Duckling, has spoken of being both an ugly duckling and a quacking swan, misunderstood in both New Zealand and Samoan cultures as he tries to find his own *turangawaewae*, or *tulaga vae*.¹⁷⁶

“According to the Asian American woman, “What the struggle of identity was [as I was growing up] was how to relate the different aspects culturally. How do you equal the playing field when one is more dominant than the other? So, you know, I grew up during a period when, oh it’s like I wish I had just been born white. It would have been easier to be white in this country. And then another period when I thought, ‘Thank God I wasn’t white!’ you know, because you kind of see the whiteness is a soullessness...So I didn’t want to be white. So I don’t know if it’s new marginality or realising that the margin is also a centre. So instead of one centre and everything else is marginal to that, you locate a centre within each, so it’s more like a constellation...Each star is very important in that constellation, so each

¹⁷⁵ Robin Yang, “Kim-Chee-Pie Theology: The Beginnings of a Korean-Australian Second-Generation Theology,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 50.

¹⁷⁶ Ete, “Ugly Duckling, Quacking Swan,” 43-48. Samoan: *tulaga vae*—place or residence.

star has a centre and it's how you relate differences. It's like the relatedness is then the key. It's not whether I accommodate or conform to what the centre is demanding. The centre is like the richness or gift of each person or culture or meaning making system and they need each other.”

The forging of identity for people like Yang, Ete, and the Asian American woman is therefore played out internally as well as externally. Within children of two cultures, the centres, part of their very make-up, cannot be simply understood as negative and exclusive of each other, but rather need to be valued as “gift” if they are to live well. Interestingly, for the Asian American woman, it was by living in a totally different country where these two centres were not vying for dominance in her external environment that she came to appreciate this. She also said that the work of Rita Nakashima Brock on interstitial integrity had been helpful.

In explaining why she chose to talk of interstitial integrity, Brock, a feminist theologian and woman of mixed race, explained:

“Interstitial” comes from *interstitium*, and it is used in biology to describe tissue situated in vital organs. The tissue is not organ tissue, but, rather, it connects the organs to one another. Interstitial tissue lives inside things, distinct but inseparable from what would otherwise be disconnected. It is a channel of life in and out of things separated and different. It makes a living, pulsating unity, both many and one. Without interstitiality, parts of my life would wither and die...Interstitial integrity is how I improvise a self, recognizing the diverse cultures and experiences that have made me who I am.¹⁷⁷

So for Brock, the relatedness is key and provides a different theological insight to Lee's thinking. Conscious of located centres and margins and of his own placement at the edges of two cultures, and reading scripture from that perspective, Lee saw God in Jesus standing at the margin and from there welcoming and inviting all people to a life of acceptance and transformation in a way that, he argued, Jesus cannot do by standing at the centre. What Brock and those for whom the interculturality is inside of them have to offer, however, is the understanding that life depends on connection between organs and that God is to be found in

¹⁷⁷ Brock, “Cooking Without Recipes,” 126.

the unity of all. Two quite different comments from the Asian American woman help to illustrate this. Conscious of her Buddhist and Christian cultural heritages the Asian American woman said, “If you’re Christian and you’re Buddhist and one system is not necessarily even theistic and yet you’re both, to be able to bring these into conversation and relatedness I think is a great gift for the church and for the world.” Later she added from a different perspective, “You know, I’m like the product of two empires but I’m also marginalized in both those empires. So at the same time I have the experience of that marginalization I also have this weird gift to be able to gesture...I mean, if I can be a help towards any kind of reconciliation then I’ll accept that.”

For Frank Yamada, a third generation Japanese American, his “internalized hybridity” is a boon.¹⁷⁸ As he explained in interview, it brings “a synergy of energy which creates something new, what Homi Bhabha, [an Indian professor of English and American literature] calls a third space.” He does find, however, that as someone who is “familiar with and comfortable with the discourses of the West...I think there’s a tendency—and this might be a danger—for some of my white colleagues to think that I play nicer because I’m familiar to them.” Conversely, he has also experienced the difficulties of operating in institutions that “don’t have that much complexity when it comes to looking at an Asian American...the only way they understand me is as an Asian.”

Pushmepullyou
inside and outside
inside and inside...

Am I guilty of seeing only one,
of limiting the horizon
where, in fact,
an intricate weaving of heritages
exists
and thereby,
like others of my ilk, perhaps,
perpetrating the
denial of newness?

¹⁷⁸ Yamada is on faculty at McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, which will be the focus of chapter eight. His words were, however, particularly relevant for this part of the thesis, hence the decision to include them here. While a third generation Japanese American (in Japanese, “Sansei”), Yamada identifies ethnically as Asian American.

To acknowledge complexity as we take care for identity in the theological classroom and staffroom would demand that we recognise that identities are forged by both external and internal realities, the experiences of which can be painful for the person and/or easily misunderstood by others. To belong to two or more cultures, whether on the margins as Lee knew, living in the between as Tupou-Thomas has described, living with amphiboly as Matsuoka has proposed, or embodying cultures as Yang, Ete, the Asian American woman, Brock, and Yamada speak of, needs to be seen by us all as a rich gift with the potential to bring reconciling power. Acknowledging this is deeply challenging, for, as missiologists know, it requires robust and creative conversation around topics such as syncretism and contextual theologising. It also requires deep knowledge of the Good News, and the humility and openness to be changed by the spirit of God as we engage.¹⁷⁹

(Postscript)

I am left pondering
 my own “white bread and boring” story.
 It isn’t really
 when I
 stop
 to think about it.
 I am of
 Irish
 Scottish
 English ancestry
 a fourth-generation New Zealander
 influenced by pioneering roots
 and Māori hospitality
 married to a man whose parents
 a Belgian and a Kiwi
 met and married in Zaire,
 a heritage now part of my own
 and that of my children.
 I am a Christian of
 Presbyterian
 and
 Methodist stock
 identifying now as Anglican;
 evangelical in my bones but
 increasingly appreciative of
 Roman Catholic

¹⁷⁹ The lessons of missionaries have much to teach us as we look to engage complexity in the classroom and in ourselves. For a profound example of one man walking these paths see Vincent J. Donovan, *Christianity Rediscovered* (Chicago: Fides/Claretian Press, 1978).

charismatic
and liberal strands of the church.
I've lived in England
and Central Asia
operated in Russian
learnt French across high school
am learning Te Reo
and Spanish
to add to my mother tongue, English.

This all impacts my understanding of God
no doubt,
not that
when I've been a student
anyone's been particularly interested in
any of this
in the classroom.
There I've just been "white."

Complexity is inherent in us all, though the temptation to keep things simple and therefore easily explainable and teachable is strong and something that we each must struggle with.¹⁸⁰

Comments from the Latina directly challenge any assumptions that complexity of identity belongs to minorities alone.

"One of the critiques of US Latin@ theologies is that sometimes we do a very good job of, you know, analysing ourselves and the States and the complexities in Latin America and Spain like some kind of giant monolith and it's like..." she made a high-pitched beeping sound, "there were language diversities, there's diversities of, you know you're talking about the place where Jews, Christians and Muslims all lived under the same roof, under the Caliph so like, hello, for how many centuries? Seven. You're talking about the conquest of the Americas that occurs after the reconquista of Spain. So you're talking about a hybrid people having to deal with hybridity; about a conquered people. You're talking about a people that include the Celts, it includes the Romans, it included the Vandals, you name it, they're there. You're talking about the Visigoths, you're talking about Mus Arabic liturgies...There's a few...including myself who've said 'Stop. Let's stop saying the great

¹⁸⁰ Hill certainly notes from his research that it is in fact helpful for all, including white people, to realise that identity is complex. Simple exercises in the classroom such as inviting people to introduce themselves using a hyphenated name (e.g., I am a Pākehā-female-middle class-young-Christian-wife-mother-student) or simply finishing the sentence starter "I am" or participating in a social location activity encourage all to see that the perspectives they have to offer are many and varied and inadequately understood by the use of one descriptor only. Hill, "Fighting the Elephant in the Room," 7–8.

evil empire here. It was a complicated mess that came into this complicated mess and created a new complicated mess.”

To add to the mess of faith and cultural heritage, there are, of course, many other factors that complicate our identities. For Letty Russell, it was being a bisexual feminist Euro American pastor and theologian, something that left her “both *outside and within*... a misfit.”¹⁸¹ Unlike Russell, however, who saw her hybridity as a gift encouraging her into a ministry of hospitality, for many, as the Latina commented:

“Hybridity is threatening. Complexity is threatening, and we don’t want it in ourselves even. There’s some great line about it that was vile. I can’t remember it now...but about hybrid folks. Hybrid things at one level are not really wanted because there’s this obsession with a purity that human beings have never been, anyway. We can’t figure out which strand we came out of so, yeah right, there it is a big stew.”

When asked if therefore “there’s really a deconstruction needed of a way of thinking, of a theology and theological system that says that everything is straightforward and simple and clearcut,” she replied, “Right. And it never has been.”

Fluidity

A concept that complements complexity, as well as further complicating it, is fluidity. Kim-Cragg was one who made a particular point of noting this. She said, “Your identity never is fixed, you are always changing. My experience absolutely says that. I was a Korean woman once upon a time but that’s not enough now. I have to put Korean-Canadian, an inter-racial couple, married, mother...you know, all other sort of adjectives that I need to really explain who I am...Everyone as a person and every community as a group of people are experiencing a change of their identity and [we need] to realise and be sensitive to that change, I think, and promote how to live together in spite of our differences... Also, I think inspire and reflect upon how we understand God and our faith because faith is not a fixed entity either... As you believe you are changing...”

Biblical scholars Yamada and Leticia Guardiola-Saenz, a Latina, concur: “Identity is fluid and dynamic. It changes as we move in life and adopt new cultures, new ideologies, new

¹⁸¹ Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 13.

beliefs, new languages. Identity is in constant motion...which in turn helps us create new and complex identities...Identity is a *process*.”¹⁸² We should not be surprised by any of this. Culture, the collective picture, though it may be coherent as the definition provided in chapter one states, is not, as Pearson notes, a stable category either.¹⁸³ Change is intrinsic to life.¹⁸⁴

Kim-Cragg went on to reflect on some of the implications of an acknowledgement of this for theological education. “So where do we start? What’s our common ground? It’s the fact that we are different, the fact that we are changing. If that can be our framework then our thoughts, our studying, our thinking has to be fertile because you know when you think about frameworks, when you think about point of reference, you know, those kind of terms already have a fixed kind of sentiment to them, right? Frame: it’s structured, it’s fixed. When you talk about ‘point’ it’s just like one point. Except there are no one-points anymore: there are many points. There is no one answer to everything. There’s just not such a thing anymore.”

Can we cope?
The uncertainty of that
no one single answer
can be so
uncomfortable.

“You know the reason for our resistance to this kind of plural, post-colonial, kind of understanding of everything is that it is so uneasy...it’s unsettling, it’s not black or white and yet we want to be black or white because that’s simple and clear and, you know, good in the sense that you feel comfortable. But...I would argue, to those who want to hide and avoid those uneasy, discomfoting, unsettling realities that...education is about growth...You know, physically speaking there is what is called growing pains...at the end of that journey...you know that you are growing and you know that you are different, you are better

¹⁸² Frank M. Yamada and Leticia A Guardiola-Saenz, “Culture and Identity,” in *The Peoples’ Bible: NRSV with the Apocrypha*, ed. Curtiss Paul De Young, et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 6.

¹⁸³ Pearson, “Making Room,” 140. Jione Havea has suggested that the burden of proof in fact lies with those who claim that cultural identities are unchanging. Jione Havea, “Would the Real Native Please Sit Down!,” in *Faith in a Hyphen: Cross-Cultural Theologies Down Under*, ed. Clive Pearson (North Parramatta: United Theological College, 2004), 202–03.

¹⁸⁴ It is not a new thought. The English Cardinal John Newman (1801–1890) once commented, “To live is to change.” He went on to add “and to be perfect is to have changed often.” John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (London: James Tovey, 1845), 39.

than you were before... You know, theologically speaking, you could say, 'I will be close to God' because you'll be a better people. But on the other hand it is so unsettling and feels so confusing because there is nothing that you can hold onto other than that we are changing. I think that's our dilemma but paradox [also]."

Journeying...
discomfort...
an identity that changes
many points
over the course of life
and faith
growing

Now the Lord said to Abram,
kinsman
settled towns-dweller
polytheist
"Go from your country...
to the land that I will show you."¹⁸⁵
So Abram went
75 years old.
Cā'naan
Bethel
Neg'eb
Egypt...
a nomad
rich man
stranger and alien
prophet
father twice over in old age
landless
living with a promise
in faith

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called
to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance;
and he set out, not knowing where he was going."¹⁸⁶

No one single answer
in ourselves
only a God who calls.

Such dynamism demands an education
in faith

¹⁸⁵ Gen. 12:1ff

¹⁸⁶ Heb. 11:8

that welcomes process
gives space to and care for the traveller
and respects wisdom gained on the journey.

The politics of identity

Identity, while complex and fluid, is also, within that, political and politicised.¹⁸⁷ We make choices about what we reveal to others and when; others, we may find, may presume to do this for us. Comments from two of the calabash breakers illustrate well these twin facets and reveal the challenges for students and theological educators alike.¹⁸⁸ There is a need to cultivate skills of self-perception and of discernment in our relationships with and description of others in order to ensure that we are honest and astute, rather than naïve, as we talk about taking care for identity in order to realise intercultural theological education.

The man who asked to be identified as a wannabe Tongan spoke of one of the first articles he ever wrote in English:¹⁸⁹

“I tried to define what the Pacific Island identity is, was quite early in my career... I tried to define it in terms of survival...I was, I guess, youngish and afraid that somebody else would define what it means to, what the Pacific Island—and I was arrogant enough to think that this is what Pacific Islanders are like. I regret it now, no, I regretted it almost after I sent in my article.

“I want to come back to what Lee said about his autobiographical approach because while I agree that our [stories]¹⁹⁰ influence how we think, I think it’s just impossible to be able to be truly autobiographical and there’s a politics behind who I say I am. It’s a very selective process for whatever one is working on.”

I am very conscious
in the wake of these comments
that I am choosing carefully
what parts of my story

¹⁸⁷ Note, Rosalind Brunt, “The Politics of Identity,” in *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s*, eds. Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1989), 151. “Identity politics” is, of course, a concept long-developed within postcolonial and feminist thinking and has challenged perceptions within other fields. See, for example, Craig Calhoun, ed., *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1994).

¹⁸⁸ No analysis will be made of these comments precisely because of the point that each is here to make: it is important to let people label and describe themselves and to allow space for them to practice critical honesty.

¹⁸⁹ Regarding the title “wannabe Tongan” see page 115.

¹⁹⁰ Word lost in the Skype interview.

I will reveal to you
here.
And they are not
completely my own
but often materials shot through
with colours lent
sometimes unknowingly
by others.
I have to fight the temptation
to exaggerate
impress
hide
demur
even while I know that
you will not know
all I know about me
ever.

Then again
it is possible you will know
about me
things that I don't,
stories beyond my power
that are shaping me
other...

The experience of Te Paa provides a stark example of the impact that labelling and politicising the other can have. It issues a very sobering warning to those setting the agenda in theological education. In 2008 she wrote:

It has been in the course of my own life's work and being—and mostly as a result of the variously privileged and occasionally accursed experience of being a pioneer in so many of the professional roles I have been entrusted with—that identity politics have impacted virtually every step of my own journey. What has been fascinating (to put it politely) is that my identity has been institutionally constructed (for the purposes of my employment by the church) as simply 'Maori laywoman,' while every other aspect of my composite human identity has sometimes made me the target of unfettered institutional abuse. I am not naive: I know that my positioning myself in a leadership role within an inherently patriarchal, residually racist, and unapologetically clericalist institutional structure means that the gifts of these three

aspects of my overall identity were not going to be immediately recognizable—let alone instinctively appreciated!

So my detractors have had the full spectrum of choice. I have experienced criticism or abuse because I was a layperson, and therefore presumably ignorant about the church, theological education, and ministry formation. (The fact that I am the only person in Aotearoa with a Ph.D. in theological education was deemed insignificant.) My identity as a woman has been taken to mean that male ordinands would, purportedly, have difficulty relating to me. (It has actually been the fact that I am divorced which has caused huge discomfort to those crusading on a morally conservative platform.) Or else I have experienced criticism or abuse because I am Maori (but unfortunately, in the eyes of some Maori, not Maori enough or the right sort of Maori) or because I am too Maori for some Pākehā people who have not liked my intellectual critique of much of anything.¹⁹¹

The words of another
 come to mind:
 “Where you stand is what you see.”
 I wonder what difference
 these words
 would make
 if we each used
 their irony
 to demand of us honesty
 and their truth
 to demand of us justice?

Imago Dei in the vernacular¹⁹²

Prioritising particularity
 in all its complicated intricacy
 is unfamiliar
 (potentially divisive?)
 to the minds of some.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Te Paa, “How Diverse is Contemporary Theological Education?,” 231–32. Macrons were not used in this publication.

¹⁹² This title is borrowed directly from a chapter heading in Nanko-Fernandez, *Theologizing En EspanGLISH*, 51.

¹⁹³ In the evangelical tradition of the church, there has been something of a struggle to accept particularity as a necessary part of being Christian to be celebrated, largely because of the threat to “Truth.” This was in evidence at the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization held in South Africa in October 2010, coming out of a movement founded by Billy Graham and involving thousands of evangelical church and mission leaders where a key topic for discussion was ethnicity and the felt need by some to have to justify

In Galatians 3:28,
the touchstone
for all who would be
united
Truth-full
without
partiality
or relativism,
Paul speaks of
 no longer Jew or Greek
 no longer slave or free
 no longer male and female
for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

I know this verse has been used to support
theological certainty for all
egalitarianism
inclusivity
and transcendence over human realities
as Christians.¹⁹⁴
We are one in Christ:
ethnicity free
class free
gender free
free,
thereby able to live together
agree
and appreciate each other.¹⁹⁵

But the problem is that it can then be

diversity. Of concern to this author was that few of the conversations participated in did not begin theologically, as they can and should.

For an example of a positive consideration of ethnicity and diversity by evangelical theologians see Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett, *A Many Colored Kingdom*, 51–61.

For a thought-provoking discussion of “dimensions to the pursuit of truth” (p8) that broadens considerations of particularity beyond an exclusive focus upon it, see Farley, *Eros for the Other*.

¹⁹⁴ Rosemary Radford Reuther, “Sexism and God-Language,” in *Weaving the Visions: New Patterns in Feminist Spirituality*, ed. Judith Plaskow and Carol P. Christ (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 156. This is noted by, for example, Denise Kimber Buell and Caroline Johnson Hodge, “The Politics of Interpretation: The Rhetoric of Race and Ethnicity in Paul,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 123, no. 2 (2004): 235. The Croatian American theologian Miroslav Volf rigorously details and addresses some of the theological arguments around reading Paul and his stance here, including providing his own reading, in Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 44–50.

¹⁹⁵ Eph. 2:13–22 speaks of Christ in his flesh creating “one new humanity” and 2 Cor. 5:17 states that “if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.” It is important, however, to consider these assertions in the wider context of the time that includes the Council at Jerusalem at which uniformity of culture as Christians was argued against (Acts 15). It is a case of both/and—both one-ness and difference, or “belonging” and “distance,” in the thinking of Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 50.

too easily read as—
lived as—
uniformity
masking privilege
universalising and totalizing
definitions of
what it means to be human,
God's faithful people.

Then God said,
“Let us make humankind in our image,
according to our likeness...
So God created humankind in his image
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them...
and indeed it was very good.”¹⁹⁶

The creation of
male and female
“locates diversity within the very being of God...
God is like me
and God is not like me,
and God is like you,
and not like you.”¹⁹⁷
We are
the Imago Dei
in the vernacular.

At the same time
we are invited to be
one in Christ—
he who draws all people
to himself
without distinction
or discrimination¹⁹⁸
embracing
not erasing
our differences.
Welcome...
all kinds of people...
Welcome...¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Gen. 1:26a, 27, 31b.

¹⁹⁷ Nanko-Fernandez, *Theologizing En EspanGLISH*, 53.

¹⁹⁸ Jn. 12:32.

¹⁹⁹ Recalling the words of the African American spiritual, “We’re gonna sit at the welcome table.” Also, Rom. 15:7; Rev. 5:9.

And more,
fissured by the Spirit,
we are becoming
catholic personalities
in a
united catholic community
“enriched by otherness.”²⁰⁰

Pentecost
where all heard
the one message
but in their own
tongues
of fire
a rushing wind
the Word united
people
still
colourful
in their
diversities.²⁰¹

Different
but not absolutely.
Unity without partiality
but not homogeny.²⁰²
Imago Dei.
Dei:
Who
as the Three-in-One
powerfully
models
for us
Diversity
in
Unity.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 51. See pages 51–52 of Volf’s book for an unpacking of “catholic personality.”

²⁰¹ Acts 2:1–36.

²⁰² For a further exploration of this see Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 67–68 and, wider, the chapter within which those pages appear, entitled “Riotous Difference as God’s Gift to the Church” which provides a thought-provoking discussion on unity and diversity, 53–75.

²⁰³ Consider the Japanese theologian, Kosuke Koyama: “A basic need of theological education is a deep sense of respect towards the vernaculars. When this respect is absent, theological education suffers cultural dislocation.” Kosuke Koyama, “Theological Education: Its Unities and Diversities,” *Theological Education* 30, Supplement 1 (1993): 101–02. And from another angle, Matsuoka: “Particularity as a starting point of a pluralistic society is by no means a concluding point. On the contrary, it frees one for universal human concerns...Solidarity...arises out of our trust in what Raimundo Panikkar calls the “universal context” of

Summary

In this chapter the idea has been presented that care for identity is the first area needing attention if we are to realise truly intercultural theological education. Not only is it an appropriate response to the priority Christ places on discovering the answer to the question “Who am I?” embedded within the wider concern to discover who he is, but it encourages care for context and personal gifting. Identity, it was noted, is situated always in the context of relationship, and so brings responsibility to act in ways that honour the wider community. As we open ourselves to the truths—both negative and positive—of our heritage, as well as to those who are different from us, a margin for grace can grow that gives us greater opportunity to engage in ways that are honest and just, as well as empowering. In the classroom, all of this challenges us, as educators, to work on growing the grace margin in each person so that the diversity of those who are united in Christ might be allowed to enrich and expand our appreciation of and respect for the insights that we each bring to the theologising task and to a life better lived. Recognising the influence of identity on our interpretations helps us to be honest and to see the inherent subjectivity of theological study. Identity, however, is complex, fluid and political, characteristics that challenge the temptation to settle for an easy, generalised, and erroneous understanding of ourselves and others. It is therefore important, in theological education, to be prioritising rigorous, formational subjectivity-in-community and celebrating diversity in unity, as exemplified by the Three-in-One.

human interactions—a constantly expanding human universe of particularity and of new experiences, allowing new insights and calling forth new judgments and decision.” Matsuoka, “Pluralism at Home,” 42.

Chapter Five: Listening to Silenced Voices

“The heart of so great a mystery can never be reached by following one road only.”

Aurelius Symmachus, 4th Century

“Imagine that all that we teach...we hear from people who think the same way we do and we’re not daring to cross the border, the cultural border, to learn about the other from the other as the other sees themselves, and the importance [of this] for learning.”

Michel Andraos, in an interview

A commitment to caring for identity will naturally mean that we begin to hear voices, including perhaps our own, which have been silenced in our usual conversations. The question thus arises: How is one to engage deeply with those voices in ways that forge genuine connections that nurture and affirm, and yet also open up space for critical interaction that may inspire transformation? This question then spawns a second question: What kind of educator is needed to model and lead this? With listening to silenced voices being the second area of concern for the calabash breakers, this chapter will draw from their comments to offer answers to these two questions.

The limitations of multiculturalism

As we begin, it is important to remind ourselves that, as this thesis is arguing, there is a difference between being multicultural and being intercultural.²⁰⁴ It is increasingly common to encounter a multicultural setting in theological education but such a setting has limitations when it comes to answering the two questions of this chapter. To be multicultural essentially refers to cultures simply living alongside of one another and travelling on, as the African American woman defined it, “parallel journeys.” Engaging with each other and with difference, and, in particular, listening to those who are silent or silenced, is not expected. Such a setting is what Andraos, for example, experienced as a student at a large seminary in Europe. Despite there being “students from around the world...the professors taught, mostly lectured, and it didn’t really matter who was in the classroom. There was no engaging or interaction with the diversity.” Four calabash breakers interviewed specifically spoke about

²⁰⁴ See pages 3–4 of this thesis.

the negative effects for them that lack of interaction and engagement in multicultural environments has produced.

As a student, the Ugandan man was keen to engage his context with the teaching of the white lecturers at the theological school where he studied. Early in his degree, however, he received a disconcerting response when he tried to provoke discussion: “Well, we’re not here to give you anything. Take what you want.” This lack of interest resulted in his feeling fundamentally disconnected from academic and social conversations for the rest of his time there. The Asian American man, as a student and now as a lecturer, observed that he lives with a continual awareness of “not fitting in and that brings some sense of being alone, by yourself...ignored.” The result of such experiences, according to the African American woman, even where those in power “may be attentive, open, and friendly with the other culture, [is that] it’s still more of a work of the culture that is the minority...it’s more their responsibility to step out and to...educate or to be in relationship with the white European Anglo person.” Carrying the onus of responsibility for engagement when one is in the less powerful position essentially amounts to a subtle form of oppression.

Alongside disconnection, exclusion, and oppression, the African American woman described a further negative tendency in a multicultural environment. Where attempts may be being made to acknowledge diversity, but there is no expectation that one should listen deeply and be open to critique, tokenism can too easily creep in. Chapel times particularly exemplify her frustration with this: “There’s still the whites who are primarily planning the stuff but then they stick in the slots. Okay, here’s the multicultural slot. You have a Black person doing the first reading. You have a Vietnamese translate one of the prayers.” This happens, the Tongan man suggested, because those in power “have the spirit of fathers and missionaries.” Of course, he is stereotyping here, but his analysis of paternalism is clear. The result of such behaviour, as Charles Foster and Ted Brelsford, both practical theologians from the United States, once noted in a survey they conducted of multicultural congregations, will be “enrichment,” perhaps, but not “transformation.”²⁰⁵ Being multicultural in fact allows the dominant culture to leave in place deeply embedded and homogenous norms and the infrastructure supporting them because it does not demand something different.

²⁰⁵ Charles R. Foster and Theodore Brelsford, *We Are the Church Together: Cultural Diversity in Congregational Life* (Valley Forge: Trinity, 1996), 18.

“Intercultural,” by contrast, according to the African American woman, “says we both have to step out. We both have to change in the process. And we should all be on the same level playing field.” The dynamism embedded in this immediately points to something else. It speaks of mutual engagement and so invites the participation of the voiceless; it sees change as essential; it values process and formation. It also hints at something that Asian American feminist scholar Boyung Lee has argued for: “the purpose of dialogue and collaboration should not be inclusion or co-existence; rather, its purpose should be the liberation of those who are the most marginalized among us.”²⁰⁶ Achieving the “same level playing field,” which means ensuring loneliness and injustice like that expressed above are no more, will ultimately require paying particular attention to structures and attitudes that exclude and oppress and therefore marginalise.

In the light of this, the opening questions become very important as part of the movement towards interculturality and, if change that brings equality is to come, it is particularly important that those in power grapple with them. The questions then, as the American woman framed them, sound like: “How do you enter into these realities that are different than yours in such a way that you’re respectful, that you are able to really dialogue with people and listen to people and not impose your ideas?...What does it mean not to have your own agenda...to be really open and...to allow yourself to be transformed?”

Answering these questions for the educator and their professional practice will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter. The glimpse caught here of a need for personal and structural transformation that brings liberation for the marginalised will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

Engaging the silenced other

“Who is missing?
Who are the one’s [sic] whose voice is not heard?”²⁰⁷

It is too easy
to speak over silence
hear it as nothing-to-say;
to never give space for

²⁰⁶ Boyung Lee, “Teaching Solidarity,” in N. Lynne Westfield, ed., *Being Black, Teaching Black* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008), 181–82.

²⁰⁷ Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 14.

or invite speech
stop
and wait;
to hear in what another is saying
what I want to talk about
to respond in part
or perhaps just pursue my own agenda
pretending to have heard
when it's obvious I haven't
really
listened.

And when another does it to me?
I feel disregarded
not valued
interrupted
shut-down
self-doubting
sometimes annoyed
and I shake my head:
I might as well be invisible.

A response to the question of how one might engage with the silenced other respectfully, dialogically, and openly is provided by three related priorities that several calabash breakers touched on between them: relationship is vital, with hospitality at its core; mission-in-reverse is, for those in power, the necessary first step to achieving that; and in order to create further opportunity for deep connection it is important to learn another's language.

Relationship and manākitanga

The tenor of the interview with the Egyptian man was different from many of the others. He told stories of people more than he talked about ideas, in a way that showed evidence of a deep care and knowledge of them, as well as of himself. He summed himself up by saying, "I think a lesson for all of us to really learn is to spend a lot of time building relationship." Borrowing from the story of Moses meeting a long-silent God in Exodus 3, however, he offered the interpretation that it must be relationship conducted with the sense of stepping on sacred ground when we turn towards each other. There is then the need to take off our shoes, approach with reverence, and be open to the responsibility that will be required from us and the change that will be required in us as we truly listen to the o/Other.

The rich Māori concept of *manākitanga* arose in conversation with Te Paa. As James Ritchie, a New Zealand psychologist and Māori advisor once explained, it contains the themes of responsibility to hospitality, reciprocity, and caring and thereby affirms the necessary two-way nature of relationship, and loving, self-giving, and genuinely interested mutual engagement.²⁰⁸ “Without that,” as Dr Te Paa said, “it just becomes a perfunctory, cold, trade-off relationship.” She went on to add that “to enter fully into the worldview of another in order to understand it, in order to understand how best to respond, then you actually have to enter into the world experience...and to feel fulfilled in that, to be curious about it.” Practising *manākitanga* will counter not only individualism but also exclusivism. If we are going to practice *manākitanga*, however, Te Paa said that we have to be willing to “live with the messiness of it, the uncertainty of it, the unpredictability of it.” This is something that, in the opinion of Kim-Cragg, is very difficult for Westerners to live with because for one thing Western culture is “so embedded in politeness and well-manners,” while for another, even those championing justice are often keen to “avoid [the] probing questions” that inevitably arise “because at the bottom of the issues [that can be raised] it’s so ugly...and it is so vulnerable.” Opening space for the silenced to speak will mean having to listen to things that are “gonna being uneasy for you to hear.”²⁰⁹ As Christine Pohl, an Anglo American feminist theologian has noted, a life committed to hospitality means “fewer opportunities to carefully project a ‘perfect image.’”²¹⁰

Mission-in-reverse

The term “mission-in-reverse,” was coined thirty years ago by Claude Marie Barbour, a French Huguenot clergywoman and missiologist. This concept deeply informed the words of two of the calabash breakers who spoke in a way that assumed the concept was understood.

²⁰⁸ Drawn from James E. Ritchie, *Becoming Bicultural* (Wellington: Huia Publishers and Daphne Brasell Associates Press, 1992). Ritche was an advisor to Tainui and the Kahui Ariki. A close Western equivalent is the idea of “deep listening” as developed by Kay Lindahl, *The Sacred Art of Listening: Forty Reflections for Cultivating a Spiritual Practice* (Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2002). Deep listening does not, however, capture the full sense of two-way transformative relation that lies within *manākitanga* because its focus is on the individual and their engagement with another, rather on relationship-in-community.

²⁰⁹ For example, a book written in 1990 by Black Christians in Britain, warned readers that some of them would become defensive in reading it and made no apologies, calling the reader instead to dialogue and debate. One of the chapters in particular, “What the Western Church Can Learn From People of Other Faiths—To Develop and Enrich its Own Spirituality” by Rev. Hitesh Dodhia, made a number of very blunt observations about Western ways of doing and being church. Paul Grant and Raj Patel, eds., *A Time to Speak: Perspectives of Black Christians in Britain* (Birmingham: CRRU/ECRJ, 1990), 79–86.

²¹⁰ Christine Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 118.

Barbour's concept of mission-in-reverse requires of the supposed educator, the one holding power, that they first listen and learn and practice a "presence to people," that is, the kind of receptiveness to them that allows "them to be the leaders in the relationship."²¹¹ This, she argued, enhances the dignity of the other and lays the ground for "true mutuality" in relationship. She was convinced that such mutuality "cannot happen before mission-in-reverse has taken place."²¹² Such thinking has potentially major ramifications. As Anthony Gittins, an English anthropologist who was interviewed for this thesis, pointed out in his book *Bread for the Journey: The Mission of Transformation and the Transformation of Mission* practicing mission-in-reverse will deeply challenge assumptions about who holds the initiative in theology, education, mission, and ministry. It will demand the end of an "us (who have the truth)," and "them (who do not)" mentality. It will also require our being sensitive to the Spirit of God already present and at work in the other.²¹³

For Tom Montgomery-Fate, an Anglo American associate professor of English who has lived and worked in the Philippines, mission-in-reverse has meant first growing the patience to listen to what he thought was the silence of the other.²¹⁴ He discovered that they, in fact, had simply been drowned out by his "white noise." His decision to listen to the other, he discovered, gave to new "voices full of new rhythms and melodies...which create history and hope" the space to emerge. In order to absorb and act on the lessons learnt, the thinking of Anglo American theologian John Dunne is helpful. He spoke of an ongoing process that

²¹¹ Claude Marie Barbour, "Seeking Justice and Shalom in the City," *International Review of Mission* 73, no. 291 (1984): 304. Further explanation of the concept later appeared in a chapter co-authored by Barbour in Susan B. Thistlethwaite and George, F. Cairns, *Beyond Theological Tourism* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), 72–91. Years later a book was published detailing the radical effects that Barbour's call to mission-in-reverse brings to practice and theological thinking: Stephen Bevans, Eleanor Doidge, and Robert Schreiter, eds., *The Healing Circle: Essays in Cross-Cultural Mission Presented to the Rev. Dr. Claude Marie Barbour* (Eugene, OR: CCGM, 2000).

A closely equivalent thought to mission-in-reverse is Eric Law's "miracle of the ear." Drawn from the story of Pentecost, he argues that while the powerless disciples were granted a miracle of the tongue, the crowd (the majority) were granted a miracle of the ear: the gift of listening and understanding bringing personal conversion. The latter, he argued, is needed by those in power today. Eric H.F. Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community* (St Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1993), especially pages 48-49.

²¹² Barbour, "Seeking Justice and Shalom," 304.

²¹³ Anthony J. Gittins, *Bread for the Journey: The Mission of Transformation and the Transformation of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993), 57–58.

²¹⁴ Tom Montgomery-Fate, *Beyond the White Noise: Mission in a Multicultural World* (St Louis: Chalice, 1997), 41-42. A book by Henri Nouwen powerfully illustrates the effect of mission-in-reverse on his own ministry to and relationships with silenced voices: Henri J. M. Nouwen, *¡Gracias! A Latin American Journal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983).

he called “passing over and coming back.”²¹⁵ In other words, we open ourselves to the world of another, enter in, return, reflect on and articulate the lessons learnt and then re-enter and continue the cycle. In many ways this recalls the spiralling actions of Buber’s *I-Thou, I-It* dialogical relation as diagrammed in chapter two. It also complements Te Paa’s earlier comments around manākitanga: an environment is created that gives the opportunity for true hospitality and reciprocity. Without all of this, as Gittins has pointed out elsewhere, “far from [forming] ‘relationships,’ we are merely creating unidirectional lines of power flow, however unintended this may be.”²¹⁶

The experience of the Egyptian man provides a glimpse of the potential effect of mission-in-reverse that practices passing over and coming back when practised by those in power. He came from a strict Middle Eastern evangelical background to study in a very liberal seminary in the United States that was attempting to engage across cultures. “In the seminary they were trying to show...humanity [to] me...At that time I didn’t even have good English so I felt that I’m encouraged and supported and strengthened...I think they were seeking my opinion, I mean they want me to speak, and I find out that the more I speak...the more I am listened to. I appreciated that. And the more I’m respected. Of course all the good things I can provide didn’t happen except later on, I mean, because I was always critical and they felt, the amazing thing they felt that they needed that criticism, so that was also very humbling.” This man has ended up in intercultural work himself precisely because the positive model those lecturers provided inspired him.

The best moments of
practising mission-in-reverse
as an educator
have meant in my own life
learning to be
in my classroom
a scene-setter
a facilitator
rather than a
banker-dictator,

²¹⁵ Noted in Chris McVey, “Outside the Camp,” <http://www.sedos.org/english/chrys.htm>, (cited 14 September, 2010).

²¹⁶ Anthony J. Gittins, “Beyond Hospitality? The Missionary Status and Role Revisited,” *International Review of Mission* 83, no. 330 (1994): 399. Considering unidirectional power flow Ruel Howe, an Anglo American pastoral theologian, once observed that “The monological thinker runs the danger of being prejudiced, intolerant, bigoted, and a persecutor of those who differ from him.” Ruel L. Howe, *The Miracle of Dialogue* (Minneapolis: Seabury, 1963), 9–10.

giving away authority
and seeing that as power,
being genuinely curious
questioning
more than giving answers
listening
more than speaking
practising humility
accepting criticism
and adopting the justified argument
admitting “I don’t know”
asking their advice
and being changed.

I have failed often
tempted by the sound of my own voice
and passions
to speak too long,
worried that others
might think less of me
if I ask them, not me, to speak—
knowing that some have.²¹⁷

Sometimes, however,
things more profound than anything I could ever contribute
alone
have found space to be said and heard and learnt from.
And the Spirit of God already present in my students
has transformed me
has transformed us all.

I have resolved to try to practice this more often
despite

Learning a new language

Building relationship with those who are different from ourselves, and particularly with those whose voices we have silenced, will often require learning a new language—literally. Eight of the calabash breakers, when asked directly if they believed people, especially faculty, should these days be at least bilingual, answered “Yes.” The Latino went so far as to say, “If we really were intercultural then we should be multilingual,” something the Pākehā woman affirmed. “I can’t see how you would use just one dominant language [in truly

²¹⁷ Compare, bell hooks, *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 63–68. “To lecture or not.”

intercultural theological education]. I think there has to be the ability for students to work in more than one language...so they can fully express their cultural worldview rather than having to fit within [another].” The reflections of the eight collected around two particular reasons.

The first reason is that there is important symbolism residing in the effort to acknowledge, speak in and engage another’s language. As the wannabe Tongan noted, “language is a house of being,” so to acknowledge and speak it reverences the other’s place of dwelling.²¹⁸ This is something Honoré passionately believes. “When I was vicar...I had one old, old...lady whose first language was Māori. Now I had very little Māori in those days [(he is now fluent)] but I could decently manage the Lord’s Prayer if the text was in front of me. One day I took this old lady, who was blind and pretty well house-bound her holy communion [and] I prayed the Lord’s Prayer. Now she was pretty deaf and she didn’t say anything to me but she told the lay minister who was very friendly with her...‘Oh, that minister speaks Māori.’ Now you see I didn’t then, but it was enough to bridge the gap and at that most sacred moment she heard what she needed, what her heart needed to hear. Now, that’s the minimum but it’s so significant in terms of its symbolic value.

“We all have the responsibility to go to the uncomfortable place, and even if we’re never going to be fluent we”—and he began to rhythmically bang on the table to emphasise his words—“must continually make the effort because of its symbolic value.” He stopped and lowered the volume of his voice. “And that’s just a little passion of mine. I’m probably not going to have a whole chorus to sing with me but it won’t stop me singing because I think it’s really, really important.”

That symbolic value also becomes important, from another perspective, for those who, like African Americans, speak English, but their own version of it. hooks is one who has argued for allowing such people to speak in reinvented and vernacular language in the classroom.²¹⁹ It is, she claims, an important site of resistance for those who have been forced to operate in a dominant language in Western contexts. Speaking it not only becomes a counter-hegemonic act—the similarity but dissimilarity of the “house of being” questioning

²¹⁸ It also, “is the only way to build real understanding,” as a Pākehā manager of a secular e-learning initiative with Māori who ended up choosing to learn te reo once said. Terry Neal, personal communication, 1 May, 2006.

²¹⁹ hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 167–75.

assumptions regarding “what is”—but also demands an important change of perception from the inside for those who believe standard English should be the standard.

The second reason for advocating the use of more than one language expressed itself in a real sense of frustration felt by those for whom English is not their first language. Not only do they feel there is little space for them to legitimately express themselves in their mother tongue, but the hegemony of English is a constant reminder of the extra effort they have to expend to make themselves understood.²²⁰ The Latino man lamented, “There’s things I know of my own culture that I find difficult to express in English. It would be wonderful to just be able to talk to people in my own language.” Meanwhile, the Tongan man, reflecting on the context in Aotearoa New Zealand, had this to say: “You people, you never thought about [the importance of learning other languages] because only the one language you speak...[and] your comfort zones only admit mother tongue speakers...See us? We have to work hard because we speak your language and we speak our language...It’s hard work but you people you...never try.”

Learning, welcoming, and creating space for the languages of others is not something necessarily appreciated or expected beyond missiology or religious studies classes in many theological education settings.²²¹ For one thing, if it is to become part of the life of a class, course or community, it will demand, from educators and students alike, openness to the unfamiliar and unknown. It may require fluency on the part of lecturers, or if not that, translators whom one can fund and trust for class discussion or assignment work. It may also involve taking risks in academic standards. Will we trust bi- or multi-lingual colleagues to apply standards consistently? Is there any room to be creative in how one applies expectations? These in fact highlight the heart of a huge dilemma in Western education. It is so much easier and more efficient to operate with “one rule to rule them all.” To grapple

²²⁰ One could go further and add that the language of those in power can even have the “sound of slaughter and conquest” for others. hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 169.

²²¹ Judith Berling, a Professor of Chinese and Comparative Religion in the United States, is one who has committed herself over years to becoming fluent in Chinese language and worldview. She believes it is important in our current world context that Christians be able to engage with religious others but has “struggled to discern the most realistic and effective way to bring the perspectives of Asian religions into...theological education.” Judith A. Berling, *Understanding Other Religious Worlds: A Guide for Interreligious Education* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2004), ix. In this book she offers some ways forward.

with our use of language and how we think about it would change how we know what we know, threatening, according to hooks, seismic shifts in current philosophy and practice.²²²

So
on a personal note,
what about me
the educator who
is not bilingual?
Sure I can speak
and/or
understand
something of
three other languages
but
I am fluent in only my mother tongue
English.
And would I be happy to let a student
speak in reinvented
vernacular English?

I guess
herein lies the challenge
to learn another language
to be open to another “tongue.”

I said I wanted this research
to ring authentically true
in its method
in its content
in its presentation...
and I want it also
to ring authentically true
in me.

So, Rosemary,
if you are listening
to what is being said here
it needs to be
a matter of
when
not
if.

²²² hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 174. This topic will appear again in the next chapter.

Postscript

A story told by the Italian American man offers a practical illustration of what this section of the chapter has discussed: relationship conducted as *manākitanga*, where mission-in-reverse is being practiced and there is a commitment to learning the language of the other, offers to those in power a way to genuinely listen to, hear and engage with those whose voices have been silenced. This story usefully and starkly juxtaposes the limitations of unidirectional speaking against, to borrow from Sherron George, an Anglo American missiologist, “two-way mission in which transformation and the exchange of gifts are mutual.”²²³ Drawn from outside of the theological education setting, it also indicates something of the theological challenges that might arise, Christian-to-Christian and beyond.

“2005 my son and I were going to Turkey for about six weeks. I was going to do some research, learn some Turkish...and we were being hosted by a Turkish movement that I had been involved with for a few years, and that were just wonderful people. On the plane over, there happened to be a Muslim colleague...[He was] going to Syria to see relatives for the summer and I greeted him.

“Unbeknownst to me there was a group of young missionaries in the back. They all had the same polo shirts on with some logo and they were all like late-teens, early twenties...I get a tap on the shoulder about an hour into the flight and they want to ask me about this guy and my relationship to him, and ‘Who are you?’ Well, long story short...they’re missionaries going to Turkey to convert the Turks to...Christianity and they discover that I’m a Christian...I said, ‘So can you tell me a little about what you know about Turkish people, Turkish culture, speaking Turkish? Do you know anything about Islam?’ and one young lady just spoke up very, very sincerely and said, ‘Well, all we know is what we need to know: that they’re good people with bad ideas.’

“Now the bad ideas aren’t their economic system. It’s their religion...[However], a human being’s religion is their quest for the face of God. No matter what you may think of it, no matter you may think of its flaws, its values, its strengths, its weaknesses, it is their quest for the face of God and therefore mediates their dignity to them in fundamental ways so that you

²²³ Sherron K. George, “From Missionary to Missiologist at the Margins: Three Decades of Transforming Mission,” in *Teaching Mission in a Global Context*, ed. Patricia Lloyd-Sidle and Bonnie Sue Lewis (Louisville: Geneva Press, 2001), 41.

cannot pretend to love a Muslim and hate Islam. It is simply not possible because if you actualize in any honest way your hatred of Islam you can't be a friend to a Muslim. They will not accept you as a friend. They may...say 'fine, but you cannot have a relationship with me because you hate who I am.'

"By sheer coincidence we were on the same flight going back—or maybe not, as Muslims would say...They were dejected and the language I was hearing was 'Hardened hearts'...[I asked] 'So what happened?' They told me their stories. [I said], 'Let me share with you a story, and I hope you take it in the right spirit because I have deep respect for your faith in our Lord and I consider you sisters and brothers.

"I gave a talk while I was in Turkey to eighty seminarians in one of their graduate schools of theology...who are going to be in the pulpits of different mosques within the next two years. I got to talk to them about what I do, what I teach. I got to answer questions that they had about Christian belief. I got to witness. I got to evangelize in what I feel is the truest sense: without an agenda, without a motivation to co-opt, adopt, or transfer, and the only reason I could do that was because it was in the context of dialogue...And there were times for proclamation because in dialogue you have to share honestly what it is you believe, otherwise it's not dialogue if you're trying to...not give the full story...But the bottom line is there was trust and there were relationships and so the witness can take place and happened vice versa. It happened all the time. I studied Islam. They were constantly witnessing to me. But you know it takes place in the relationship of trust and mutual respect and that can happen because...I actually have deep respect for their tradition and don't think it's my place to 'lead them out of it' in that way. The only place it is for me to do is witness to Christ as a member of the body of Christ. And also I guess, the other way I've thought about it...is that it is the difference between thinking you're bringing Christ to someone and bringing your relationship with Christ into your relationship with another human being. These are two very different things."

To choose to listen
really listen
to the other we have silenced
and
to discover
two-way mission
inside

and
outside
the classroom
will
I am realising
mess with theology
potentially
change answers to
Who is God?
and
What does it mean to be human?
open up
the possibility of conversion
redefine faithfulness
demand a commitment to
speaking God's truth
and a commitment to
listening for it as well
redefine mission
simultaneously
focus
and
e x p l o d e
our identity as
pilgrims
and
lift the responsibility for
effecting transformation
in others
off our shoulders
and put it firmly
where it belongs—
on God's.

The world I have lived in is shaking...

In the classroom and professional practice

As the calabash breakers reflected on what it means to truly listen to others, especially those who are typically silenced, they spoke about their own attempts to do this in the classroom and in their professional practice. Thoughts ranged from the value of collaborative learning to handling power dynamics, catering for differing learning styles, taking care in choosing class readings (at this point a particular concern regarding current expectations in scholarly writing was expressed by two calabash breakers), team-teaching, and valuing curiosity and imagination.

Collaborative learning

It is important for Andraos that students understand that “your story counts as a source for theological reflection and the production of theological knowledge...and you are not here as a consumer of theology but as a co-contributor.” In the classroom, therefore, he and his colleagues “emphasize collaborative ways of learning...group work, and dialogue” and only occasionally lecture. He mentioned that they have to plan very carefully, and during class frequently revise in the interests of creating a sense of connective process to the elements of learning. “So we keep constantly coming back to the story and it’s not only personal...but to one’s own story as part of a community of faith, as part of a people...a church...a country—language, heritage, tradition, etc...So it’s a spiral model.” He added, “It’s a profound conversion to see that we’re not doing it just to affirm our identity. It’s a question of the contribution to knowledge.” He went on to speak of the resistance he receives from some of the students who would prefer simply to know what will be in the exam, wary not only of the hard work that engagement requires but the decentering of authority it brings.²²⁴

Two calabash breakers were concerned to express that ensuring all contribute to knowledge must not mean lowering standards or being uncritical. Te Paa has high expectations of all her students, no matter who they are, something that she has received criticism for from students and colleagues alike. She insists that scholarly rigor must be maintained. The question then becomes: Who sets those standards, and how? Meanwhile the Asian American man made a point of warning that if, in the bid to listen to everyone, people end up “so burdened by being politically correct they don’t dare say anything...I don’t think that’s taking people or scholarship seriously. I think you need to push and critique what people try to say in the

²²⁴ See hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 39–43. One of the supervisors for this research, Susan Smith, recounted how, in her experience, students for whom English is not their first language seemed to prefer the banking method of a lecturer at the front of the classroom and set texts. She suspected this was because it “gave them a sense of security” and an assurance that they would pass if they just learned what they were given. It may also, or instead, have been that if the material was written down it would enable them to go over it in their own time to make sure they understood correctly.

There is a real challenge in such an observation to balance convictions and creativity with realism. Students may not always, for whatever reason, be able to operate to our ideals. This should not be, however, justification for resting with the status quo; it just offers a challenge to take time to understand their background and show care and consistency as we seek to train students in new modes of learning that assist the goal of intercultural education. Greer Anne Wenh-In Ng, a Chinese Canadian specialist in Christian education, has written a very helpful and thoughtful article exploring the ways in which liberative pedagogies might seek to engage with students from a Confucian background. Greer Anne Wenh-In Ng, “From Confucian Master Teacher to Freirian Mutual Learner: Challenges in Pedagogical Practice and Religious Education,” *Religious Education* 95/3 (Summer 2000): 308–319.

name of context.” He did note, as he spoke, that “of course that can’t happen until you’ve really learned something about that context.”²²⁵

Handling power dynamics

In order to facilitate a high standard of contribution to knowledge by all, power dynamics need to be taken into consideration. For certain cultures, as two calabash breakers particularly noted, the opportunity for students in class activities to work first in mono-ethnic groups gives them time, as Hitchen said, “to develop, to get [their] own strength to be able to come...as an equal partner to the dialogue.” Knowing this, the Asian American man takes a “both/and approach” in his classroom. “So I think there has to be spaces that are racially specific; spaces that are specifically for, say Asian Americans, whether that’s a discussion group within a class, or even a class....But along with that if you just have that then you end up being ghettoized and there’s no conversation....So, it is important for minoritized or marginalized voices to be part of basic required or so-called foundational classes, but at other times you also need the racial specific groupings and courses.” Operating in this way can be risky. St John’s College in Aotearoa New Zealand, a theological college training Anglican priests and laypeople, has, for example, been accused, in its attempts to operate the both/and at institutional level, of apartheid.²²⁶

Significant research undertaken in the 1980s by Geert Hofstede, a Dutch sociologist, fully supports the need to pay attention to power dynamics.²²⁷ Studying people from forty different nations in their workplaces, Hofstede discovered that while some cultures promote individual voice, others find power in groups. In Western culture, power is vested in the individual and so, in educational settings where students are expected to be able to speak eloquently for themselves, those from group-oriented cultures will remain silent unless, like the approach of the Asian American man, provision is made to let them speak within a safe space, such as among members of their own racial/ethnic group.

²²⁵ This comment reflects the emphasis in this thesis on paying attention first to identity-in-relation in order to help facilitate genuine “meeting” (as adapted from Buber).

²²⁶ The critique of “apartheid,” as well as a noting of other risks that mono-ethnic grouping can bring within an institution, is made in Graeme J. Davidson, “Is It Anglican to Practise Apartheid?,” <http://www.theologicaleditions.com/Features/3tikanga.htm>, (cited 22 September, 2010).

²²⁷ Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*, abridged ed. (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1987). For a discussion of power dynamics in church and seminary settings see Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb*, 13–43.

Two other calabash breakers aware of such issues are the African American woman and the laywoman from the United States. The former allows students to self-define through storytelling and then self-select their small group in the opening classes. The latter also allows students to self-select those with whom they will work by specifically designing activities that facilitate this. She ensures that on the “first day of class there’s always an elaborate, very thought-through exercise for people to get to know each other at a deeper level than you normally do and for them to name what they bring to the class.” Acting off the information they discover that day and in further conversation, students are then able to gradually align themselves with those who interest or intrigue them and/or with whom they feel an affinity. This woman described how, engaging both an understanding of power dynamics and a commitment to seeing all contribute to knowledge, she requires—and trusts—the students in small groups or pairs to “design a final project that is a better interface of their own background, and interests with the course than if they just...got a topic.” Time for working on this and exploring and testing their particular angles with each other is woven into the course design. In addition, she invites “them to be as creative as they want to be in terms of learning styles and all that [when they present]—anything short of nude dancing!...So they know that there always has to be a critical conversation, that’s the goal, but how you get to that is opened up and it relaxes people and they have a whole lot more fun.”

Catering for differing learning styles

The issue of learning styles, or multiple intelligences, is one that Kim-Cragg particularly wanted to discuss.²²⁸ As the Asian American man said, “Just like people are from different places and have different cultures, people learn differently.” According to Kim-Cragg, too often the emphasis in Western education is “on the writing and research and rational and logical [and] analytical.” Such an emphasis, she believes, is another way of silencing people, albeit unintentionally. She went on to say “I think it is important to stress and emphasise further right brain activities like kinaesthetic or visual and other parts of learning so that, you know, all different students will share their gifts, and value their gifts as they are.” Of course, if learning styles or multiple intelligences are to be taken seriously, this will impact accepted

²²⁸ The work of Howard Gardner has been seminal in this regard: Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic, 1983).

methods of assessment. In an educational culture committed to essay and exam writing, there may well be significant resistance to change.²²⁹

Perry Shaw, an Australian theological educator who has worked for years in Asia and the Middle East, recently noted that the “almost universally accepted shape of advanced theological study is linear, specific, analytic, hypothesis-driven, and individualistic-competitive.”²³⁰ However this, he says, is “globally atypical,” the domain of Western white males. “The general pattern of information processing throughout most of the non-Western world tends towards holism and networked thinking.”²³¹ It is also how women tend to operate. The culture and gender imperialism that is at work, Shaw argues, creates “bondage” to a system that, while it has offered much, is too narrow to meaningfully engage and serve the breadth of cultures sitting in our classrooms, let alone include and value the female half of the population. He advocates “broad-stroke multidisciplinary study,” priority for action research, affirmation of the affective element in reflection and writing, emphasis on relational learning including collaboration, an oral examination rather than a written thesis as the preferred form of assessment for Masters and PhD, and a commitment to “contextualised methodology in theological reflection” (for example, welcoming storytelling, narrative, poetry, proverb, and epic from those whose cultures value such forms).²³²

Choosing class reading

A further point raised by several calabash breakers concerned decisions made around class reading choice. A number of them work with readers rather than textbooks because, as the Latina said, in what you ask students to read, “you establish a canon” and you need to think about the messages that canon is sending about whose voices are worth hearing. “If,” Kim-

²²⁹ In the 1990s in Aotearoa New Zealand, those developing the secondary school English curriculum, conscious of increasingly multicultural classrooms, took steps to acknowledge multiple intelligences by requiring educators to design written, oral, and visual elements into every module of work and assignment. Interestingly, a recently finished research project has discovered that these requirements have been completely ignored in most upper-level schools with large Maori and Pacific populations, because they don't feed into the university entrance exams. This indicates something of the resistance that exists where a system is dominated in regard to standards by one cultural way of recognising scholarship. Philip Culbertson and Margaret Agee, “‘If They Get to Know Me Well, Then They’ll Find out the Rest’: Shifting Concepts of ‘Afakasi Identity among Pasifika Youth,’” [forthcoming].

²³⁰ Perry W.H. Shaw, “‘New Treasures with the Old’: Addressing Culture and Gender Imperialism in Higher Level Theological Education,” in *Tending the Seedbeds: Educational Perspectives on Theological Education in Asia*, ed. Allan Harkness, (Quezon City: Asia Theological Association, 2010), 47.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 53.

²³² *Ibid.*, 67–68. This topic will be revisited in the next chapter because—as has already been indicated—it impacts on curriculum and assessment practices.

Cragg said, “a textbook is always the old guys in Europe...you are saying basically without telling it verbally...[that they are] more important.” The Asian American man is therefore “quite intentional to present different materials by people from different backgrounds, from different racial and ethnic groups, [and] make these required readings....If I have books assigned I will have people reading from those books like either one by one or concurrently to take away the idea that there is one basic text that is foundational to everything else.” Kim-Cragg concluded, “So when you create a course, create a syllabus, think about which materials that you want students to buy.” From a professional point of view, taking care over such decisions is one way that scholars can support each other and, using each other as source and resource, as the Latina said, “get people in our different circles to reach each other.” This is something which she believes brings “justice in the academy.”

Meanwhile, something that brings injustice in the academy, according to the Latina, concerns academic writing itself. “This happens to us all the time...Someone wants to know about the Latin@ community, the Latin@ theologies, just speaking from one [book]. They don’t quote us, they quote the white guy who wrote about us and who made his money off of us—and I purposely used ‘white guy’ at that point because...it’s mostly been he....[So he] makes his money off of Latin@ theologies, picks and chooses which ones will get [emphasized]...paraphrases them [and] makes them the icon. Then one of us dares to say ‘homage to the great father...but so-and-so’s...concept...is flawed at this level,’ and that person’s work gets slapped down in a critique. We’re like, wait a minute, ‘Who died and left you god of Latin@ theology?’ I like to say it’s like, you can accompany us and we can accompany each other...but accompaniment employs the model of walking with, not stealing somebody’s shoes and running off with them!”²³³

This critique strikes at the heart of long-held expectations and assumptions about what constitutes “good” academic writing, and the ethics thereof. She is saying that it is not acceptable to take another’s words, paraphrase them, ignore their wider context and the opinions of the scholars of their own group that they are interacting with, and make money off of them.²³⁴ She is therefore issuing a challenge to educators as they choose their texts: decisions made aware or unaware of the politics that lie behind each text will necessarily

²³³ This can be perpetrated by the most well-meaning of people. See footnote 28. Precisely because they are well-meaning others assume their work is worthy and make use of it.

²³⁴ This echoes some of the discussion in chapter two.

involve one in the politics of justice or injustice. It is important to make well-informed choices.

Prioritising universalism or generalisation as good scholarship, long practiced in Western circles, riles Kim-Cragg. She said of the keynote speaker at a conference: “This guy...[was] interested in covering whole spectrum of whatever theme, as if he [is the only] authority who can do this comprehensively. I’m not interested in that anymore. Because so what?! You covered this area, and so what?! What has it to do with this context?...He was busy covering and broadening all the issues but....there’s no heart in it because as an observer you can cover up whole issues...I don’t think that will have a transforming power of theological education if they keep doing it that way.” Judith Berling, a Professor of Chinese and Comparative Religion in the United States, has suggested that this is due to a Western impatience to consume and then get on with life. It creates a willingness to work only with information that is neatly packaged, summarised, and well-structured. The resulting “easier” way to understand and deal with that information has produced, in her opinion, people reluctant to truly engage with other voices and “an increasingly inward-looking, isolated, and atrophied church.”²³⁵ It could be argued that such critique is directly linked to the rise of contextual theology, within which most of the interviewed scholars would locate. It is, however, entirely consistent with their emphasis on particularity as one of the areas needing to be addressed if intercultural theological education is to be realised—something discussed in chapter four.

Team-teaching

Modelling collegiality and solidarity across cultures, one particular calabash breaker noted, is another way to encourage engagement with diversity because it “walks the talk.” This can be achieved by the educator being personally involved in crossing cultures but also by him or her inviting others in to team teach.” In the opinion of the Italian American man working in the area of Muslim-Christian relations, “Giving students an opportunity to actually build relationships with someone like me who is one of them, one of their faith community, but who crosses these boundaries all the time, someone who does so very gracefully and sometimes very clumsily and [transparently] tries to learn from these experiences is important. It’s also important that they...have Muslim teachers that they come to respect

²³⁵ Berling, *Understanding Other Religious Worlds*, 3.

who will be evaluating their work, who will be responding to their thoughts, and ideas, and who will also be there for them to have lunch with, and talk with about any variety of things.” In his case, he teaches all but one of his courses with a Muslim colleague with whom he has an almost father-son relationship, referring to himself as the “son” since the colleague is, in fact, his spiritual mentor. This is something he believes is the most important piece of loving and respectful intercultural modelling that he personally does.

At issue here, of course, is not only a financial commitment, paying for the extra educator, but also the ethical-theological question of whether a Muslim should teach in a Christian institution. For some, such commitments may prove too difficult to embrace, but in wrestling with the question of how to realise truly intercultural theological education, such issues will inevitably arise in some form or another, because speaking about something is not the same as living it: the lack of integrity will expose the words as empty. This man is even more radical in that he invites Muslim students to become a genuine part of his classes, not to convert them but to engender real dialogue, and thereby bring a further integrity to his teaching of Muslim-Christian relations.

Would I
would we
be willing to go that far?
It's a risk
not just for the Christians
but for Muslims...Hindus, Buddhists
as well

Valuing curiosity and imagination

As this section draws to a close, there are two things that Harrison touched on that usefully tie together the ideas expressed here for facilitating and practising listening and manākitanga in pedagogical and professional practice. “I used to say to the students that there are two really important values that I hope they held and they were curiosity, and imagination.” She warned, however, that “some of Christianity dumbs down curiosity and imagination...People are told what to believe and they’re not allowed to be curious. I don’t think we teach people curiosity—and you can. I don’t think we teach people imagination—

and you can.²³⁶ And I certainly think that imagination is seen as a dangerous place.” Harrison believed that curiosity and imagination were modelled by Christ in his “willingness to apprehend the goodness of the other and that’s what call[ed] the reaching out.” But it entails taking risks, and, in her opinion, when it comes to the educators themselves, “I don’t think we take enough risks with our teaching.”

Curiosity:

“a state in which you want to learn more about something”²³⁷
 but more than that
 that probes deeply,
 often in the interests of finding
 genuine understanding

and

Imagination:

something that
 opens the door to empathy,
 helps us step outside of our own worldviews
 to know the other,
 and enables our own horizons to
 e x p a n d
 beyond what we accept as given.²³⁸

Risky business indeed.

It won’t let me stay with the known
 control my world
 live comfortably.
 Am I up for it?

The theological educator

A rhetorical question asked by Kim-Cragg usefully recalls the second question to which this chapter attempts to offer answers: “How [then] do you...be an innovative and transforming agent as a theological educator at the same time you still carry out the traditions and histories

²³⁶ The work of the Anglo American educational philosopher Maxine Greene makes a particularly strong case for the possibilities of imagination in the classroom. Maxine Greene, *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), 3ff. hooks has recently also made a case for imagination in the classroom: see hooks, *Teaching Critical Thinking*, 59–62.

²³⁷ Definition taken from <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=curiosity>, (cited 22 February, 2011).

²³⁸ This is the essence of Greene’s argument: Greene, *Releasing the Imagination*.

Albert Einstein once said: “Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world.” Albert Einstein, *Cosmic Religion: With Other Opinions and Aphorisms* (New York: Covici-Friede, 1931), 97.

and our past?” By way of response, a number of qualities were suggested by the calabash breakers—a sense of adventure, respect for others, openness, interdisciplinary interests, a willingness to count the cost and patience—as well as two evocative metaphors offered by Kim-Cragg—the quilter and the midwife.²³⁹

In the opinion of Gittins, being an innovative and transforming agent as a theological educator requires “an adolescent sense of adventure. You have to have a degree of imagination and you have to have a fair amount of flexibility. If you want the creature comforts then [it’s not going to work], but if you’re interested and curious and imaginative...” When asked how he then inspires that in others, he replied that, for him, “It’s kinda contagious. Either people get contaminated or they don’t. Some people will get put off because it will be far too threatening to their comfort, but other people...will be excited.” There is actually a sobering warning in there that echoes Harrison’s words above: this approach is risky. Others may or may not come with us—students or colleagues.²⁴⁰

I know that
 fears and antagonisms
 and who
 and where
 they come from
 are not always possible to predict
 in anyone.
 They have certainly arisen in me.
 No matter how
 adventurous
 or magnanimous
 I might be feeling
 they can quite suddenly
 turn up
 when I least expect it.

Gittins continued, “I simply start off by making a contrast between any word you can think of which describes a pursuit, like a walk or a stroll or a weekend or a vacation or a day-off, and an adventure, because all of those other words are bounded. You control them...If you’re on a vacation you know when you’re half over. But an adventure...you certainly

²³⁹ As a further, complimentary resource to the ideas presented by the calabash breakers in this section see, S. Steve Kang’s chapter “The Formation Process in a Learning Community” in Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett, *A Many Colored Kingdom*, 151–66. There he explores the educator as model, friend, enabler, innovator, and questioner.

²⁴⁰ Regarding the idea of education as a risky adventure and the possibility that colleagues and students either may or may not come with us, see hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 35–44.

don't know...If you want to get involved in anything...other than to control people or to control programmes, then you have to have that adventuresome thing, because otherwise you'll simply want to do it your way." An example of "doing it your way" was given by the laywoman from the United States who spoke of faculty who "have old-fashioned ideas about what standards are and they simply won't bend on that." She said that instead, what is needed is imagination to "help students think of a...project that is more suitable to the context they come from and are going back to and will do more for them, that still intersects with the course." She did admit, however, that, "it takes a lot of imagination on the part of the faculty member to work with the student to figure out how you could find that form of intersection," and that "some people find it incredibly threatening [to]...their authority."

Honoré, when reflecting on these things, suggested that "if we are not on the same page [as others we should] at least understand which pages we ourselves are on and discover that maybe we don't need to be on the same page, but if we're part of the same volume—to borrow a nice John Donne sort of image—maybe what's on the next page on our path as teachers and leaders is important in the whole scheme of things. I'm wanting to look for complementarity...not conformity. I'm increasingly comfortable with multiple voices and multiple understandings...There's something dialogical about education that I want to see happen: genuine, respectful conversations which lead to mutual benefit, and mutual understanding...[It is] when we are unsure of ourselves, or unsure how our colleagues feel about us I think we then lose nerve. So, I guess there's something about safety and mutual respect among colleagues that is important."

To older faculty members, Matsuoka offered the following challenge, which speaks to the notion of finding safety: "I think...we begin to appreciate the weight of tradition as we get older because we need something to fall back to, and the trick for us is that we have to realize that there's no home, and we have to live in the very tensioned, very liminal, very what I would call 'translocal' world. We are, as we Asian Americans would say, really...people 'on the way' and can we negotiate our longing for something secure, a secure home, and at the same time be open to something we don't know?"²⁴¹

²⁴¹ This is a very biblical concept, really. Compare, for example, the story of the people of Israel across the Pentateuch.

Liminality is not just a challenge to those who would be secure, however; it also sets up a challenge to “specialisation and...the reductive narrowing that’s going on in Western theological education [as a result].” Hitchen, speaking these words, expressed his gratitude that he’s never specialised and therefore narrowed his own understandings of, for example, scripture down to one interpretive lens. Interestingly, for the Asian American man, a commitment to interdisciplinarity comes naturally simply “because I did not realize that you’re not supposed to [talk to other people outside your discipline].” In a context where specialisation is the hallowed norm, interdisciplinarity suggests a greater openness to conversation across differences, something more fitting as a scholarly model for the would-be intercultural setting where a commitment to listening to other voices is essential.²⁴²

In addition to qualities of adventuring, imagination, respect, and interdisciplinarity, three calabash breakers particularly mentioned that a theological educator engaged in trying to listen to silenced voices must be able to accept that there will be a cost. Harrison said that “it’s a personal cost...We actually have to [to be willing to] face crucifixion. We actually have to face rejection, and dereliction, and loneliness and people around us who don’t get it...I know that. I know that intimately.” The Italian American man knows that intimately also. For him it has come from the context of one working across faith cultures. His attempts to engage have generated misunderstanding from others in power and even hate mail. “You know, ‘dialogue’ sounds really nice. It’s a very nice-sounding word like ‘reconciliation’...but this work is hard work and its dangerous work. You can get hurt.” For the laywoman from the United States, part of the price of engaging meaningfully with others has been sacrificing her own research and writing as she has prioritised mentoring students. “Yes I give more of my life...There’s always a price...But I decided at one point that, you know, I’m producing more scholarship through the synergy of mentoring these students than just if I’m writing myself...I’m still writing but I’m just writing a bit more slowly.” She has also practised honesty about who she is, even to the point of disadvantaging herself, in order to inspire honesty in others (she identifies as a lesbian).

A sixth characteristic offered by a calabash breaker is patience. The American woman offered a parable to explain; she called it “The Art of Soup-making.” It was the story of a

²⁴² A search on Google Scholar turned up only one article, written in 1984, arguing for interdisciplinary research in theological education, though for different reasons than this thesis is presenting. Kay, William K. and Leslie J. Francis, “The Seamless Robe: Interdisciplinary Enquiry in Religious Education,” *British Journal of Religious Education* 7, no. 2 (1984): 2, 64–67.

Native American woman taking over a year to teach her how to make soup. The woman taught her step by step, allowing her to absorb one thing at a time, no more, no less, and eventually did not return but simply trusted her to be responsible for the soup-making herself. She had taught her as she would a child, and the lessons stuck. Introducing a new way of thinking and behaving takes time; it cannot be rushed. In a world driven by such things as PBRF,²⁴³ as in Aotearoa New Zealand, where educational product outweighs process when measuring success, patience in the educator, let alone in the institution, is practiced at a price.

Interestingly, none of the calabash breakers in their interviews specifically mentioned “reflective” or “facilitator” as qualities needed by theological educators hoping to enable their students to listen to silenced voices. These qualities are worth adding. If, for example, Dunne’s previously mentioned process of “passing over and coming back” is to happen effectively, being able to reflect will be critical. Moreover, in order to lead others through that process, it will be important to approach it as a facilitator, for experiences and responses cannot be typecast or “banked” and the purpose of listening is to learn to appreciate not just one voice, but many.

Another kind of reflective facilitation is needed also. To follow a line of thought from Berling, educators who are able to balance their authority as experts familiar with the central discourse of their discipline with a different authority as people skilled in working at the boundaries between the worlds of their students and their discipline are dearly needed.²⁴⁴ Modelling and guiding the learning of new languages and new ways of thinking and welcoming socially constructed knowledge is not, she suggests, generally well done because few critically reflect on the processes and purposes of learning and teaching in their rush to engage with the subject material.²⁴⁵

The closest a calabash breaker came to speaking of facilitation and reflection was in the two metaphors offered by Kim-Cragg in response to her own question of how the theological educator can be an innovative and transforming agent, without denying the heritage they work within. These two metaphors in fact encompass the six other qualities that have been

²⁴³ Performance Based Research Fund. For more information visit <http://www.tec.govt.nz/Funding/Fund-finder/Performance-Based-Research-Fund-PBRF/>

²⁴⁴ Berling, *Understanding Other Religious Worlds*, 32–33.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

mentioned, as well as adding a deeper dimension of their own, namely, the quality of nurture. The two metaphors are the quilter and the midwife.²⁴⁶

“These are not new metaphors...You know...the beauty of quilting is the fact that it is full of different colours and shapes and textures that somehow co-exist in a piece of work. So therefore, if our world is one piece of quilt then you really must have different colours, different patterns, different textures, even different themes...Each person and each living thing—all creation—has a place to contribute to this piece of art that is a quilt. So I want to see theological education as an agent of such quilting. It’s doing, it’s not just talking. It’s creative because you do create something new out of this all different cloth, and pieces, and it’s usually for the common good. You do not make a quilt for yourself...Everyone who does that is thinking of someone else, you know, and I think that’s how we, as Christians, are called to be, right?

“The other part, as a teacher, is a midwife...Midwife wouldn’t be needed if there is no life coming out to the world or being born, right? So therefore I think our work as a theological educator is about life. You are dealing with life and you want to be life-giving, life-celebrating...It’s about nurturing, but you are not doing it, you are helping, you are assisting, and you are accompanying. I like that word: *accompanying*...A midwife, I think, really knows how to wait and let things happen, rather than ‘I can do everything’. I think as Christians, at the end of the day it’s the Spirit that really makes things happen. It’s not us, but we are assisting.”

The accompanying
in her talk
of being
a midwife
I very much like
although
I think
from experience
that I would want to
move the metaphors
over
and explore the thought
that both
the chief quilter

²⁴⁶ In Hill’s research those he spoke with also used the metaphor of the midwife. Others that were suggested were “cojourner” and a “set of windows.” Hill, “Fighting the Elephant in the Room,” 8.

and
the midwife
are
in fact
perhaps
the Spirit...

which makes me
her assistant.

In my classroom
I have been conscious
that
my role was to set the scene
provide the tools
and further resources
(voices written)
to join those
in front of me
to ensure the tissues
and hot cloths
were there
the bath filled
the water
and snacks
on hand
to help sustain
the journey
to ensure
we were all
prepared
for the work of the
quilter
the guiding care of the
midwife
as new life was being born
in all of us.²⁴⁷

Whether one argues that the quilter or midwife is the educator or the Holy Spirit, a comment from Hitchen reminds those of us working as theological educators of an important limitation we face: “There are some things that are caught, not taught and you can throw the ball but you can’t guarantee it will be caught. And it’s even more complicated than that

²⁴⁷ Australian theologian Denis Edwards, is one who explores the role of Spirit as midwife (and also companion), though in the context of a creation groaning in the pangs of childbirth (Rom. 8:22) waiting for salvation and new creation. Denis Edwards, *Breath of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2006), 105–16.

because the means by which a particular person or a particular group of people from a particular cultural setting actually have that encounter, or that experience, varies and what works for one won't necessarily work for everybody else. And certainly what worked for me is no guarantee that it will be the same for them." Ultimately, we are all dependent on the One who is the Ultimate Educator to educate us all as we need to be.

As I reflect on
the lessons, and priorities
expressed across this chapter
and ponder the
qualities it has been suggested
here
a theological educator needs
I realise there is
One
who has modelled all this
listening to silenced voices
this manākitanga,
and shown that
on a human level
much is possible
though he also
had
the divine edge.

Jesus asked questions²⁴⁸
told open-ended stories²⁴⁹
focused his attention
in a crowd
on one²⁵⁰
took his time²⁵¹
heard beyond words
to heartache²⁵²
engaged earnestly²⁵³
responded respectfully²⁵⁴
cared²⁵⁵

²⁴⁸ Matt. 16:5–11; Mk. 10:46–52; Lk. 7: 36–50; Jn. 5:6.

²⁴⁹ Matt. 21:23–32; Mk. 4:33–34; Lk. 10:25–37. Recall footnote 83.

²⁵⁰ Mk. 2:1–5; 5:25–34; Lk. 13:10–13.

²⁵¹ Jn. 8:1–1: The woman caught in adultery. Law has noted what he considers the wisdom practised here by Jesus in creating space and then quietly making a comment that called for consideration of the situation from a different perspective. Law, *Inclusion*, 50.

²⁵² Jn. 4:1–26.

²⁵³ Jn. 3:1–21.

²⁵⁴ Matt. 8:5–13; Jn. 6:25–40.

²⁵⁵ Lk. 10:38–42.

quietly pointed out
the deep worth
of an unexpected neighbour²⁵⁶
affirmed²⁵⁷
took risks²⁵⁸
and walked the line
performed justice²⁵⁹
called people on²⁶⁰
counted the cost
accepted rejection²⁶¹
was changed.²⁶²

And as the Spirit took up where he left off,
the role of
the quilter and midwife
continues.

It was/is
not
violent teaching—
competitive
unilateral
alienating—
but
redemptive—
evoking potential
bilateral
actualising the hope of a
better
welcoming
curious
imaginative
and just
world.²⁶³

²⁵⁶ Lk. 10:25–37.

²⁵⁷ Lk. 7:1–10.

²⁵⁸ Lk. 11:37–54.

²⁵⁹ Jn. 8:1–11.

²⁶⁰ Mk. 11:20–25.

²⁶¹ Matt. 19:16–22.

²⁶² Mk. 7:24–30.

²⁶³ Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, 11–21.

Summary

This chapter has sought to offer some answers to the two questions: How is one to engage deeply with the voices of silenced others in ways that forge genuine connections, that nurture and affirm, and that yet also open up space for critical interaction that may inspire transformation? What kind of educator is needed to model and lead this? In response to the first it has been suggested that relationship with hospitality at its core, mission-in-reverse as a pre-requisite to that and a commitment to learning other languages are necessary elements in any attempt to engage the other. In the classroom and in professional practice collaborative learning, being aware of power dynamics, catering for differing learning styles, taking care in choosing class readings, team-teaching, and respecting the scholarship of fellow academics in their full particularity are specific methods that can help facilitate this. Meanwhile, the kind of educator that is needed, it is suggested, is one who is an adventurer, imaginative, respectful, interdisciplinary, patient, reflective, a facilitator, a quilter, and a midwife. In the next chapter an element of the second question, as it was reworded by the American woman, will be explored, that of allowing for transformation—more than that, the necessity for it in realising intercultural theological education.

Chapter Six: Experiencing Epistemic Ruptures

“I was blind, now I see.”

John 9:25

If we are to be transformed—growing and developing understanding of a world bigger than our own culture and church tradition as well as the ability to engage well with it—it is necessary for us to experience tearings in or challenges to the knowledge and assumptions in which our upbringings package us. As anthropologists know, we learn our worldviews and behaviours as if they were absolute and perfect and so it takes a significant rupture of what we know to change our intrinsic ethnocentrism.²⁶⁴ This chapter argues for a need for epistemic ruptures—the third area suggested by the interviewed calabash breakers—in ourselves, our classrooms, and our curricula in particular as we seek to realise theological education that is truly intercultural.

A question of terminology

The term “epistemic rupture” came from the interview with Andraos. According to him, it is too easy in educational circles to neglect the fact that transformational engagement in an intercultural context implies openness to being changed by the other. In order for mission-in-reverse to truly happen, he is convinced that there is “a need of a shock of some sort” that tears the known, and demands that we reexamine, even rethink our worldviews: an epistemic rupture.²⁶⁵

Admittedly, in his reflection, Andraos was pondering more the big-picture question of how to bring about change in educational philosophy and institutional systems than bringing change in individuals and he was arguing for the need for a significant break “like an epistemic shift...[from] a particular way of doing and thinking.” Referencing an article by a colleague, Riebe-Estrella, Andraos noted that so influential is the value system of the Enlightenment that rarely in the West is anyone prepared to question it for fear of

²⁶⁴ Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996), 45–46. In Kraft’s words, our ethnocentrism is changed only when we “have been intimidated by another people into believing our customs to be wrong.”

²⁶⁵ The equivalent New Testament term would be *metanoēō*, “which means to change one’s mind or to adopt another view.” Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett, *A Many Colored Kingdom*, 112. The Latin counterpart is “conversion.”

destabilising the whole educational enterprise on which it is built.²⁶⁶ As Andraos said in interview, “Christianity and its association with Western philosophy and categories of thought...has provided the language and the frameworks and the disciplines and the centres of knowledge...[And so] there is a need for a...rupture with certain thoughts to allow room for an alternative.”²⁶⁷ He added, “It could potentially create some fear in the centres of power because the notions of education and of church...are somehow rooted in the hierarchical structure of control, consciously or unconsciously, and anything that somehow shakes the structure [is a threat.]”

Andraos wanted to talk of rupture because to his mind “gradual reform” or “cosmetic adjustments” will not be enough to produce the thoroughgoing epistemological changes he perceives are needed to turn an essentially monocultural system into an intercultural one. He did make the observation, however, that such change “doesn’t have to be always violent.” Of course it is worth saying here that what is judged to be needed at the macro level is often necessarily begun at the micro level. To adapt a quote from Mother Teresa: oceans are made up of drops. Change on the personal level is crucial for inspiring change at the classroom or institutional level or higher. Widespread ownership of a significant push for change is very difficult to achieve where convictions born out of individual experience are lacking.

While an initial break or shock is often crucial for shifting understandings, Gittins, who was interviewed after Andraos, objected to the implication in the term “epistemic rupture” that what is needed is simply a one-off, cataclysmic event to bring change. It also sounds rather dramatic when talking about personal experience, where change might be more incremental. He preferred instead to talk of constant irritants that push a person “out of my own cocoon

²⁶⁶ Gary Riebe-Estrella, “Engaging Borders: Lifting Up Difference and Unmasking Division,” *Theological Education* 45/1 (2209): 23, quoted in Michel Andraos, “Engaging Diversity in Teaching Religion and Theology: An Intercultural, De-Colonial Epistemic Perspective,” (2010), [forthcoming].

²⁶⁷ An excellent example of a rupture allowing room for alternatives within modern Christian history has been the second Vatican Council of Roman Catholicism. German Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner has claimed that Vatican II was the beginning of the church’s “discovery and official realisation of itself as a *world-church*.” Karl Rahner, *Concern for the Church: Theological Investigations*, Vol. 20 (New York: Crossroads, 1981), 78. That the repercussions of the Council have also affected Protestants suggests Rahner’s claim is perhaps justified.

where I'm very safe, and very comfortable...[where] I just assume that that's just the way it is and should be."²⁶⁸

Perhaps it is worth exploring the possibility of holding both concepts together. Transformation that is true does imply a fundamental shift in thinking—a thorough-going epistemic rupture—however, in Christian thought, transformation is seen as an unfolding and lifelong process and thus across our lives there will be a series of tearings in what we know. Tearings therefore, whether in the interests of a person or institution or educational system or even a philosophy becoming intercultural, will be inspired by several encounters with quite different others across time, working as irritants in the way Gittins meant that word. To speak of epistemic ruptures in the plural could maintain something of the initial sense of shock created by a tearing in what we know, as well as acknowledge the fact that ongoing transformation will require many such tearings, not just one. Of course, an initial tearing, though significant for prising a topic open, may in fact prove less dramatic than subsequent ones on a similar theme.

Gittins provides further support for the case for speaking in the plural in *Bread for the Journey*.²⁶⁹ There he notes that certain (often evangelical) understandings of Christian conversion—effectively an epistemic rupture—see it as an abrupt supracultural change in perspective, what he calls “radical disjunction,” but in doing so fail to take account of the fact that wider context and history always provide “radical continuity” and hence a context for ongoing conversion.²⁷⁰ St Paul, whose Damascus road experience is often used to illustrate the need for radical disjunction, was one who spoke of the need for continuous renewal from within.²⁷¹ To recognise that it is a case of both/and would suggest that conversion is in fact a dynamic, complex, and ongoing process. Gittins also notes Carolyn Walker Bynum's claim that women experience contextualised evolution more often than

²⁶⁸ In anthropology this is the point of transition from just living one's culture—what we do around here—which has been learned as being absolute and perfect, to discovering difference which challenges our reality, helping us realise that not everyone does it like us.

²⁶⁹ Also, arguably for an approach that leans in favour of the less dramatic and incremental.

²⁷⁰ Gittins, *Bread for the Journey*, 39–42.

²⁷¹ E.g., Rom. 12:2. The Greek word translated “renewing” in this verse occurs in the present continuous tense.

one-off disjunction. Assuming she is right, to speak of epistemic rupture in the singular would thus have little relevance for half of the population.²⁷²

Another who has specifically reflected on this notion of epistemic ruptures and their importance in the process of transformation is Nancy Bedford, a theologian from the United States.²⁷³ The wider setting for her thoughts, found in a book exploring Latin American theology, is the experience of migration, which she claims has much, by way of analogy, to offer to theological reflection on the Christian life. She is particularly arguing that the dynamism inherent in talk of following and knowing Jesus, the divine immigrant, the Way, suggests that Christians, rather than looking for any particular *locus theologicus* at which to rest should in fact be speaking of God from more than one place as their faith journey unfolds. Journeying and the associated constant exposure to others has both negative and positive aspects, as migrants know, and these open up possibilities for “discovering and rediscovering the gospel (and [our]selves) in new ways.”²⁷⁴ Thus,

significant God-talk requires *epistemological ruptures*: I was once blind, but now I see; or I was once deaf, but now I hear; or even I once could see only as those who have eyes, but now I can start to see as those who are blind can see; and I can start to hear as those who are called deaf can hear.²⁷⁵

Before recounting stories from seven of the calabash breakers about particular experiences of epistemological ruptures that brought them new sight (space here permits only mention of one or two per person) it is worth noting alongside Bedford’s theological work the educational work of Mezirow. A key element of his influential transformational learning theory is this very idea of an epistemic rupture, or, in his terminology a “disorientating dilemma,” something that he believes educators should seek to stimulate.²⁷⁶

²⁷² Gittins, *Bread for the Journey*, 39, referencing Carolyn Walker Bynum, “Women’s Stories, Women’s Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner’s Theory of Liminality,” in *Anthropology and the Study of Religion*, ed. R Moore and F. Reynolds (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984), 105–25.

²⁷³ Nancy E. Bedford, “To Speak of God from More Than One Place: Theological Reflections from the Experience of Migration,” in *Latin American Liberation Theology: The Next Generation*, ed. Ivan Petrella (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2005), 95–118.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 110–11. Bedford does note that the kind of migrant lessons that she has had to learn, as one who is a member of a dominant culture, are quite different from those who enter another culture at a disadvantage. The upcoming stories of the calabash breakers will illustrate this.

²⁷⁶ Jack Mezirow, *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: A Guide to Transformative and Emancipatory Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 14. James Loder’s thinking around “transformative logic” has

The stimulation of transformation, in Mezirow's thinking, requires a disorientating dilemma that acts to trigger reflection on one's premises.²⁷⁷ Any given dilemma can either be epochal or incremental: note here the parallel with the previous discussion establishing the idea of epistemic ruptures. Ideally, such a dilemma would then inspire self-examination, critique of one's assumptions, discovery that others also are part of transformative processes, and then a gradual reassessment of roles and relationships in the light of emerging new perspectives.²⁷⁸ The educational environment, Mezirow believes, is a prime site for providing potential disorientating dilemmas and nurturing what he calls perspective transformation. Significantly, in the context of this research, Mezirow's theory supports the overall emphasis of the calabash breakers on formation as mentioned in chapter three, for it prioritises education that cares not simply about bringing change in what one knows but even more in how one knows and who one becomes.

Mezirow's work has been gaining traction in theological education circles in recent years.²⁷⁹ It is important to point out here, however, that analysis of the ideas of the calabash breakers suggests that, in order to realise truly intercultural theological education, care for identity and listening to silenced voices will be necessary and important pre-conditions for nurturing the kind of perspective transformation that will encourage and will grow deep and genuine engagement with the o/Other.²⁸⁰ These preconditions should also undergird and interact with a person's continuing journey of transformation, with its attendant epistemic ruptures. Perspective transformation, in other words, whether initial or ongoing, always begins from somewhere and is, and continues to be, informed and inspired by the influences that are chosen and the conversations that are entered into.

helped to inform Mezirow. Loder's first step toward transformation is "conflict, an apparent rupture in the knowing context." Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, 26.

²⁷⁷ Mezirow, *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood*, 14.

²⁷⁸ Summarizing Mezirow, Kathleen P. King, *The Handbook of the Evolving Research of Transformative Learning Based on the Learning Activities Survey*, 10th ed. (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2009), 5. Mezirow argues that the "central learning problem of adulthood" is the failure to notice. Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, 19.

²⁷⁹ Recent work in theological education drawing on Mezirow's thinking includes Christine Sorensen, "Formation, Transformative Learning, and Theological Education" (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 2007). Also, Reg Wickett, "Adult Learning Theories and Theological Education," *Journal of Adult Theological Education* 2, no. 2 (2005), 153–161. The Christian priority for formation/transformation is usefully explored by Julie Gorman, "There's Got to Be More! Transformational Learning," *Christian Education Journal* n.s. no. 1 (2001).

²⁸⁰ Compare, Thelma Barer-Stein, "Learning as a Process of Experiencing the Unfamiliar," *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 19 (1987): 87–108. The first two of five phases she has argued is needed in order to experience the unfamiliar include being [self-]aware and observing.

Living ruptured

Scripture is littered with
the stories of
people living ruptured
knowledge and assumptions
torn
into something bigger.

David
thinking
a king can decree
as he wants
exposed and
self-condemned
by a simple parable
about a sheep;²⁸¹

Ruth
realising that
the only way Naomi
the bitter, beleaguered Jewess
is going to let her stay with her
is if she finds within herself
a constant and stubborn
voice of love;

Peter
self-confident
disbelieving Jesus' prediction
that he
could betray him
broken and weeping
in a courtyard
as a cock crows
his fallibility;²⁸²

Paul
ardent Jew
"ravaging the church...
dragging off both men and women"²⁸³
stopped on the Damascus road
turned
convinced

²⁸¹ Examples of other epistemic ruptures for David include 1 Sam. 16; 17; 2 Sam. 13ff.

²⁸² Examples of other epistemic ruptures for Peter include Lk. 5:1–11; 9:28–36; Matt. 14:22–33; Acts 2; Acts 10–11.

²⁸³ Acts 8:3. The epistles credited to Paul evidence his ongoing unfolding conversion to the mind of Christ.

convicted
becomes a servant of Christ to the Gentiles;

Mary
visited
and told
she, though a virgin,
would bear the Messiah
choosing in a moment
to believe “Yes”
and it coming true;²⁸⁴

Jesus
crushed by the weight of
his cousin beheaded
being mobbed by crowds
baited by religious leaders
slipping away to Tyre
and hoped-for obscurity
then confronted
by a woman
forgetting his divine manners
and issuing a racist statement
which she challenges
and he
stops
listens
accepts her correction
and grants the Syrophenician woman her request.²⁸⁵

Stories of challenge to what we know and consequent change are part of the fabric of life for us all. One of the questions to the calabash breakers asked about key experiences that had conscientised them to the margins. Several talked of moments that had torn their understanding of what was. The particular epistemic ruptures they each chose to describe were crucial for two reasons. Not only did those ruptures inspire, to borrow the words of Gittins, “serious conversion, serious theology, and [practice that exemplifies the difference between] teaching theology and becoming a different person,” but they also taught them what a commitment to operating in a genuinely intercultural way will particularly demand of

²⁸⁴ Examples of other epistemic ruptures for Mary include Lk. 2: 1–20, 41–52; Mk. 3: 31–35; Lk.24: 1–12; Acts 2.

²⁸⁵ Consider also the growth and change mentioned in Lk. 2:52.

them.²⁸⁶ Each example is in many respects a classic of Mezirow's description of perspective transformation. For some the disorientating dilemma, or epistemic rupture, had been precipitated by a confrontation with those less powerful than themselves, for others the change had come as they had listened to and owned their own voice in contexts dominated by thinking that was culturally other. Their stories compellingly illustrate the value of epistemic ruptures for positive change towards interculturality.

Epistemic ruptures amongst those of the dominant or powerful group

Gittins would readily admit to being someone whose transformation has been often precipitated by those less powerful than himself. A particularly notable rupture for him—he would prefer to call it an irritant—occurred several years ago while in conversation with a homeless woman in a shelter where he was volunteering. She said to him, “The trouble with you is that you always tell us what you’re gonna do for us. You never ask us what we want.” He replied to her, “That’s what we do as ministers. We tell people what’s good for them.” He went on to say that, with that comment “she turned my life around.” The consequent effect is that now, “I [now] try to find out what people want or think they need rather than simply telling them what is good for them and then expecting them to be grateful to *me*. And it’s subtle but at least it gives me pause. It makes me stop quicker than I otherwise would. I mean, I do know what’s good for people because I’m an intelligent person. That’s a terribly dangerous thing to be. So, I’ve got to stop and I’ve got to catch myself doing it and I’ve got to try and say, ‘Well, you know, what do you think?’”

Gittins has found resonance with this same lesson expressed in the gospel story of Bartimaeus. There he has noticed that “one of the first things that Jesus says to Bartimaeus [is], ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ And there you’ve got it...If Jesus is beginning to be seen as a little bit of a celebrity then the danger for him is to be captivated by his own celebrity and so then he will go around telling people what’s good for them. But he tends to invite them and tends to call them to the deepest things and engage with them. And the other thing, of course, is if Jesus says to Bartimaeus, ‘What do you want?’ then Bartimaeus has really got to come up with some kind of answer.”

²⁸⁶ Gittins suggested that it is actually considered arrogant of anyone to ask if a theological educator is “in this to teach theology or are you in this to become a different person? So the question doesn’t get asked.”

A story told by Harrison that was crucial for her journey towards genuine intercultural engagement agrees with the lesson Gittins has learnt: that it is important to be asking the other what they need or want, rather than assuming one knows the answer already. It also reveals what for her has been a key reason why.²⁸⁷

The setting was the early days of Harrison’s nursing career in South Africa: “I remember I’d been nursing three or four months...and I was sitting having coffee with one of the coloured nurses and she told me something that shocked my socks off me. She told me that coloured nurses earned a third less than we did as white nurses and Black nurses earned a third less than they did as coloured nurses and yet we all had to have the same educational qualifications to get into nursing. And so a little group of us...went to talk to matron to say ‘How is this fair? Could we give something from our salary to change that situation? Could we try and persuade our fellow white nurses to do that?’ I went and told my friend...the coloured nurse this over coffee a few nights later and she flung her coffee on the ground and she said, ‘You don’t understand.’ And I got all puffed up and thought, ‘Here we are trying to help!’ She said to me, ‘That’s charity. I don’t want charity. I want justice.’

“Everything I’d believed as a Christian fell apart. Here we were, willing to give our money and she didn’t want our money. So I said to her, ‘What can I do?’ She said, ‘Vote.’ It was like an immediate...Then the door was open and I was able to say, ‘I don’t understand’...Me saying ‘I don’t understand’ was a turning point because I was trying to impose my Christian charity and my desire to help without checking out what was needed. And so, often, when people come I say, ‘What do you want from me?’ ‘How would you being here—what difference does that make?’ So I’m asking a different set of questions...I’ll never forget her. She was a young Muslim woman...I think often we need someone or something to conscientise us.”

I am learning that
 with many assumptions—
 precisely because they are assumed
 not named—
 it does take
 a tearing in what we know,
 an experience of conscientisation,
 to change

²⁸⁷ The principle embedded in this story was mentioned in the early part of chapter four. Here is the story behind it.

(and to see those assumptions
for what they are).

For those who hold power
consciously or unconsciously
the subtlest lessons are the hardest to learn
like discovering that
having authority and power does not
make me an expert on what
you want or need
and that
there is a fine line between
good intent
and injustice;
dignity
and shame.

I once invited my Māori friend
to speak
in a room full of Pākehā.
They WhiteWashed her
and I was angry.
I stood, and chastised them
then sat smouldering.

Years later
she told me that I had shamed her
that day
by presuming to defend her.
In doing so I stole her voice.
It was my act she remembered
from that day.
Rosemary, the WhiteWasher.
After years of living in
indignation
over Those Others, and
That Day
my knowing was torn
by her words.
(Self)-Righteous Indignation
has been replaced
by a deep Sorry.

Since then I have tried to walk
the humble path that does not presume that
authority = the right to answer for you
and to walk that particular
fine line

between good intent and injustice
with more of the care
that it deserves
acutely aware
of how difficult it is to walk it straight
and of how many times
I fail.

Nothing is simple;
the more fools we
to presume
we Know.

“I think often we need someone or something to conscientise us.”

A story from the Pākehā woman takes up a similar refrain but, rather than speaking of a lesson learnt in a particular face-to-face encounter, illustrates the potential impact that a facilitated engagement with societal issues in the classroom over time can have on the individual. She was a theological student during the days in New Zealand of divisive protests against hosting rugby games with the touring South African Springboks, calls for inclusive language, and workshops on honouring the Treaty of Waitangi. Those were turbulent and confrontational days. She said: “But in many ways, while they were difficult times [they] kinda laid a solid framework for being able to recognise how important those issues were in relation to people being able to exercise their own voice and the implications of that being blocked or overridden...by power dynamics or just an unwillingness to recognise that voices had even been silenced...My eyes were really opened to how deep-seated both the anger and the ascribed shame [was] which were like pieces of outer clothing for particularly Māori and Pacific students who time and time again were confronted with quite overwhelming dynamics of power which consistently shut them down...and in many ways annihilate the real essence of the person.” She noted this all “changed me in the sense that I saw myself as a New Zealander in quite different ways. I saw the history of New Zealand in radically different ways...So those initial Treaty workshops and that kind of conscientisation actually worked. It was most uncomfortable and very powerful...and in a way it was like another conversion, of suddenly realising that the country that I thought I was part of had a completely different history than what I had absorbed or been taught in the standard school syllabus and that friends and colleagues that I was developing relationships with saw things

in radically different ways than I did and yet equally we were New Zealand citizens. So that was really pivotal.”

The need for change like this woman experienced can be very difficult for some to even comprehend. In 1994, a documentary powerfully demonstrating this fact, entitled “The Color of Fear,” was released in the United States.²⁸⁸ It simply follows the conversation of eight men—six men of colour, and two white men—sitting together in a room as they discuss different issues of race. The men of colour are eloquent in their expression of the invisible walls they are experiencing at nearly every turn, in society in general, in the workplace, in education, because they are not members of the dominant group. For much of the film the complete inability of one of the white men to hear or comprehend what the men of colour are saying to him, let alone to put himself in the others’ shoes, is staggering in its awfulness.²⁸⁹ The tension in the room slowly builds to a deeply discomfoting level until eventually the expressed pain of the men of colour sitting beside him and across from him serves to create a tearing in what he knows.

As Peggy McIntosh, a feminist scholar from the United States, has noted, because advantage brings its own kind of “invisible package of unearned assets...about which [one] is “meant” to remain oblivious,” sometimes it takes painful confrontation and a deep level of discomfort to open the eyes of a powerful person to embedded injustice and to transform their perspective.²⁹⁰ It could also, as the New Zealand woman recounted, come about as the result of being on the receiving end of injustice oneself. Her own conscientisation has come about because of “being a woman, and especially a woman in evangelical circles where there’s just so much patriarchy, and women are not necessarily taken seriously.”²⁹¹ She said, “One watershed moment I can still remember very distinctly...I was taking the Bible studies at a student conference and some guys walked out because they couldn’t have a woman teach

²⁸⁸ Lee Mun Wah, “The Color of Fear,” (United States: StirFry Productions, 1994).

²⁸⁹ This film has become a key tool for prising open discussion around race in the United States, along with a subsequent documentary, also by Lee Mun Wah entitled “Last Chance for Eden” discussing racism and sexism. See <http://www.stirfryseminars.com>

According to the social identity development model developed by Hardiman and Jackson (1997), the white men in this film are in a stage of passive acceptance of the value system of an unjust society, which will require confrontation to change. See Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice*, 54–55. Dismantling discrimination and promoting social justice within institutional systems will be the topic of the next chapter.

²⁹⁰ Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies,” *Working Papers Series*, no. 189 (1988): 1.

²⁹¹ For a comprehensive study exploring the truth of this in institutional circles in particular, see Nicola Hoggard-Creegan and Christine Pohl, *Living on the Boundaries: Evangelical Women, Feminism and the Theological Academy* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2005).

them...It is incredibly hurtful, of course...So that personalised experience of feeling marginalised as a woman gives you a sympathy and empathy for marginalisation and injustice elsewhere.”

I understand this
personalised experience
and that is part of why,
despite, no doubt,
my naivety
over the power I do wield,
I am committed to this research.

From a different angle...
As a person from Aotearoa New Zealand
Oceania
I am also becoming conscious of
how often
in international Christian conferences
our particular voices are
silenced
simply through
being
forgotten
to be asked
or being talked over.
Invisibility
doesn't feel so good
or just
either.

At an international congress I was recently at²⁹²
Oceania
was not on the world map
not in any of the media
not given a speaking slot
not invited onto any of the stages
(except one afternoon in the women's café).
Then one day our region
gathered together
and
the Australians
could not seem to hear
what we Kiwis were saying.
For us

²⁹² The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization. Things were similar at the Quadrennial conference of the International Association of Mission Studies in Hungary in 2008 and, a colleague said, at the Edinburgh 2010 conference.

it was
another disturbing layer of
invisibility
to add to
invisibility.
“But we are the same,
our issues are the same,”
we were told.
This is not correct.

**Remember what it is like to be rendered invisible by those in power
who think they**

Know.

I can so easily be guilty of perpetrating the same.

Leave this tear
let it become part
of a new section of the story
I weave.
Let it exist as a warning
to work against
rendering others
invisible
also.²⁹³

It is, of course, wholly possible that perspective transformation can also be wrought by positive experiences, not just negative ones. For the Italian American man it was his curiosity and the generous hospitality of the Muslims leading and participating in his classes at university during his studies that inspired change in him: a much more gentle, one might say, rupturing of what he knew and opening up of new ways of understanding the world. He said of that time, “There was something life-giving about being invited, however much by proxy, to live in someone else’s religious world and to know that you could do that with goodwill and maybe with the hope of increasing understanding because you realize that this other’s world is grossly being misunderstood. So you want to be transformed yourself and you...are thinking maybe I can be an agent of transformation. I don’t know how, but maybe I can...You know, sometimes theology is all in the prepositions. I say I am not a convert to Islam but I have been and continue to be converted by Islam.”

²⁹³ Diane Goodman suggests that whenever we are faced with the behaviour of someone who is privileged in a certain way compared to us, it is a good idea to remember the criticisms we have heard from others about a privileged position we hold, both to learn our own lessons well about ingrained attitudes needing attention but also to grow compassion for the privileged, for even they need our compassion if anything is to change. Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice*, 185.

The sense of process in these words “continue to be converted,” and reflected in the choice in this thesis to speak of plural “epistemic ruptures,” importantly draws attention to the idea that a person must experience and process epistemic ruptures on an ongoing basis if she or he is ever to be more than just a theological tourist of cultures other than her or his own. This notion was central to a project run in Chicago during the early 1990s that worked with faculty from several theological schools.²⁹⁴ The danger of tourism, of course, is that a person can enter and leave a culture on their own terms, or forever regard it as exotic, never allowing him- or herself to be fundamentally transformed by something they are essentially treating as a curio. Tourists also can stay in luxurious hotels far from the reality of those who live around them, or disappear home when things get tough. Christine Pohl once made a pertinent observation in this regard: “Persons who have never experienced need or marginality, or who are uncomfortable with their own vulnerability, often find it easier to be hosts than guests...They make others...passive recipients.”²⁹⁵

Epistemic ruptures amongst those of the minority group

The experiences of epistemic rupture for those amongst the interviewed calabash breakers who do not belong to the dominant group, in a given situation, contrast with those who do. For them, the tearings in what they know have tended to require more of a proactive than a receptive stance. In other words, perspective transformation has not so much been born within a reaction to a truth told or acted out but in taking a decision to proactively engage that cuts across the dominant paradigm. Stories told by the wannabe Tongan and the Latina particularly illustrate this.

“Coming as a ‘Third World person’” to theological study in the United States, the wannabe Tongan said, “I had to learn all of those Western things in order to be accepted, I guess, in order to qualify... It wasn’t until—and I remember it clearly—1987 when I wrote a, what they call a credo, for a systematic theology class and I failed this subject [because I had written] a paper on liberation theology...But then it was at that point that I thought, ‘Well, stuff this Western way of thinking, ‘cause I prefer liberation theology.’ And that was kind of the moment when I decided that I’ve learnt the Western thing, I think I can cope with that,

²⁹⁴ See Thistlethwaite and Cairns, eds., *Beyond Theological Tourism*, 4.

²⁹⁵ Pohl, *Making Room*, 119.

but I also need to pay attention to, I guess you call it, marginal or marginalised modes of reflection... Almost everything I do [now] has an Island root or Island flavour or look to it.”

The Latina, similarly, has made a decision to honour her heritage and in so doing has become a rupturing presence for others, a role she seems to relish because she believes it is a way to stimulate change in the status quo. She said, “I drive some scholars crazy because...I’ll invent Spanglish words. And I can do it because it’s Spanglish and they can’t tell me I can’t. And then they’ll say, ‘Well, you can’t do that!’ Just did it. And then that will drive them crazy because I’ll put it in the titles of things. They say, ‘Why do you do that?!’ Because that’s the reality. We’re code-switching all the time. The reality is that this model’s [*lost in recording*], and is it jarring? Yes. Are you jarred by it? Yes. Does it interrupt and irrupt? Yes, because that’s what our presence is doing, the presence that you’ve just recognized. So on some level it’s a whole modelling thing that goes on, you know. How do you model it in the language? How do you model it? But it’ll drive people crazy, which is kind of fun!”

The Ugandan man, as a result of his own experiences and convictions, has become committed to, not jarring the language of scholarship as the Latina has described, but facilitating ruptures for his faculty members in the interests of inspiring more relevant and engaged educational practice. What he spoke of occurred in an institution in Uganda but offers a challenge for theological institutions beyond. He told me that “in Uganda itself, I have sent my staff every year for four months in the field. I’ve been pushing them. It’s been a hard thing. They don’t want to go. It’s so comfortable with their books and their study. Four months out in the field. I just say, ‘The college is relocated out there.’ So I get money to make sure they go...Now when they go I want them not to go and live in hotels. I want them to live the life of the students: sleep where the student sleeping, eat where the student eating, go with the problem of the student...Now you go there and you find there are places where there is no water, there is no food. Then you know that the church for the whole day is speaking to people who eat only once in a day. They can’t concentrate to follow what you are talking about! You go there and see HIV/AIDS and its impact on the people and you realise these people are just nicely clothed but inside them the key issue for now is not ascension but is God alive now?...If he’s alive, can he touch my life? That kind of thing. So they’re passing areas of rebel zones. They’re passing areas of famine and drugs. They’re

passing areas of pastoralists who are just mobile. How do you talk to them the gospel and so on?...They live in the homes of people who are Muslims, plus Catholics, plus whatever religion. Then when they come back they are terribly challenged but they know whom they are talking to now in the class and they know whom they are preparing now from that setting to go and help develop the church, transform the church...And they don't find most of the things in the books for addressing that. So, how much more for Western setting...for somebody living there?"

While this example speaks of exposing lecturers to social, economic, health, and religious difference, whether within or across ethnic definition of culture,

Just imagine for a moment that
if we said
Go
and learn!
listen
live amongst
“go with the problem,”
what kind of radical tearings
epistemic ruptures
might then bring
care
urgency
dialogue
relevance
back into the classroom?

Is it possible to capture something of that without going?

Maybe not.

A final story from Kim-Cragg illustrates the complexities that can exist for some as a result of experiencing epistemic ruptures not only as they move away to study in another place but also as they return, changed, to their “home” context. It offers a useful warning that epistemic ruptures can be deeply painful, isolating and very lonely experiences and raises the question of how we might better support and educate people, both educators and students, to reflectively process and live them well, whether they occur within the classroom or beyond.

The first epistemic rupture for Kim-Cragg was precipitated by her arrival in Canada; the second by her return to Korea. “I became an exchange student doing my Master of Divinity

programme...I hardly spoke English...and my reading and comprehension was, I guess, good enough that I could pass all the exams but my speaking and listening ability were really, really limited and poor and so that year was really, really challenging. I literally can say that, you now understand what it means to be deaf because you cannot understand what people are saying and therefore you cannot speak either...So my experience with that school was painful but real learning curve...You got chosen to be an exchange student so you felt that you are really smart and brilliant and yet, you know, in a Western school you became basically deaf and completely ignorant and dumb.” A Chinese Canadian feminist scholar became her lifesaver, helping her to discover herself as an Asian woman and accept her liminal status. “[Then] as soon as I finished my [PhD] dissertation...there was a chance that I could go back to Korea...You know, you look Korean, you speak Korean probably more fluently than English. You love your culture. You know that place. And yet you find yourself very foreign, very different. The way that people treat each other is not the same as what I am now used to in Western setting and often that is negative because...the Christian community in Korea is much more patriarchal than church communities that I belong here in Canada. Therefore the treatment of women was more discriminating, more oppressive and I was viewed, perceived by my Korean people as more or less like a wife of the Caucasian missionary [man I am married to]. So it was really puzzling and although students loved me and they were really challenged by what I could say and offer but, in general, like the church communities and the faculties in the university, those others, those who already are in power, those who have kind of teaching and pastoral authority do not seem to respect my position, my identity, you know. So it was quite interesting and speaking of kind of reversal racism.”

Mezirow has argued that the existence of a transitional, uncertain, and liminal state “between established patterns of thought and behaviour...gives discourse a powerful new role: those who can name ‘what is’ in new ways and can convince others of their naming acquire power.”²⁹⁶ While he is speaking of those caught in the time immediately following a disorientating dilemma, this argument, extrapolated out, could be used to suggest that those like this woman for whom the liminal state is permanent—she is now neither “native” to her adopted country, nor “home” in her country of birth—are worth listening to in the interests of helping us all name “what is” in new ways. To “convince others” of this is often, however, the challenge.

²⁹⁶ Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, 3.

On a practical note, this woman declared that her experiences have certainly affected her approach as an educator, making her open and sensitive, happy to acknowledge her own weaknesses and problems and gaps in her knowledge, and comfortable to operate as a co-learner in the classroom in the interests of prioritising dialogue. Of the latter quality, she said, “Not knowing everything is actually really nice and natural and gives an openness to others and lets, really, the Spirit come in.”

Stop press.

This acknowledgement of the Spirit
adds a dimension
to any discourse that
theological education
cannot afford to
sideline.

According to Ephesians²⁹⁷

it is Christ
who breaks
the hostile walls
that divide us
yet
it is only
ultimately
by God’s grace
in Christ
that we
can provide space for all
to learn from all
and together grow into
a holy temple in the Lord.

Let us pause
for a moment
to give honour
where honour is due...

A concluding thought

In all of the conversations with the calabash breakers there was the sense that unless the educators are themselves experiencing epistemic ruptures and effectively processing and nurturing the lessons arising from them, there will be little chance that they will know how to facilitate epistemic ruptures for others, or even know what kinds of lessons might be

²⁹⁷ Eph. 2:14ff. Here the liberty of spreading the application wider than the Jew/Gentile divide has been taken.

worth trying to facilitate in the interest of growing people's abilities to genuinely engage with the o/Other. It is highly possible that an educator from a dominant culture will not even realise that there is a need to engage, as the white man in "The Color of Fear" struggled to understand. In addition, for those who might like to talk about the value of intercultural engagement, an inability to walk their talk will defeat even the good intent behind their talk. Finally, lessons that are learnt will lose their immediacy unless, to return to the term used by Gittins, we open ourselves to constant irritants that remind us of old lessons and teach us new ones.

Epistemic ruptures in the educational setting

Seven of the interviewed calabash breakers between them offered specific thoughts on facilitating epistemic ruptures in the educational setting, as well as the particular challenges these might bring. They included comments regarding the experience of the educators themselves, the value of short-term exposure trips, innovation in course design, and the value of learning other languages and traditions. A particular remark made by Honoré nicely sets the scene for these thoughts: "Theological college should be a thoroughly unnerving experience. Well, it is unnerving because quite a lot of the assumptions that a theological student arrives with are challenged—assumptions about scripture...assumptions about ethics, morality, and being human...If a person is at all self-reflective, and we hope they are becoming self-reflective and thinking and praying people, then surely there is going to be some shifting of internal furniture and internal understandings."

The experience of educators

If theological education is to be such a thoroughly unnerving experience then it is logical that those shaping the learning environment need to be people who themselves are used to negotiating shifts of internal furniture and understandings across cultural difference. For such people then, in the opinion of the New Zealand woman, "nothing's off limits. God is everywhere and truth can be anywhere, so you can ask questions, you can explore everything."

The Indian woman observed that, "When you do have feet in different cultures or have had the opportunities to work in different cultures, you become sensitive to issues you may not be if you've lived in one country all your life...[Then again,] for example, coming from

India there are instances where you are in India and yet you do not know about India. Particularly I am talking about Christians because of our history of colonisation and education in Christian schools which required that we in a way disassociate ourselves from our own culture, you know, in terms of texts or rituals or symbols...I am humbled by the fact that there is so much that I do not know and that therefore it is important to work alongside sisters and brothers in other faiths, in other communities...There is so much that we have missed out on by virtue of having cocooned ourselves.”

The particular insight this woman brings is fascinating because, from a quite different context, it holds a warning to those of us who now find ourselves Christian minorities in once Christian-majority cultures and where churches that are growing are often those serving recent immigrants. Rather than feeling tempted to insist on historical and monocultural principles and precepts, it is important that we become open to encounter and evolution as we renegotiate what it now means to be Christian in our context. A comment she made offers good advice: “I have always felt that...there can be a movement from theology to relationship or relationship to theology. I think the second one is far more effective because the grounding is in the experience. Encounter between different cultural groupings is a far more effective tool than actually just talking about it.” In other words, mixing with others, living, loving, listening, eating together and engaging should be the soil from which our theologising grows. It thus becomes important to consider creating opportunities for personal encounters inspiring critical theological reflection rather than conducting academic talk about theology and simply hoping that relationship will arise from this.

Short-term exposure trips

According to Matsuoka, the short-term mission trip or exposure to “the universe next door,” to appropriate a phrase from James Sire is not to be underestimated as a personal encounter worth creating for faculty and students.²⁹⁸ Though he admitted it is often “ridiculed” these days as a tool, it does hold great potential for facilitating the kind of epistemic ruptures needed to birth the theological realisations and conversations we now need.²⁹⁹ In Hill’s

²⁹⁸ James Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, Downers Grove: IVP, 1976. While the book was exploring various worldviews, use of “the universe next door” here is meant to be understood as philosophically and culturally wide as possible.

²⁹⁹ To avoid such trips ending up becoming a “globally expanded parochialism,” rather than a real opportunity for experiencing epistemic ruptures bringing change in the participants, Koyama once offered the following advice: “Go to a place where your language does not work, avoid interviews with big-name people, spend as

opinion “well-conceived site visits” are invaluable for enabling “maximum impact on radicalizing awareness about oppression.”³⁰⁰

The Asian American woman is one person who conducts such trips as matter of course. In taking her students out of the classroom, she aims to “actually displace them and then have a reflection process...where they have to kind of let go of a lot of categories...that are really barriers to each other” and then she requires from each student a promise to act on what is learnt because she believes that “whatever gift you’re given in that experience then calls forth a promise in you.” The American woman is another who regularly takes her students out, in her case into a Native American reservation where local mentors guide the students along the journey. She said that it is relationship that makes this possible. “You can’t do this [as faculty] unless you have a gate to this.” She herself has spent much time over many years on that reservation, including helping young women to prepare to go on a vision quest as a now trusted part of the community and often praying on the margins of a Sundance or in a sweat lodge. She said, “I pray harder in the sweat lodge than I’ve prayed in any church,” before going on to say, “if you do this kind of thing you have to be changed as much as you would be if you were assigned to work in an emergency room in a hospital and the people were coming constantly, wounded and dying, and they’ve just lost their loved one... You can’t get swallowed in it but at the same time you can’t be so passive that it doesn’t matter to you, that you don’t take it home at night.”

In Matsuoka’s thinking, the key value of going on a short term trip—and, it could be added, of faculty returning to other cultural contexts in the interests of keeping the gate open—is that it immerses people in the fact of difference, and “not just the heady, intellectual difference but real difference in worldviews, lifestyles...life expressions.” He went on to add that “when we do that something strange happens. At the most surface level when we go...we are so fascinated with different people and cultures and so on and we come back and say ‘oh, there are some different people existing there.’ I think that’s at least the beginning part. But if you take those so-called intercultural experiences seriously, I think ultimately we begin to see our own selves in those experiences more than seeing other people.”

much time as possible with the people on the street, and remain prayerful so that you may witness the finger of God that casts out demons from yourself and from others.”Koyama, “Theological Education,” 103–04.

³⁰⁰ Hill, “Fighting the Elephant in the Room,” 11.

As he made the above point, Matsuoka had in mind the experience of Ruth Behar as described in *Translated Woman*.³⁰¹ Bilingual and bicultural herself, the anthropologist went to a small village in Mexico over several years to interview the same peasant woman, in order to research her worldview. She eventually realised that her reporting was always coloured by her own interpretation of what she had been told, a discovery that proved to be a key epistemic rupture for her and her scholarship.³⁰² She could not work objectively and represent that woman as she wanted to be represented. Behar could only present that woman in a translated form—as seen through Behar’s eyes. Matsuoka said, “I thought that kind of insight is very helpful when we talk about our own faith. Ultimately...penultimately at least, what we really know about faith and how we experience faith is our own translated version...Now is it bad? No, it isn’t. I mean that’s reality. The only thing we have to be careful of is to be so convinced of the ‘correctness’ or ‘rightness’ of our own translation. So we always need to be open to other ways of understanding faith.” Short-term immersion into another’s universe can prove an important means for such discovery if processed well.

For Matsuoka, such talk is not about losing integrity in faith or reducing it to relative personal preference. “It seems to me we need to appreciate [the traditions that we come from]...We can’t throw them away. But what I think is needed is the kind of bigger picture of what Christianity is...One time I went to Coventry Cathedral, UK and...if you open their Book of Common Prayer it says ‘You are entering the conversation that began long before you were born, and the conversation that will go on way beyond your time’—I’m kinda paraphrasing. And that’s what I think Christianity is...No matter how crazy my idea may look at this point it’s part of a conversation that started a long time ago and it will go on in a direction that I will never be able to comprehend at this point...I think that’s a kind of sense of humility and a sense of appreciation of what the Christian faith is all about which is not just a tradition in a very static sense but the very dynamic sense of the traditioning. We are part of the traditioning process of Christian faith. At least we need to recognize that and need to recognize that the very temporal character of our own faith understandings and faith expressions is needed more than ever in this time of globalization.”

Though the talk has been of the value of short-term exposure trips for facilitating necessary epistemic ruptures, the Asian American woman also believes that it is possible to achieve

³⁰¹ Ruth Behar, *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

³⁰² Behar’s discovery is one which, as noted in chapter two, has fed into the methodology of this thesis.

them within institutions because “the world is also in the classroom. So the other way, if you’re limited to the classroom, is to actually help that be more visible. It’s a matter of getting their stories out or, it depends on the discipline, you know...what can they bring to what’s on the table.”

Innovation in course design

As people hear and engage with each other, change is inevitable. Another way to precipitate it is through innovative course design, as the Pākehā woman illustrated.

“I once team-taught a paper called ‘Cross-Cultural Issues in Pastoral Care.’ We deliberately had no text. We had readings, and we were very clear to the students that part of the text—they were the text. We deliberately structured co-operative learning... so they had to learn [in groups] to negotiate what topic they would work on...which had to have something to do with understanding different cultural dynamics, and some of the issues related to the current context of Aotearoa and Oceania...Then they also had a group presentation, so they had to negotiate and work out how would they do that...Many of the Pākehā students initially were resentful and very obstructive...and they came up with questions like, ‘How will you know how fair it is? How will you know that everyone equally has done the same amount of work?’ And we said, ‘Well, we don’t. Those dynamics you’ll have to deal with. What we do believe and trust is that you will find a way to work this out.’ I was the course co-ordinator and I said ‘I’m the continuity person and I will only intervene when you can assure me that you have tried every means to try and communicate and try and resolve this...So, you have to make an attempt to try and identify what are the obstacles, what is the problem when you hit a brick wall, or whatever.’ And actually many of the groups...did hit obstacles but they found a way to name that they weren’t listening to each other or they had misread each other. They had assumed that they had a common understanding when they didn’t at all. So they were able to go back. By the end of the course, the majority found it quite a liberating experience and they worked out how they could play to each other’s strengths.” They had also learnt in the crucible of practice what kind of crosscultural issues they might encounter within pastoral care and some tools to address them.

It is worth noting that a commitment to innovation in course design in the interests of facilitating intercultural engagement in the classroom came about for this woman from her

own in-class epistemic rupture in her first year of teaching at a particular theological college. The story of that experience usefully reinforces the point already made that, if theological education is to become truly intercultural, tearings in what one knows and assumes also need to be occurring in faculty, those who shape the educational environment, not just in students.

“The first time I taught a paper...was human development and pastoral care. I had organised the paper along quite traditional Western psychological and pastoral theology lines so, you know, there was a bit of Freud and Erickson and all of the classic theorists. I’ll never forget going into the classroom and looking at the class of about thirty plus students and thinking, ‘Oh my goodness! There must be at least ten to twelve ethnic groups in this classroom.’ I just went hot and cold thinking, ‘I don’t know how to deal with this...I don’t even know how I am going to modify this syllabus,’ because I’m not a trained teacher. I mean, very much I learnt by watching other people and by example and by hit and miss. Did this work? No. Why didn’t it work? Well, maybe I need to modify this or that...So the one thing I did out of sheer anxiety and panic was...I said, ‘Well, as a way of getting to know each other...I want each of you systematically to go and draw on the whiteboard your particular schema, from your cultural, and ethnic background, of how you would describe the major stages of the life cycle.’ And to my absolute amazement we had...four whiteboards just filled with data and no one of those schema was identical to another. So, it was very clear that this syllabus that I’d worked out was going to have to be adapted. I decided...to use the classroom as a living laboratory [to test, and discuss the theories.]...So from that point I started to be aware of how something as simple as a syllabus, and the assumptions of Western paradigms, is a misfit.”

Learning other languages and traditions

Expecting faculty and students to be able to operate fluently within another or other languages is one more way to facilitate epistemic rupture within an institution. As the New Zealand woman commented, “Having other languages... just opens up whole other worlds, doesn’t it? You see a different way of expressing things. You see a different approach to things. You see a different understanding of language and culture.” Even including and using a few words here or there can make a difference. Conde-Frazier, for example, allows words from other languages that are perceived to enhance classroom discussion to be spoken,

without translation, and then become part of the overall vocabulary of a course.³⁰³ This, she claims, can move thinking into whole new dimensions.

As well as expectations around language, the laywoman from the United States suggested that “everybody needs to learn thoroughly, well relatively thoroughly, another [religious] tradition because it’s like learning another language.” She explained, “It puts your own tradition in another perspective and you realize why you have the assumptions that you do. You don’t really know your own religion confidently until you know another and you sort of have a relationship that’s mature with that other religion. And so my suggestion is that it would be ideal if a seminary chose a religion...and then used it as a dialogue foil all the way through [their course offerings] with Christianity. First of all, we’d be more prepared for the world, but we’d also be clearer about our Christian identity and what it means. And it’s like another language because it’s another worldview. It’s another way of thinking and...it undermines those patterns of thinking that we think are universal, and aren’t.”

The use of other languages and the study of other religions moves the focus of attention onto not just what is happening in a particular classroom but what is happening across the curriculum. As the Latina asked, “What does an intercultural curriculum look like?”

An intercultural curriculum

Talk of curricula requires consideration of choices in underpinning philosophy, methodological approaches, and assessment, as well as the probable resultant tension with current accreditation systems. Here the focus will be on these issues rather than on plotting out an intercultural curriculum per se, simply because that is what the calabash breakers wanted to talk about.

Underpinning philosophy, methodological approaches, and accreditation

A warning issued by Gittins is important to note. It reflects Andraos’s earlier assertion that epistemic shifts rather than cosmetic adjustments will be needed if theological education is to become fundamentally intercultural. “I think it’s important to advocate for a much more intercultural understanding but I think in a certain sense it’s structurally incompatible with the kinds of academically loaded syllabuses that we have. It’s like, you know I always say

³⁰³ Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett, *A Many Colored Kingdom*, 114.

dialogue and hierarchy are incompatible structurally because hierarchy is vertical and dialogue is horizontal and you can't have them both together...Unless theological education lies down it cannot establish itself in such a communication relationship as is required by intercultural theology.”

With that warning in mind, words from Andraos as he was pondering a way forward proffer one person's response. He is personally interested in the Friirian model of education, with its emphasis on emancipation from oppressive structures, but wanted to say that the break, or disconnection or delinking, that is needed from the current system in that model cannot be total. He did not explain why but did say that he thinks that what is needed is the creation of “a space of autonomous thinking within the system [where one can] go back and forth in dialogue” between new liberating modes and the old epistemologies. This, he sees, requires learning a new methodology for living, more than just changing knowledge and what is taught. Comments made by Hitchen offer a possible practical exploration and illustration of what Andraos is speaking about and thinking towards, if he has been understood correctly.

“I don't think the answer is just to reject, out of hand, and set up an alternative system that is anti-Western because [for example]...the academic skills inherent in linear thinking, logical sequencing and synthesis, documented defence of an argument, [and] a reasonable presentation of argument are actually human skills, not just Western ones...You can use them in foreign ways which are detrimental...but you can also use them in ways that are supportive. The problem is when they become the exclusive tools to advanced education. And so the question is how do you supplement those Western linear logical thinking skills with other patterns of thinking and how do you recognise it?”

Hitchen went on, responding to his own question: “I think the level at which it's got to start, and this is as far as my thinking has gone at the moment...is we've got to identify the positive patterns of academic thinking skill that we actually want to preserve and why we want to preserve them. I actually think that what I mentioned before—logical thinking, sequencing, the value of critical thinking, and documented argumentation of a case—there are good reasons to keep some of those...We need to identify also what other things we want to add into that. I suspect that one way of identifying them would be to grapple with the awful dichotomies we've got in the West: the dichotomy of material verses spiritual; the dichotomy of theory and practice...of theoretical and applied; faith and reason as opposites;

objectivity and subjectivity, as if one's valid and the other's invalid for intellectual work; the contrast that we make between thought and experience, the cerebral and experiential; the individual and communal. If we actually in a particular subject said, 'Okay, in this subject we're going to bridge some of those dichotomies and in our assessment tasks, our delivery methods...and particularly our criteria of evaluation...we're going to bring some things from both sides of those traditional divides,' it would be interesting to see what happened."

Intriguingly, the New Zealand woman described a proposal she has written along just such lines for a project aiming to get some African scholars together to discuss "methodologies, with the working question: 'Can the framework for Western validation be developed that recognises different cultural ways of reasoning as well as the different needs for academia?'" The reasoning behind this, she explained, is that "those scholars are still measured by Western standards and either have to be pressed into the mould of Western reasoning or expected to be able to use the language of Western academia to be taken seriously." She went on to say, "None of this is talked about or acknowledged, hardly even named and I think that could have huge consequences for academia because at the moment, basically, everyone has to play the Western game...Why do we call all the shots? Why do we set all the criteria? Why do they have to match up to our expectations?" While she is thinking more on an international scale in regard to scholarship in general, this project, if it happens and was able to impact current practices and expectations, would have implications for multicultural classrooms also. Moreover, it would finally begin to address a plea made by the Kenyan philosopher-theologian John Mbiti back in 1970:

I would appeal to our brethren in, and from Europe, and America to allow us to make what in their judgment may be termed mistakes...When we speak or write on particular issues about Christianity or other academic matters, we should not be expected to use the vocabulary and approach used in Europe and America: please allow us to say certain things our own way...Sometimes we reach a point of despair when what we say or do is so severely criticised and condemned by people in or from Europe, and America—often because we have not said it to their satisfaction or

according to their wishes. Are we not allowed to become what we wish to become?³⁰⁴

The underlying question of how to break Western hegemony at all levels continues to puzzle Hitchen. He said that he believes that if a “sufficient group of key...globally recognised institutions would dare to break out of the mould and develop some new criteria we would see some change. I suspect it may have to be south-south relationships where one or two southern seminaries partner with each other, come up with a new model and trial it and demonstrate its validity for a while.” As one who has been involved in trying to gain accreditation for theological institutions, with both theological and secular accrediting organisations, he is well aware of the outside pressures that are placed on curricula to conform to current models. While he did not use the phrase, it seems that epistemic ruptures may be needed at the level of the oceans, as well as the drops that make them up, if a way of educating that is dominated by Enlightenment thinking is to, culturally, become one open to other alternatives.

Assessment practises

Embedded in talk of criteria is the thorny issue of assessment practices. As the Pākehā woman has experienced, good intercultural work attempted in the classroom through pedagogy and syllabus decisions can be destroyed by assessment expectations.³⁰⁵ Exams are something which, in particular, she is “inherently opposed to.” Heart-breaking for her has been “seeing the devastating effect on some students whom I’d got to know and got to hear something of their own voice and then watching how something as simple as an exam would completely silence that student. And I can still remember marking exam papers because we had to have exams in most of the courses...and weeping knowing that some of these students had actually failed. Their exams papers were just appalling because they’d either frozen when they’d come into the exam room or, when I talked to them afterwards, they were so uptight they couldn’t even read the exam question properly...It just struck me as so unjust

³⁰⁴ John S. Mbiti, “Christianity and Traditional Religions in Africa,” *International Review of Mission* 54, no.236 (1970): 439.

³⁰⁵ Charles Foster, an Anglo-American theologian, has told a story that affirms this woman’s experience. An African American student of his initiated superb discussions during class but struggled to maintain a C average in assignments. This occasioned an epistemic rupture for Foster who became convinced of what he called “academic racism” operating around the ground rules for research and engagement and led to him seeking to diversify his assessment practices, including using collaborative learning and oral exams. Charles R. Foster, “Diversity in Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 38, no. 2 (2002): 17–18, 33–34.

and so lacking in creativity to make someone dredge up knowledge in the most stressful environment and then label them as either a success or a failure.” Exams, she said, “will always disadvantage students who’ve come out of predominantly oral cultures...They favour people who can write fast, who can think in a particular way, and they do not, in my opinion, examine or assess a person’s creative integration of learning. It’s about recall.” She went on to say that she would like to see experimentation with modes of assessment other than written and, crucially, that students should be allowed to present assignments, whether written or oral, in their mother tongue. Regarding the latter, she mentioned working with students who have told her “if only you could understand my language you would understand how nuanced is the concept that I am wanting to express and how translation into English language destroys that nuance.”

Harrison, working in ministry field education, experimented with using oral assignments with her Māori students at theological college. She would invite them to come to her privately and would ask “every student who came to me a similar set of questions: tell me who you are; tell me what gifts you bring to this; and tell me where you see your growing edges and where you imagine you might learn to grow those edges?” She said that those kinds of questions she found to be very important to Māori and interestingly, “Pākehā students would start in a different place to Māori students or students from Polynesia or students from Melanesia.” She went on to say, “We had a student from another country...for whom writing verbatims...was impossible, and so we learnt to let him speak those verbatims. Now in the issue of fairness for students, he had to do the same amount of work as everyone else, but he did it differently, and it worked.” According to Harrison, it wasn’t about fiddling with criteria and creating different sets for different people—her criteria were the same for all—but about expanding the practical options of the assessment space “so that a student could come to us as lecturers and say, ‘I’m really struggling with how to approach this,’ and we [could] say to them, ‘What in your imagination could you use to show me that you know about this topic?’” In taking that approach, the most unique and comprehensive field education assessment Harrison said she ever received was a piece of art.³⁰⁶

A call to be more creative and also more flexible in assessment design and, as the Pākehā woman would like, to be open to the use of other languages generates strong reactions:

³⁰⁶ Harrison did say that she thought creativity and flexibility was possible even in such traditional, cognitive subject areas as biblical studies. Storytelling was one area she felt is underutilised.

students choose to come to this English-speaking, text-based environment to study so they should accept the consequences, plus it would be difficult to ensure that standards are maintained in a creative, flexible and multilingual setting. If, however, we are to prepare graduates for a now-multicultural society and globalised world these issues need to be grappled with. Assimilation into one paradigm is no longer a relevant approach, if it ever has been.

The highly collaborative course mentioned earlier—Cross-Cultural Issues in Pastoral Care—that the Pākehā woman co-taught, provides a pertinent illustration of how the very systems and philosophies supporting curricula are in need of some epistemic ruptures if theological education is to become open to a greater pluralism of approaches. As the Pākehā woman said, “At the examiner’s meeting we were told clearly, over the three years we taught it, that the Bell Curve was completely skewed and would we change the grades [because many students had done well], to which I said each time, ‘Absolutely not...The Bell Curve is clearly a Western understanding which is actually unjust. It makes some pivotal assumptions about norms, and normality that are very Western-oriented and do not fit across other worldviews that don’t abide by that sense of a “norm.” It’s very individualistic’...And then we were told at each examiner’s meeting our assessments were so subjective so how could we prove that there was an objective aspect to it? So, I said, ‘Well, can you prove that there is a 100% objective aspect to all of *your* assessing? That you can prove that just because you have exams or mark clear assignments...?’ We were told it was a soft subject...but we stood our ground until...the paper was lost because the curriculum was reshaped and since then it has simply not been possible to at all reproduce a paper like that within the university.”

The call for the plurality of approaches perceived necessary for realising truly intercultural theological education will affect methodological and philosophical decisions across an institution in regard to its curriculum. Epistemic ruptures will need to occur not only at the personal level. Having said that, three final observations made by the interviewed calabash breakers suggest that if an intercultural curriculum is not only to be embraced, but consistently so, students and educators will need to consider their personal attitudes and priorities.

Addendum: Personal attitudes and priorities

According to Andraos, in an intercultural education environment, “the students are the owners of their own educational process.” An expectation to engage beyond the known—whether linguistically, culturally, or in regards to religious tradition—is immediately more demanding and if students are to be the focus of the transformative process, incompatible with passivity. “We want active learners. And this is not easy because sometimes we, as students, I mean, I remember as a student we are lazy. We want to just go sit in the classroom, think about something else, take notes or read something, go to the exam, and get a degree and go.” Students then also need to be able to let go of their need to be in control of the learning process in the interests of keeping things easy. In an environment not operating within a monocultural paradigm, there are many possible outcomes in the midst of engagement and creativity with each class, each individual taking their own path. This is education as open process as opposed to controlled product.

When it comes to the educators, a requirement to be bilingual or multilingual has already been mooted. To the Pākehā woman’s mind, “we have to move in that direction.” She also believes in the importance of walking the talk: “If you’re talking about intercultural issues, [then] visibly the courses have to be taught by an intercultural team...[that] is modelling that exploration and students are seeing visibly discussion taking place and dialogue and that kind of experimentation.”

Finally, Hitchen boldly suggested that, for an intercultural curriculum, crosscultural experience should be a prerequisite for educators. “I think we’ve got to make sure that our biblical studies, our theological, our ethics, our church history specialists have actually had the experience of trying to teach these things and grapple with what they mean when they’re in a different cultural setting. In other words, there is an important sense where the crosscultural experience forces a person to reevaluate their own approach and you can’t see your contextual blindness until you see it from another context.”

Without such experience
perhaps it might remain
a case of
the blind leading
the blind?

Summary

This chapter has argued for the need for ongoing experiences of epistemic ruptures in individual students and educators in the interests of thoroughgoing transformation towards realising truly intercultural theological education. It has noted the parallel that thus exists with the thinking of Mezirow. Several stories were recounted of epistemic ruptures experienced by selected calabash breakers, indicating the kind of changes a commitment to intercultural engagement has required of them and might require of us. In the educational setting it was suggested that the best facilitators of epistemic ruptures—helping students negotiate shifts of internal furniture and understandings across cultural difference—are educators who have experienced, and continue to experience, ruptures in their own thinking. Short-term exposure trips, innovation in course design, and learning other languages and traditions are tools such educators could be investing in. Finally, the limitations of current philosophy, methodological approaches, accreditation, and assessment practices were discussed before three additional, brief points, regarding the personal attitudes and priorities that are needed in students and faculty if a truly intercultural theological environment is to be cultivated, were made.

The next chapter will explore the topic of dismantling discrimination, the fourth area highlighted by the calabash breakers, and conclude by offering a wider vision for change.

Chapter Seven: Dismantling Discrimination

“We all have that kind of ethnocentric feeling.”

Egyptian man, in an interview

“To build community requires vigilant awareness of the work we must continually do to undermine all the socialization that leads us to behave in ways that perpetuate domination.”

bell hooks³⁰⁷

If an ongoing journey of gradual transformation is to take place in us, then, as Conde-Frazier has said, “we need to explore [and understand] the barriers to it. Prejudices are some of the strongest barriers,”³⁰⁸ and discrimination—the acting out of prejudices—is something that several of the calabash breakers spoke about with real passion as needing to be fundamentally addressed and repeatedly addressed if theological education is to become truly intercultural. This chapter will consider their stories, their insights to the attending issues, and a wider vision for change in theological education.

It has been difficult to know what to call this chapter, as “discrimination” is really only one aspect, or barrier. It describes a negative external act towards another based on his or her membership of a certain category or group. “Prejudice” usually refers to the internal beliefs, attitudes, and feelings on which that act is based. They exist as an integral pair.³⁰⁹ The eventual reason for choosing to focus on the concept of dismantling discrimination here, however, has been that in analysing the words of the interviewed calabash breakers, their emphasis has rested largely on external actions. Discrimination seems, in their estimation, to be creating practical blocks to real change and needs to be challenged and addressed if the implied underlying prejudices are to be gradually reformed. In some situations the

³⁰⁷ hooks, *Teaching Community*, 36.

The importance of the task of dismantling discrimination is something that others beyond the calabash breakers recognise for society as a whole. In 2009 and 2010 the theme for the international Human Rights Day was “Embrace Diversity, End Discrimination.” As Navi Pillay, the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, was quoted as saying, “Discrimination lies at the root of many of the world’s most pressing human rights problems. No country is immune from this scourge. Eliminating discrimination is a duty of the highest order.” <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/HumanRightsDay2009.aspx> (cited 9 December, 2010).

³⁰⁸ Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett, *A Many Colored Kingdom*, 106.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 110. Conde-Frazier, while acknowledging that prejudice and discrimination often “feed each other in a vicious cycle,” suggests that it is possible to perpetrate a discriminatory act without prejudice but equally possible to avoid discriminatory actions while harbouring prejudice. It is not likely, however, that such events could exist as any more than occasional one-offs. Across the long-term one’s beliefs and actions tend to become entwined.

symbolism in concrete practical effort may have more power to change the abstract than attempts to work from the abstract to the concrete.³¹⁰

While discrimination and prejudice exist as an integral pair, it is important to note, however, that privilege—“right or advantage or immunity belonging to person or class or office”—informs and influences them both.³¹¹ Often invisible, privilege is the one thing that certain calabash breakers in the case study of the next chapter identified as being the greatest challenge for a would-be intercultural institution to have to grapple with. While the emphasis in this chapter is on discrimination, the discussion will also touch on privilege.

It is also important to say that in this chapter there will be an emphasis in the responses of the calabash breakers, and in the subsequent discussion, on racial discrimination. This is to be expected. As stated in chapter one, the initial entry point for conversations about interculturality was ethnicity prompting several of the calabash breakers to speak with a similar emphasis to that which Andraos expressed: “A genuine intercultural education is antiracist and has to be articulate [and] explicit about that, not just as a subtitle.”³¹² Acknowledged is a warning given by Boyung Lee that to emphasise one site of discrimination over others is to risk ignoring the fact that “we live in multiple locations [of discrimination] simultaneously.”³¹³ Focusing on one of those locations, she has argued, means that while we may continue to advance our position, it will be at the cost of others and we will remain insensitive to the myriad of power dynamics that exist in our world. It is important, she says, to approach justice holistically if we are to see thoroughgoing

³¹⁰ It is also the case that the word “oppression” rather than discrimination could have been used. As Diane Goodman has pointed out “prejudice + social power = oppression” and yet “certainly, people from all social groups (advantaged, and disadvantaged) have prejudices and may act in discriminatory ways.” (Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice*, 16.) Simply because the words of the calabash breakers have pointed to the reality of this latter point discrimination is being spoken about here rather than oppression. This is not meant to imply that oppression is not to be found in theological education.

Though oppression as a term will not be used here, and as a concept will not be specifically addressed, for an extract that provides a useful history and definitions and suggests and describes five faces of oppression (exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence) see Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 39–65.

³¹¹ George Turner, ed., *The Concise English Dictionary* (Dingley, Victoria: Hinkler, 1995).

³¹² It was noticeable, however, that racism particularly preoccupied most of those working in the United States while Jenny Te Paa, for example, who as a Māori could easily have rested there, chose to widen the discussion to sexism, clericalism, and classism in her interview.

It is also important to say at this point that while talk of racism tends to place the spotlight on white privilege, being a white man does not guarantee immunity from marginalisation or powerlessness. It would be wrong not to acknowledge that here. As Jung Young Lee noted, marginality has many faces: disability, whether physical or mental; economic disadvantage; classism etc. What we all need to be aware of are the various kinds of ignorance and privilege that come with the “centrisms” that are true of us. Lee, *Marginality*, 32–33.

³¹³ Lee, “Together in Solidarity,” in Westfield, ed., *Being Black, Teaching Black*, 179–80.

transformation. What must be said here, then, is that talk of racism serves to provide a point of entry into what must be a broad conversation.³¹⁴ In the context of this thesis, however, it happens to be a significant point of entry.³¹⁵

Making it personal

Chinglish

Yesterday

a shop lady smiled at me

and said,

Your English is very good

her eyes crinkled

in a let's-be-nice-to-aliens way.

I wanted to say

of course it bloody is,

I was born here...³¹⁶

This poem by Renee Liang, a Chinese New Zealand doctor and poet, powerfully illustrates how the simplest of encounters, perhaps even well-meant, can reveal assumptions that result

³¹⁴ Though the greater emphasis in this chapter is on racism, it is not possible to do the topic justice here. That will not be achieved for any other sites of discrimination either. For a sample of resources around issues of race in particular, however, in addition to those books and articles that will be drawn from in this chapter, the following three books are suggested. 1. Kimberlé Crenshaw et al., eds., *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement* (New York: The New Press, 1995). Critical race theory has been very influential in thinking on race and racism. It grew out of the legal context, where this book focuses, though it is now found within education and other settings also. 2. Christine A. Stanley, ed., *Faculty of Color: Teaching in Predominantly White Colleges and Universities* (Bolton, MA: Anker, 2006). This book includes narratives from twenty three persons of colour in the United States and their recommendations for change in the academy. They cover a number of the issues mentioned in this chapter and more. 3. "Embodied Pedagogies: Engaging Racism in Theological Education and Digital Cultures" from Mary E. Hess, *Engaging Technology in Theological Education: All That We Can't Leave Behind* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 95–112. A personal concern is that with the growing trend towards e-learning in the theological education, issues of race will be forgotten or ignored. The medium requires a lot of imagination, wisdom, and investment to ensure courses are intercultural in their approach. This chapter offers a useful introductory discussion.

³¹⁵ Racism is, however, not to be underestimated as a significant "site for discrimination." A recently released report from Australia, which interviewed 12,500 people across the country, concluded that forty percent of Australians have a narrow understanding of who belongs in the country and one in ten are prejudiced against other cultures. "Report Reveals Deep Racial Divides in Oz,"

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10708312, (cited 4 March, 2011).

³¹⁶ This poem was included in an article featuring the author, Renee Liang, in the University of Auckland Alumni magazine: Vaneesa Bellew, "Doctor Poet," *Ingenio* Spring (2010): 23.

in condescending words or deeds hurtful to the recipient. Many of the calabash breakers interviewed, some of them “born here” in the West and others arriving from beyond, also have stories to tell of such moments, whether as students or as faculty within Western institutions. Seven of those stories will be profiled here. Discrimination even in the best of intentioned places is, unfortunately, a reality amongst the people of God.

The story of Te Paa, who is proudly indigenous, is a particularly sobering example of such reality. “I came into theological education full of naïve trust and hope that there was a site as yet unexplored, untouched by indigenous influence but by its very nature, because it is the site that has the franchise on the discourse of the things of God, that by implication it would be good and wonderful and kind and merciful and,” she laughed, “devoted to the justice project. I guess I just entered into it thinking, well it would just be a mere matter of conscientizing it, and they would get it immediately, and we would be away. Ha, ha, well!” As Te Paa was to discover across her Masters and PhD research there were, in fact, many decades of discrimination against Māori embedded in the church and in the theological education history of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, her particular context.³¹⁷ But then, “having experienced deep marginalisation in secular education in my being prepared for social work, nothing kind of prepared me for a different experience of marginalisation within theological education, and this was really to do with clericalism, sexism, and to a lesser extent classism.” The ongoing and deeply painful injustices of these further experiences of marginalisation Te Paa has written about.³¹⁸

During Te Paa’s years of study a consortium of theological colleges was jointly offering courses. Discriminatory behaviours, so she said, were common to them all. “So, for example, at [the Baptist College]... ‘outside students,’ as those of us who were not Baptist were deemed, were not allowed to use the library, we were not offered tea or coffee, let alone a biscuit—it was a cardinal sin to presume upon the biscuits of the Baptists!—and the seating... They had their classrooms arranged so that the ‘outsiders’ (I think there were about five of us) were always seated in the worst possible parts of the classroom. In fact they had these bi-folding doors, I can remember as someone who used to come from work, and

³¹⁷ Jenny Plane Te Paa, “Kua Whakatungia Ano a Te Rau Kahikatea: An Historical Critical Overview of Events Which Preceded the Re-Establishment of Te Rau Kahikatea Theological College of Te Pihopatanga O Aotearoa” (unpublished Masters thesis, University of Auckland, 1995). Also, Te Paa, “Contestations.”

³¹⁸ See her words on pages 75–76 of this thesis. They illustrate how little changed when she moved from being a student to faculty.

usually late, I actually sat, for probably about eighty percent of the time, in the corridor...So I could hear but I'm not often seen by the lecturer. That became my seat. It was always there for me when I arrived, was this seat in the corridor and of course in the winter it was cold! It was very uncomfortable. So, you know, quite a literal experience of being on the margins of the classroom.”

How aware,
I wonder,
are theological colleges
of the subliminal messages
they send
through the choices they make
in such things as
physical classroom layout
attitudes toward resources
and hospitality?

So simple
those choices
and yet so powerful,
more powerful than words.

I studied at a theological college
where the women
I talked with
thought they could only ever be
Sunday school teachers
helpers
maybe involved in pastoral care
but never
ministers
or theological educators
influential decision makers
in the wider church
though many were
eminently capable.
Why?
Because
in addition to the fact that
only two women
were on faculty
everyone knew
the principal
a highly published
and respected
pastor

each year
 chose to mentor
 those
 he saw
 were the up-and-coming
 leaders of the church.
 They were always young men.
 (They also were always white.)

So simple
 our choices
 and yet so powerful,
 more powerful than words.

“Classrooms [and, we could add, institutions] are not politically neutral, nor are they politically benign,” Westfield has pointed out. In fact “hegemonic practices of exclusion and domination are present and operative—sometimes in lethal doses.”³¹⁹ For Te Paa, marginalisation, in her words, helped her to “shed the highest degree of naïvety that I’d brought into the situation.”³²⁰ She has tried to avoid cynicism though, as she said, “I confess to having momentary lapses. Sometimes they’re more momentary than others.”

A Puerto Rican man was very blunt about his view of racial discrimination in particular. “When I came to the U.S., the first experience as a student at the graduate level was awful. It was in the south...[in a] very racist institution. And still today I suffer racial prejudice at all levels...There’s a lot of hypocrisy in Western educational settings and a lot of baloney. The hypocrisy is that a lot of people try to say and portray that they are liberal...and open-minded...‘No, no! We are very inclusive!’...But I use the image—some of them laugh—‘You love tacos, but you hate Mexicans.’ He went on to talk about a Puerto Rican woman he knew, highly qualified in pastoral counselling, who, arriving to a new job the previous summer, had been placed in a small room outside of the main faculty building of a particular seminary, was paid a low salary, and was denied any teaching role, though she was being

³¹⁹ Westfield, ed., *Being Black, Teaching Black*, ix.

³²⁰ Dealing with alienation is, according to Hoggard Creegan and Pohl, an “ongoing enterprise” for academic women. Their observation regarding the wider context of evangelical academic women and their relationship with church, in particular, adds an interesting agreement to Te Paa’s hint here that despite everything, losing “naïve trust and hope” altogether in the justice project is often difficult to do. “While alienation is the common human condition, we expect—perhaps especially as women committed to church—that our *church* experience will be otherwise. The high expectations clash with the often low level of real community and equality and with the homogeneity.” Hoggard-Creegan and Pohl, *Living on the Boundaries*, 146. Why they continue to trust and hope, they do not say.

held up as the new icon representing equal opportunity. She had rung him, humiliated, in tears.

For the Ugandan man, life as a student in Britain “was really, really hard...Just being black, the colour was just bad. I don’t know why. I remember one day somebody asked me, ‘How are you enjoying this college as a black student?’ and I said, ‘Oh, I think it’s forced me to think that being black is terrible in a white culture.’ Just the word ‘black,’ you are always suspected, associated with all kinds of,” he clapped his hands together, “even when you’re talking about issues seriously.”

That matter of being taken seriously is one that the Latino man has struggled with in his life from Sunday school to the seminary, whether because he has been rendered invisible by words or actions because of assumptions about who fits certain roles best. “I remember my first theological wondering...as a child...at summer bible study...They were singing this song, ‘Jesus loves the little children,’ and I thought, well apparently Jesus doesn’t love us because it’s ‘Red, and yellow, black, and white, they are precious in his sight.’ What about brown?! What happened to us? So, as a child, that was one of the theological questions or wonderings I had: What about us? Where do we belong in the spectrum of things when church, and society are pushing us to the side? Even vocationally...we kept getting mixed messages. They’d say, ‘We want you in the seminary; we don’t want you in the seminary. We want you in the seminary but you make the sign of the cross wrong, you say the wrong prayers, you have the wrong devotions,’ and ahhhhh!” He went on to reflect, “Nobody told me that they thought I’d make a good theologian, you know?...And I’m thinking, why did nobody ever tell me? When I look at it everybody kept telling me I would be a good pastor, I would be a good parish minister. It’s almost the ecclesial equivalency of ‘We’d rather have you scrubbing toilets than doing theology.’”

I can hear the frustration
and the hurt
in these words
though they are delivered in a
shrugging-the-shoulders
kind of way.

Don’t deny me
and my calling
because

I am not who you think I should be.

For the Asian American man, finding his place in the theological academy has been accompanied by, in his words, “what Habermas would call a crisis of legitimacy.” He is not the only one to talk about this. Legitimacy as a member of faculty is something that has been explored recently by several African American scholars of religion and theology in a book already quoted from, entitled *Being Black, Teaching Black*.³²¹ Two women professors, in particular, detail examples as simple as a student assuming that because an African American woman is standing at the front of the classroom, the professor must have failed to show up for class and so the student leaves early; and being treated with disrespect by a student until later it was discovered she had published with an esteemed scholar and then being told ‘Had I known you were somebody, I would have done better in your class.’³²² For the Asian American man the issue of legitimacy is felt most in his interactions with the scholarly community. His interdisciplinary approach to his work conflicts with the priority given to specialisation in the academy and because of this, along with his ethnicity, he said he is conscious that “as a ‘marginal’ person you have to work twice as hard to be considered an equal; otherwise they will assume that you are average or below average. So there is this burden that you are constantly feeling that I have to prove myself.”

The word “burden” came up several times in the interview with the Asian American man, who also spoke of how tired he can feel at times. To add to the burden of feeling the constant need to prove his legitimacy he also spoke of “the frustration...of tokenism.” It is evidenced with Asian American students in that they look to him as their mentor and, feeling “a sense of affinity...think that you would automatically be on their side and be more lenient with their work or more understanding.” It also comes up at an institutional level. “That is, to prove that [the institution] is progressive, they want a ‘marginal’ person on every committee but, you know, there are only so many of us to go around. So, actually, your work demand...is double because you have to do this, you have to do that. You still have to do your scholarship. You still have to do your teaching...So you feel this burden of representation that you are never just you, you represent a community. That is a thing that is very difficult at times because sometimes I hate it...I don’t want to represent anybody, just me. Nobody appointed me to represent them...but on the other hand sometimes you feel like,

³²¹ Westfield, ed., *Being Black, Teaching Black*.

³²² *Ibid.*, 11–12, 14, 68–69.

‘I do want to represent that community,’ so it’s like an internal thing that can get very tricky.” The words of this man point importantly to some of the real tensions for minority faculty to be found in an environment still essentially dominated by one voice.

Boyung Lee has a similar story to tell of tokenism and the burden of representation.³²³ She has found herself struggling with well-meant comments made by white feminists on behalf of feminists of colour that in fact deny realities and cultural complexities, and struggling with the many invitations to represent the coloured community on committees and at official functions. Like the Asian American man, she knows internal tension. For her it is between what she calls the specialness of being, at the time of writing, one of the only women of colour on the tenure track in her institution and the temptation that creates to universalise or appropriate others’ stories for the sake of her specialness. She calls “this situation a sweet...[yet] dangerous place.”³²⁴

Issues around employment add further to the difficulties faced by minority groups. The Asian American man said, “Being an Asian American should not preclude you from being considered for a job...It should also not be the case that you get a job simply because you are Asian American.” He noted that very few Asian Americans are deans of seminaries in the United States, let alone presidents, and they “would face a very difficult time if they do choose to apply.” If, however, they are given a leadership role and it proves not to be a good fit, “sadly enough it would be taken as 'unbiased evidence' that reinforces the stereotypical image: Asian Americans cannot do the job.”

This suggests that a way forward would be intentionally to change the demographics of the faculty of a would-be intercultural institution. This would involve carefully and deliberately investing in and grooming future leaders and operating positive or affirmative action in recruitment, employment, publishing, and the use of resources.³²⁵

³²³ Lee, “Teaching Solidarity,” 175–83.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 179.

³²⁵ Gary Clabaugh, an Anglo-American educationalist, wrote in 2000 about the injustice that he felt operating “positive discrimination” on the basis of ascribed characteristics rather than achieved characteristics brings. The example he chose to use to illustrate his point—positive discrimination would allow a wealthy “unmotivated” black woman to receive a job over a poor, unsophisticated, hardworking white man—shows something of the emotional power of the arguments and their complexity, as well as the embedded prejudices that influence people’s definitions of “justice.” Gary K. Clabaugh, “Positive Discrimination,” <http://www.newfoundations.com/Clabaugh/CuttingEdge/PositiveDiscrimination.html>, (cited 9 December, 2010).

Similar issues are being faced by Latin@s but the comments of the Latina add another layer of complexity to the dominant-minority dynamic. She spoke of how hard as a Latin@ community it has been to get scholars into seminaries, publish books, and keep journals alive in order to ensure they have a voice and that voice is reaching others.³²⁶ “Then what happens is that you see the system coopt folk and then you’re like, ‘Wait a minute! We just kicked all these doors down so you could become them? The plan wasn’t like you’re in and then you forget what you’re supposed to do.’” The grief for her in all of this is that Latin@s remain the community “with the smallest percentage in graduate education, the smallest percentage with undergraduate success, which means that we’re not influencing the churches that we’re in and we are not influencing the theological academy, not at four percent —and that when you’re fifty percent of the church in the United States. Those are bad numbers. Those are really bad numbers.” Given the situation, her parting comment was: “So I say, if you are [proudly] Latin@ in theological education, you are a sign of resistance. You are a sign of hope because you are not supposed to be here. Everything has been set up to make sure you don’t get here.”

Despite the deep frustrations that experiences of personal discrimination, as well as observations of its effects at institutional and even national level bring, the calabash breakers interviewed here are choosing to stay and to believe that change is possible. The Latino said, “I love my community and I love my church. I don’t always like my community and I don’t always like my church. When I look at some of the things that have happened to myself and some other Latinos, [I ask myself], ‘Well, why am I still here? What holds us to this community? What holds us to this church?’” Perhaps some words from Te Paa offer an answer: “I believe, perhaps naively, that there can be generosity, there can be mutual encouragement, that difference can not only be tolerated but celebrated, and that within all of those things the Christ can be made manifest in our midst.”³²⁷

The Christ

³²⁶ A particular journal she mentioned is the *Journal of Hispanic Theology Latino Theology* which, after ten years as a print journal, was told by the publisher that because the subscription base was not large enough in their estimation they would have to cease publishing it. It has since become an online journal:

www.latinotheology.org Another “site of resistance”—to borrow some of her later words—is the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians, www.achtus.org

³²⁷ In a powerful sermon to open the 52nd Anglican Diocesan Synod in Auckland, Te Paa reminded people that the ability to live with difference as the community of God’s people is to be found in the command of Christ to love one another as brothers and sisters united in him. Jenny Plane Te Paa, “Diocesan Synod Kauwhau,” (unpublished speech, Auckland: 2009).

who is

God subverting expectations
born into an oppressed people
to an unmarried mother
justice in the womb³²⁸

who grew up
first a refugee
then in a despised backwater town
a carpenter
homeless, at that
a thorn in the flesh of “us”
a friend to “them”
 including
 a woman he healed on the sabbath
 whom he called Daughter of Abraham
 laughing at the rules
 a man, disabled,
 (because of his or his parents’ sin?)
 seeing now what others cannot
 a woman who gave him a precious gift
 with her free-flowing hair
 running the gauntlet of criticism
 a Samaritan leper
 the only one
 who said ‘Thank you’
 an Ethiopian eunuch
 and a dealer in purple cloth
 from Philippi...

Justice made manifest
in our midst.

Noting some of the issues

Between interviews with several of the calabash breakers and the reading their comments inspired, three issues present themselves when contemplating the goal of dismantling discrimination. First, simply finding the space to speak and be heard can be very difficult for those—either those discriminated against or those who are sympathetic to them—who would desire change. Second, the internalisation of discrimination, whether in the form of prejudice aided by privilege for those in a powerful position or ascribed shame for those on the

³²⁸ The phrase “justice in the womb” is the title of a song published by the Iona Community in 1992, words and music by John Bell. It explores the negative realities of the Christ event and yet the promise of justice that such a Christ brings.

receiving end, makes any attempt to dismantle it a massive and very complicated task. Third, there is a price at which all of this comes, for individuals and for institutions, for example, prioritising patience, relationship and innovation over speed, deadlines and conserving the known.

Finding the space to speak and be heard

While for some the wait for justice in the theological academy continues, the great difficulty from the perspective of a person experiencing discrimination is that by virtue of that fact they often hold very little real power. Change, if it is to begin with them, will require a very careful and discerning navigation of the status quo. This is also true, however, for those in more privileged situations who wish to see things done very differently but find themselves in a minority line of thought. As Matsuoka said, reflecting particularly on racial discrimination, “The reason why it’s so hard for people to [bring] change [is] if you are racial/ethnic person like me, people expect me to talk about race because I can always go back, according to their perception, to my racial cocoon...And that’s a conversation stopper because they can’t come in there. So we are already stereotyped to talk about race. That’s very difficult.” The implication underlying his words was that people then do not feel obligated to listen. He continued: “If you are a person of the dominant group, if you talk about race, then you are in truly a liminal situation, you know...The white people say, ‘Why is she talking about race? She’s not racial/ethnic’...And on the other side...the racial/ethnics will say, ‘Why is she or he trying to represent us or trying to cozy up to us?’ So you are in a very difficult situation where you don’t have support....Who wants to be in a situation where nobody understands you?”³²⁹

If anything is to change, in the opinion of the African American woman, for those being discriminated against or those in the dominant position who are onside, “Your way of looking at things has to in some ways be outside of the box. But,” she warned, “you have to develop allies within the box.” As Honoré pointed out, “Powerholders are the gatekeepers: they control who goes in and who goes out.” To gain a powerholder, or several, as allies is

³²⁹ For an excerpt that illustrates this situation, both for people of colour and for whites, where “nobody understands you” though you have worked hard for the cause you believe in, see hooks, *Teaching Community*, 51–53. Earlier in the same book, on page 27, she comments that “simply talking about race, white supremacy and racism can lead one to be typecast, excluded, placed lower on the food chain...No wonder then that such talk can become an exercise in powerlessness.”

therefore crucial.³³⁰ The Asian American said that, for one thing, it will mean learning the culture of the academy without becoming “acclimated or acculturated...so that you can navigate it politically.” He also believes it means ensuring that powerholders are included in any eventual efforts to dismantle discrimination. “The first time we tried to look at being an anti-racist institution...I said, ‘We’re not going to get anything done because the people in power didn’t come.’ ‘What do you mean the people in power?’...’You know who I’m talking about,’ and I just named them. ‘This person, this person, this person.’ And they were like, ‘Yeah, true.’...Sometimes the people in power don’t have the official title of power but you know who they are, and if you don’t have those voices as part of it or being able to develop those relationships to be able to get some things done right, it’s not going to happen.” This opinion is also held by Gittins. He said, “I do intercultural workshops...A bishop in Canada [asked me to come]. ‘You know, we’ve been importing priests from four or five different nations over the last thirty or forty years...and they’re not talking to each other and there’s fragmentation...Will you come in and do some work with them?’ I said, ‘Who’s “them”?’ ‘Well,’ he said, ‘the Polish guys or the Indian guys.’ I said, ‘No. No. There’s no “them.” It’s “us”, and if you’re not part of the workshop, there’s absolutely no way it can work.’”

When discrimination (or privilege) is internalised

Another difficulty in dismantling discrimination is the insidious nature and outworking of internalised racism, sexism, classism, etc. The French philosopher and Christian mystic Simone Weil once observed, “Someone who does not see a pane of glass does not know that he does not see it. Someone who, being placed differently, does see it, does not know the other does not see it.”³³¹ A comment made by the African American woman helpfully illustrates a “someone” moving across both of those statements and then struggling to understand how the other can be so blind. “Sometimes students coming from other continents like Africa have no idea that anything is wrong because on the surface everything seems wonderful. “We talk about some of these issues [in class] and they’ll say, ‘What are we talking about? I don’t understand this whole thing about racism, whatever.’ They’ll be here for about three or four years and then you’ll hear them say, ‘Prof ____ treats me as if I

³³⁰ This statement is echoed in the words of David Schuller who was writing at the beginning of the decade of globalisation in the ATS. David S. Schuller, “Globalization: A Study of Institutional Change in Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 27, no. 2 (1991): 145–47.

³³¹ Quoted in Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 39.

don't have a mind and I was a teacher in my country. I come here and suddenly you treat me as if I don't have'—I'm like, Yeah, yeah. You're gettin' it now.'”

For many, whether those benefitting or suffering from discrimination, the vexed issue of privilege can be difficult to understand precisely because it is internalised. Critical questions are seldom openly asked about why one person or group has easy access to resources, power or information while another does not.³³² As the African American woman went on to say, it is thus very hard, for example, “for whites to understand that they are privileged or even those of us who are Black who are in a college situation...We are in a sense in a more privileged place than let's say my brothers and sisters who are living in the ghetto...so in some ways we've all been impacted.” She noted that particularly for those who are discriminated against, especially racially discriminated against, “many of us have internalized racism. We've internalized the negative betrayals and images that society has placed upon [us]...and so even on a very insidious level we have to overcome our own sense of internalized racism and believe in our own goodness and our own potential and our own giftedness.” There is thus a deep work of spiritual formation needing to be done.³³³

The Pākehā woman was one who specifically spent time considering the destructive work that internalised racism can do in those on the receiving end. “For many Māori in New Zealand, they live with that sense of ascribed shame...that is put on them by the dominant groups...which say, ‘You're lazy. If you just concentrated more,’ you know, ‘you're the ones that do the crime and...are alcoholics’ and dah de dah de dah. The literature is looking now quite clearly in terms of what they call the post-colonial traumatic stress disorder...³³⁴ It clearly is manifest in generational patterns of alcoholism, abuse, unemployment, mental health, higher incidence of psychotic, depressive disorders, violence, and very much that's now being ascribed or inscribed across generations where they have internalised where they're going to be, you know, at the bottom of the heap.” The story she told of a Māori research student offered a particularly poignant illustration of what can result: “[The student]

³³² For a comprehensive definition and discussion of privilege and its intricate complexities, see Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice*, 13–36.

³³³ Law's “Cycle of Gospel Living,” which speaks of practising the spirituality of the resurrection and the spirituality of the cross, is one relevant way forward. Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb*, 71–77.

³³⁴ One interesting report, for example, examines the historical trauma suffered by American Indians that often results in substance abuse. It goes on to offer an “indigenist” approach, as opposed to a colonial one, towards addressing the problem. Karina L. Walters, Jane M. Simoni, and Teresa Evans-Campbell, “Substance Use Among American Indians and Alaska Natives: Incorporating Culture in an “Indigenist” Stress-Coping Paradigm, *Public Health Report*, Supplement 1 (2002): S104–S117.

recently said to me quite clearly, ‘I wasn’t able to challenge the faculty member because...I could feel it happening to me. I went into that space of giving away my power to the faculty member’—they were Pākehā —‘and just became quite diminished and quite ashamed at the fact that I hadn’t done as good a job as I could have. It was my fault,’ whereas,” the Pākehā woman went on to reflect, “quite clearly actually it wasn’t at all. The faculty member had not given clear instructions about boundaries in terms of expectations, feedback, and in fact hadn’t given any feedback at all. So...it silenced the student and the student said, ‘It meant that I couldn’t get out of that space and I couldn’t summon the energy to be able to say, actually it’s not my problem. What I needed from you was...and you didn’t give it.’ So, again the student then let it go and this kept happening, and that accounts for a great deal of the silence from some ethnic cultural groups in our classrooms.”

Internalisation of race, gender, class, privilege, etc., of course not only affects those on the receiving end, but also those who go on to intentionally or unintentionally act on it through discriminatory practices. The latter situation is of particular concern because it is harder to convince people that that is in fact what they are doing. Diane Goodman, a Jewish diversity consultant from the United States, has written a very sobering but also very helpful book that talks about how to educate people from privileged groups with a view to promoting diversity and social justice.³³⁵ She particularly grapples with how to understand and work with those who are resistant precisely because they cannot see the privileges they are benefitting from, and carefully explores the various reasons for this.

In the previous chapter mention was made of the film, “The Color of Fear,” and the reactions therein of a conservative white man who found it very difficult to conceive that racism is a problem, even when confronted with the pain-laden stories of the men of colour with whom he is in conversation. He presents a clear example of a person whose assumptions are so deeply internalised that he is simply unable to hear the injustice and untruth embedded in the statements he makes, such as his strongly articulated belief that “the world is open” to everyone. As Goodman addresses in her book, and McIntosh has observed, it is precisely such blockages in thinking in those who are the powerholders that makes dismantling discrimination so deeply challenging and problematic.³³⁶ Such a blockage is not necessarily

³³⁵ Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice*. This book has already been drawn from earlier in the chapter, though mentioned only in the footnotes (footnote 310).

³³⁶ McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege,” 1–2.

limited to those of a more conservative mindset. In “The Color of Fear” the other white man in the room, a self-styled liberal who claims he is non-racist, is proved by the end of the film to be just as “morally reprehensible” in his assumptions as the other man.³³⁷ What does not help is the “pretense” or “culture of niceness” embedded in white culture that is determined to avoid conflict at all costs, as Hill, Boyung Lee, and Kim-Cragg have all noted.³³⁸

“There’s a racist inside all of us”³³⁹
so a student of mine once stated.
I knew it was true
as soon as he said it
even while
I hoped
it mightn’t be.
 Don’t kid yourself.

To my shame
it is true.
Oftentimes it
just happens
a looking away
a crossing the road
a fear
I don’t necessarily know why
or where from
It’s unjustified
unjust
I wish it wasn’t there.

I am working on it
but how do you get rid of it
especially when you can’t always pinpoint
where
or
why?
And in the meantime
how do you rob it of its power?

³³⁷ This is Hill’s assessment as the author has not been able to see the whole film. Hill, “Flying the Elephant in the Room, 9.

³³⁸ Ibid. Boyung Lee, “Together in Solidarity,” 176–80. Kim-Cragg spoke of this in chapter four.

³³⁹ Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, has written: “We know that the seed of discrimination lies in all of us. Once in New York, a black woman shouted at me even though I am also a person of color. It is not only certain people who discriminate; the oppressed and the oppressors are inside each one of us.” Thich Nhat Hanh, *Together We Are One: Honoring Our Diversity, Celebrating Our Connection* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2010), 53.

In an influential paper, McIntosh once described how, after pondering unacknowledged male privilege, she “realized that since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there was most likely a phenomenon of white privilege which was similarly denied and protected, but alive and real in its efforts” and set herself the task of personally recording the “invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day.”³⁴⁰ She made an initial list of forty-six such assets, noting at the same time layers of denial operating to protect male privilege, particularly in the education setting, that she suspected were similarly true of the protection of white privilege and possibly of other forms of privilege that operate in our institutions and society such as economic and social class, religion, sexual preference, and clericalism in the church.³⁴¹ Those layers of denial make for sobering reading for in McIntosh’s analysis they subtly make it very difficult for a privileged person to recognise the powerful (themselves) as needy or damaged, preferential treatment for others as anything but unjust, and yet preferential treatment for oneself as anything but normal, thus perpetuating myths of meritocracy. As McIntosh concluded, “it is an open question whether we will choose to use unearned advantage to weaken hidden systems of advantage, and whether we will use any of our arbitrarily-awarded power to try to reconstruct power systems on a broader base.”³⁴²

Ignorance
they say
is bliss
but
it seems
to suck
life
leave scars
of deep
frustration
in
those being
ignored.

³⁴⁰ McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege,” 1. For an interesting video account from McIntosh herself of the process of writing this paper see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRnoddGTMTY>

³⁴¹ It could be a very useful exercise to ask those in power—board members, faculty etc—to create a similar list to McIntosh’s with theological education as the context, considering the particular privileges they can take for granted by dint of who they are. Another exercise to grow awareness and address ignorance of internalised racism would be to help people in privileged groups understand the ways in which they are actually harmed by oppression psychologically, socially, intellectually, spiritually, morally, materially, and physically. For this latter idea, see Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice*, 103–24.

³⁴² McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege,” 19.

How
can a person
like me
change
another
who simply cannot see?
And what will it take
to change
the various kinds of
ignorance
that exist
in
privileged
me?

I am
deeply
deeply
aware
of how naïve
and ignorant
I am
on many levels
how easily
I could
can
do
become
the perpetrator
sometimes I hate
the nescience
that comes with being
white-educated-ablebodied-Protestant-heterosexual-middleclass-professional...

Perhaps
it has to start
with honesty
with stories
with care for
identity in relationship
with listening to silenced voices
with manākitanga
and with epistemic ruptures
which blow
prejudices
acted out in discrimination
whether overt
or hidden

into
the water
that is Life.³⁴³

“You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart...”³⁴⁴

O Lord, give me eyes to see, and ears to hear
so that I might
love
as
You
do.

And what might all of that look like, in the classroom, for instance? Words from the Asian American woman offer a window in:

“It’s a good-will effort to be ‘inclusive’ but I just always put the challenge out there that everybody is racial-ethnic. It’s not just people of colour [who] are racially-ethnic. If you really want this to feel inclusive then, everyone around the table has to recognize that. And so I want to know your story. It’s like ‘why?’ I don’t want the fact that you don’t know your story projected onto me and therefore I have to know my story, and your story, and that’s often what happens!³⁴⁵ As I get to know what are the forces or things that help erase stories, then I find out part of your story...and I tell that to you, and it’s like ‘oh!’ Everyone has to do their own homework to undo this kind of system that creates marginal people to begin with.

“It just opens us up to each other, and I don’t expect specific transformation. I haven’t a clue. I mean, I’m kind of along with the ride with everybody else...I just want to be part of enabling something to happen, to create an opportunity, but I can’t say that you have to be transformed in this way because people’s starting points are also different and I’m not fluent in all those starting points...I guess what I do expect is that people will take responsibility

³⁴³ Jn. 4:14.

³⁴⁴ Ps. 51: 10.

³⁴⁵ In her PhD thesis, Te Paa notes the greater degree of transformation required of Pākehā than Māori in her context because of the latter’s “double consciousness.” This means that to date they have had to do most of the “‘cultural and moral work’ necessary for healthy race relations.” Te Paa, “Contestations, 249. The mention of “cultural and moral work” is Te Paa drawing from Cornel West, *Race Matters* (New York: Vintage, 2001), 6.

for it, like they take responsibility to understand their starting point, to do their homework, and then to follow through with it.”³⁴⁶

My story

your story

undoing a system

transformation

taking responsibility.

Paying the price

For those who do experience discrimination in theological education, change can seem very long in coming and while waiting for it there is, in the meantime, a price.³⁴⁷ The Tongan man spoke of needing to be “prepared to suffer,” to be “patient” and to “sacrifice.” He described one incident where a simple failure on the part of those in power to communicate a fees increase, because he taught in a back room with his Tongan students on a different timetable and so was not part of key staff meetings, had severely damaged his reputation amongst his own people, but he suspected the leadership was unaware of what they had done. The Latino veered away from the word “sacrifice,” however, wanting instead to talk of kenosis. “I remember hearing from some of the older Latino friars who sadly are no longer here that they were...aviendo caminos, opening paths for the younger Latinos...and they would get upset when we were having the same problems they had. And I didn’t understand that until

³⁴⁶ Another “window” comes across the disciplines from the long experience of a history professor from the United States, Peter Frederick. In an article written in 1995, which argued for the importance of intercultural education, Frederick offered nine strategies for stimulating multicultural discussion in the classroom, believing that the “landmine” issues that will arise should be tackled in the interests of growing understanding. The strategies included presenting students with powerful and evocative quotations and visuals to stimulate conversation; asking students to make multicultural hyphenated introductions of themselves and create pictographic autobiographies; inviting student (multicultural) stories; offering a metaphor for (in this case) America; exploring overviews, frameworks, and analytic models to focus discussion of understandings (for example, a five-stage overview of the history of certain groups which moves through invisibility, contributions, victimisation, cultural identity and affirmation, and transformation); and pairing readings, in other words, using contrasting texts to spark comparative discussion. Peter Frederick, “Walking on Eggs: Mastering the Dreaded Diversity Discussion,” *College Teaching* 43, no. 3 (1995): 83–92.

³⁴⁷ One reason that change can be very long in coming is that people tend to be at any one of several different stages toward becoming easily able to relate well crossculturally. The stages can also take varying amounts of time to move through. Effecting change requires enough people to be at or near the final stage. For a fuller exploration of various developmental theories that are particularly relevant here, see Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice*, 37–59.

now when we've been opening up the pathway for the younger Latinos...and I hear some of their complaints and they happen to be the same complaints that we were complaining about. So there's been advances but not as fast as we would like or not as deep...and I do think there's got to be a certain amount of, I'd rather say kenosis than martyrdom! The one sounds just a little too self-abnegating...You know, it's somewhere along the line of letting go of not so much my cultural identity, because I will never sacrifice my cultural identity, but letting go of the predominance of my cultural identity because I could go places where my culture will be dominant."

Kenosis
is really
a word
for us all.

"Let the same mind
be in you
that was in Christ Jesus
who,
though he was in the form of God
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself..."³⁴⁸

Kenosis and dismantling discrimination will happen slowly, for neither come naturally. They also at their core begin and end with relationships and therefore are difficult to initiate and maintain in contexts that are outcomes-driven. The African American woman pointed out that "making changes in theological education, it's all about relationship...[But] the Western way, how we value something, is that we value the object, how many bodies you get or how much money you earn, and that's what is valued. It's not the relationship. It's not the person." As Gittins wryly noted, if relationship is important, as well as getting everyone on the same page so this kind of change is owned, "well, you can do that in a world that's more or less homeostatic but if you've got to get something done fairly quickly, you can't wait until everybody sees it your way or sees it the same way and that's the problem that we're driven with in this kind of society. We might want to listen to every voice, but there are deadlines. We're always driven by deadlines and it doesn't matter what we try to do...The best ideas never come to fruition because you don't have time."

³⁴⁸ Phil. 2:5-7a.

Fundamental change and the best ideas also tend not to come to fruition because, according to Matsuoka, most institutions are focused on “conserving more than innovating...[They] pay lip-service to the diversity...They’re more of the add-ons, not the central pathway. And the reason, it seems to me, for that kind of very infantile [state in terms of] dealing with the diversity questions is because institutions can’t afford to do anything else...Even if you have a good will or intention...the main financial energy that drives seminary education just doesn’t change overnight...We can sell the intention to really diversify to the board of trustees but I’m not so sure if [they] really have the in-depth understanding of what it means...Globalization is in some ways like looking into the bamboo bush and finding a tail wagging. You pull the tail because it looks kind of curious and then all of a sudden you realize the tiger’s face is staring at you...Intercultural studies...looks intriguing and you can probably sell it as an innovative educational method...but once you’re really serious about pulling the tail and see something else coming out at you, then you don’t want to do it.” As evidenced here across these last chapters, the intercultural project is complex and wide-ranging with potentially costly implications, not something to be treated simply as an interesting or trendy topic. As he reflects Matsuoka, for one, says he is “kind of cynical and pessimistic about the future of seminary education...”³⁴⁹

So should I stop here?
 Is the project doomed,
 finally
 and completely
 thwarted
 by the very system
 it is trying to transform?
 Defeated by
 embedded privilege
 lack of time
 and money
 reluctant donors
 and

³⁴⁹ Matsuoka believes that the larger schools with historical and large funding sources will hold their own and preserve the status quo. He does note, however, that the smaller schools that are fighting for their very survival seem often to be the most innovative. “This is where the theology of the cross comes into the scene. You know we don’t do conversion just because we need to. We do it because we are forced into it...In terms of institutional change...I think the cross is really becoming much bigger and bigger and bigger in seminary education. And the question now is how we schools take the evangelicity of the cross experience and how we cope with it. You can just withdraw and do business as usual...Cross experience means you have to have some kind of radical shift which in theological knowledge is death to yourself and out of death comes something new.” The Puerto Rican man thinks the upcoming years will be “hell” as the “old boys” try to hold on to “our turf” in the context of a changing landscape.

recalcitrant faculty
wary boards
unconvinced
or scared
by the
intercultural project?
It does all seem
rather
overwhelming.

Or is it still possible to believe that
where there's a will
and an important cause
and an inevitable
new landscape emerging
there is a way?

“It is imperative that we maintain hope
even when the harshness of reality may suggest the opposite”
– Paulo Freire.³⁵⁰

Theological education in the round

“Everything we do here has to reflect us being redemptive community, where redemption can take place, where redemption is possible, where redemption might be occurring.”

Harrison

In an important book drawn from real life experience, Letty Russell once explored the idea of a “church in the round,” offering it as a feminist interpretation of church as a place where walls between people are broken down, justice and God’s welcoming hospitality are practiced, and where sharing and dialogue and engagement are happening in a context of equality and connection.³⁵¹ The vision seems apt and worth appropriating for the theological education context, even while it will inevitably face problems and difficulties along the way. A comment from Gittins offers hope as well as realism: “there is no problem that cannot be solved by everybody addressing the problem and we are as much the problem as we are the

³⁵⁰ Quoted in hooks, *Teaching Community*, facing page.

³⁵¹ Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993). Compare a comment made by the Gittins: “A hegemonic system is incompatible with an intercultural practice. You can only have an intercultural practice if you are more-or-less a roundtable.”

solution.” Becoming truly intercultural in theological education “will,” in his words, “be a life’s work for everybody.”

The intercultural project
and the justice project
that lies inside it
are large and complex.

It will take much
love and humility
perseverance and commitment
imagination and courage
to achieve.

I may not see it in my lifetime.

However, Matsuoka suggests that, given that the younger generations tend to see “difference as a reality they live in,” as opposed to a “problem...we need to keep our views and opinions in a perspective that there could be something unknown, totally different from what we are thinking could break in, which is kind of a theological statement itself.”

From the perspective of the present, at least in the opinion of the New Zealand woman, if theological education is to become truly intercultural it would need, ideally, “a complete re-visioning.” The current system, she judges, is unable to change. Thus, “you would undo the theological colleges and you might rebuild them or recreate them or reuse them in a different way but I think you would throw everything up in the air and completely start again and say ‘what is it that we want for a world like this in this context?’”

In his writing, Jung Young Lee was another who called for such “radical change.”³⁵² He, in fact, even offered a vision of what a seminary “for a world like this in this context” could look like. According to him, it would prioritise formation, storytelling, and contextual theology over abstract intellectual pursuit. It would consider widely historical and traditional approaches to theological disciplines so that the approach taken by one ideology only could be avoided. It would be concerned with social justice. It would be based around small cells mentored long-term by faculty. It would avoid the traditional lecture style of teaching. It would value vision, creativity, and imaginative reflection. Students would be recommended from their faith communities and they and their mentor would negotiate their course of

³⁵² Lee, *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology*, 138.

study. Grading systems would not be used: students would graduate when they and their educators judge them to be formationally ready. Meanwhile, there would be a regular recycling of educators returning to ministry, and graduates and others in ministry returning to teach in order to keep the seminary relevant and dynamic.³⁵³

Interestingly, another of the calabash breakers is part of a project that has been re-envisioning theological education “for a world like this.” Te Paa said that there is “a project where those of us who are senior women theological educators in various parts of the [Anglican] communion have come together with a shared commitment to...mentoring other women, particularly into our positions of leadership. We recognise that our individual institutions don’t give us any sort of mandate...to do it so we have, out of our positions of privilege, to claim that mandate for ourselves and struggle to find the resourcing to enable us to do that...We’ve already identified a number of young women around the communion who are in places of significant disadvantage and we are seeking the resources to allow us to work alongside them in quite close collaboration...to provide them not only with mentoring but exposure to the kinds of leadership experiences which have been formative for us but which happened in an ad hoc kind of way...and to network in a highly politicised kind of way that creates opportunities for these young women. The second aspect is that we are engaged in a very serious...publishing project...as a way of providing the sort of resources on women’s leadership that these young women can [draw from]...And the third possibility...is that we are considering the desirability of and the probability that we ought to create a virtual academy...and we see this going beyond ourselves, beyond the gender project...All of the indications are that there’s widespread buy-in for that possibility by young scholars...We’ve already got an...institutional anchor for our project...the University of Pietermaritzburg [in South Africa]. So that’s the dream of this gang of five. We call ourselves the ‘Global Anglican Theological Academy’...There’s myself, [Kwok] Pui Lan, Esther Mombo from Kenya, Bev Haddad from South Africa, and Judith Berling from the United States.”³⁵⁴

Such re-envisioning of theological education from scratch is not in general possible in most contexts as the systems are already in place and the theological seminaries and colleges are

³⁵³ For a fuller explanation of his vision, see *Ibid.*, 137–40.

³⁵⁴ For more information on the meeting, in 2009, where the dream began, see “Anglican Women Theological Educators meet in Canterbury, England,”

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2009/3/3/ACNS4584>.

already in operation and have been so for decades. Within seminaries and colleges and Bible schools, the work and dreaming and “facing [of] our own problems” that is being done “with utmost care” by some within individual classrooms and across institutions and beyond gives hope, however, that change can come even to established settings.³⁵⁵ The calabash breakers themselves have already offered some examples from their classrooms. McCormick Theological Seminary, to be profiled in the next chapter, is an example of intercultural work being applied across an institution.

To exercise the depth and breadth of imagination needed for such work obviously requires hard work on the part of faculty. The knowledge and humility to negotiate or navigate the complexities that exist is not gained in just one or two workshops, or a few conversations with experienced and/or culturally “other” friends, or even from a sabbatical spent doing extra study.³⁵⁶ It requires a long-term, concerted commitment to continually opening ourselves to other ways of thinking, speaking, living, acting, and being. The calabash breakers, between them, raised three particular foci for learning which, if acted upon, will impact expectations, approaches, structures at institutional level, as well as help to dismantle discrimination: learning about culture and learning cultures; learning to be interdisciplinary; and learning the politics of education.

Learning about culture and learning cultures

According to two of the calabash breakers, culture as a general topic and cultures in particular are not something typically studied by theological educators, certainly not with the kind of seriousness that they give to their specialisation. Yet, having some understanding, including of where other cultures intersect with our own and how the dynamics of power and privilege play out in those intersections is, they said, important if one is going to be able to engage effectively and with justice in an intercultural environment. The Tongan man, who chose in his Masters degree to change from studying theology to studying anthropology in order to be an effective contextualiser, was clear about its value for the work he has been involved in, including helping him to understand his relationships with his Palangi

³⁵⁵ These words in quotation marks are Matsuoka’s.

³⁵⁶ Compare, as mentioned in chapter one, the almost twenty-year journey of the ATS as it sought to equip people for a vision of globalisation in theological education, and the choice of words for the title of a final report despite all that work: Leshner and Shriver, “Stumbling in the Right Direction.”

In all of this, how students will perceive and accept such a project remains another, potentially time-consuming, unknown.

colleagues.³⁵⁷ Gittins observed, however, that “a lot of Westerners seem to think that you can learn another culture like you catch a cold. I say to them, ‘Look, you go to Russia and you listen to people talking in Russian. You think you can just listen and overhear them for a while and then you’ll get it?... No. You have to learn the rules. And you can’t intuit the rules. You can if you’re a baby but once that window’s closed you can’t intuit the rules. So this...intercultural thing is about hard work, and...most theologians think that theology is the problem and culture is what they already know...From my point of view, very few theologians have the first understanding of culture but because they live in their own culture, and they’ve assimilated their own culture they think they understand it, and yet they can be very high-handed when other people would like to think they understand theology. ‘Ah, but you don’t have a PhD...’ So, [with such people], talk about interculturality sometimes is just idle talk. It [also] means something like ‘sensitivity sessions’ but no system, no work. It’s like, for example, we periodically have workshops on racism, and you still have people say, ‘I don’t need that. I’ve done that.’ The idea that I need to be taught something in order to sensitize me to the way I react in that situation is one that doesn’t go down terribly well with academics because they think, ‘Oh well, I’ve got my terminal degree.’” The litmus test for those convinced that they know enough and are sensitive enough, he suggests, should be “if I say I am culturally, crossculturally, or interculturally sensitive then somebody should say to me, ‘Okay, have you listened to the voices of those people who you think you are sensitive to?’ And if I say, ‘Well, no,’ then somebody should say, ‘Ask *them* whether you’re sensitive.’”

Avenues for learning about culture and other cultures and becoming interculturally sensitive are easily come by. Personal experience is one. To further encourage learning about culture, and cultures faculty should, according to the Asian American man, make a point of using their sabbaticals and other opportunities to spend time in contexts different from their own. “I would like to see...a lot of flow back and forth of people from different backgrounds, including continents. So I would love to see, for example, people from New Zealand coming

³⁵⁷ “Palangi” is used generally by Polynesian peoples to mean white person (Pākehā in Māori). It derives from the Tongan “papalangi,” literally “people from the sky.” The tall masts of the first European ships gave the impression that the sailors came from the sky. Being all white, the word becoming “palangi” came to refer to white people. Mary M. McCoy and Siotame Drew Havea, *Making Sense of Tonga: A Visitor's Guide to the Kingdom's Rich Polynesian Culture* (Nuku'alofa: Training Group of the Pacific, 2006), 3.

here to teach and learn as well as people from here going to New Zealand or Africa or wherever it may be, both to teach and to learn.”³⁵⁸

Secular expertise is another worthy avenue sometimes forgotten by theological educators. Two books by way of example that are worth mentioning here are *Multicultural Education: A Cross-Cultural Training Approach* edited by Margaret Pusch, and Geneva Gay’s *Culturally Responsive Teaching*.³⁵⁹ The former, derived from the field of intercultural communication is an informative and practical, if older, book. Designed for training school teachers and based on the premise that the process of human interaction is a better trainer than simply gaining cognitive knowledge, as is the focus of ethnic studies, it offers thirty strategies for discovering the difference of perspective that one’s culture brings compared to others, and how to process the resulting ambiguities and the challenges. The latter, very recently published book is from the field of secular education. More theoretical than the book edited by Pusch, the author offers a personal case of culturally responsive teaching praxis after exploring the role pedagogy, pastoral care, communication, curriculum design, and learning styles have to play.

In addition
 missiologists
 missionaries
 it seems to me
 are often underestimated in what they have to offer
 to our changing landscape,
 especially from personal experience
 if they themselves have learnt well
 in a cross-cultural situation –
 anthropologists too.³⁶⁰
 And for some reason
 whether it is externally or internally generated

³⁵⁸ Recall also the words of Hitchen from the final paragraph of chapter six, before the summary, who explained why he believes it is important that lecturers across all disciplines should have had crosscultural experience.

³⁵⁹ Margaret D. Pusch, ed., *Multicultural Education: A Cross Cultural Training Approach* (Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1984). It would need contextualising for settings outside of the United States. Geneva Gay, *Cultural Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 2nd ed., ed. James A. Banks, *Multicultural Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2010). Of course these two examples are only the tip of the resource iceberg.

³⁶⁰ The temptation to underestimate the contribution that calabash breakers, missionaries, missiologists, and anthropologists have to make, recalls Jesus’ words in Mark 6:4: “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown and among their own kin, and in their own homes.” Of course, some of their contribution comes from mistakes they have made that others would do well to learn from rather than disown. For a snapshot of the complex lessons historical mission work in particular has to bring to the table, see Andrew Porter, ed., *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880–1914* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

or perhaps both
they seem
by, and large
fairly powerless
to change that.³⁶¹
Perhaps it is so because
Theology remains the queen of the sciences,
at least in theological institutions.

In all this
I think it is
time for change.
Not a coup;
just something closer to
a power-sharing agreement
brokered between
theology
and
culture.³⁶²

Learning to be interdisciplinary

The topic of interdisciplinarity has already been broached in chapter six but is further explored here because of its broader implications for theological education. Genuine intercultural theological education is, according to Andraos, “profoundly interdisciplinary...The knowledge needed for developing this kind of education is rooted in a variety of fields.” Conversation between theology and culture, drawing from the social sciences, has already been mooted as one kind of dialogue worth embracing. Greater support for Andraos’ comment comes from a point made by Tat-siong Benny Liew, an Asian American biblical scholar. He has noted that while the gatekeepers have been careful to keep theology and its disciplines “pure,” in other words Western, if those of other cultures are to participate fully then it will become necessary to draw from and engage with their literary,

³⁶¹ Regarding the powerlessness of missiologists, see Rosemary Dewerse, “Missiologists as Key-Holders for Western Theological Education Reform.” Paper presented at the Mini-Symposium of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Mission Studies, Henderson, New Zealand, October 31–31, 2009.

³⁶² The Catholic Anglo American systematic theologian Stephen Bevans has set a potentially useful precedent. In the opening chapter of his seminal book *Models of Contextual Theology* he made the statement that “there is no such thing as theology: there is only *contextual* theology,” the three loci being scripture, tradition, and present human experience. If he is right, culture, sourced in the past (tradition) and present (human experience), is therefore integral to the theological enterprise and not to be thought too little of. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 3–4ff.

philosophical, and even religious understandings.³⁶³ This would require a very wide conversation indeed.

Of concern to Hitchen, however, is the separation that he perceives currently exists between, and even within, the various disciplines to be found in a theological college. “When a theological educator, who is a biblical scholar can tell me that he’s not interested in what Peter and James said on a topic because he’s a Pauline specialist, there’s something fundamentally wrong. And then he also ignores all the gospels on the same topic—that really worries me.” Parochialism like this would threaten the expansion of the conversation that is intrinsic to intercultural engagement. He then made the comment: “The cutting edge and the areas of concern arising from the intercultural situation are almost always in the interdisciplinary ones—the interface between two [or more] disciplines. This is where the Western system disadvantages real academic progress because if somebody is genuinely grappling with an interdisciplinary issue, they’re expected to do twice the amount of work of any person doing a one-disciplinary thing because they’ve got to have both disciplines to a Masters or PhD level before they can start to bring them together. That’s virtually impossible...And...the moment a person from one discipline begins to comment on the other discipline a person laughs at them because they don’t know the intricacies of the now-technically specialised area and so they don’t even listen to the question the other person is validly asking.” This is something, he sees, is a product of “the way we’re wired to ethnocentricity.”

He knows
the laughter
this man.

Can you hear it?

Interestingly, a quote used by Liew from the Japanese Canadian writer Joy Kagawa adds thought-provoking support to the parochialism that this man has perceived around standards. To his frustration with his white colleagues, her comments add the further impact of being

³⁶³ Tat-siong Benny Liew, "Introduction: Whose Bible? Which (Asian) America?," *The Bible in Asian America*, in *Semeia: An Experimental Journal for Biblical Criticism* 90-91 (2002): 2f.

racially “other” in the situation, without denying those like Hitchen their experience of discrimination.³⁶⁴

Yet just let us get a little too close—let us stub our toes on the line of privilege—and then watch the reaction from even your most liberal do-gooders. If we don’t get our facts exactly right, you whites say, “Look, look, she made a mistake on the third line.” You look for the errors in our remarks rather than for the truth beyond our errors. And that too is racism. We’re all trapped in it. Every one of us lives and breathes in structures of racism from the moment we’re born. We’re caged in standards controlled by people of privilege—standards of truth and goodness, standards of excellence, standards of beauty...and those are the bars that deny our specific realities and lock us out of even your most anti-racist institutions.³⁶⁵

Where cages like these exist there is a real need to address and challenge prejudices, remove boundaries, and reimagine and transform practices and standards.

Meanwhile, the Pākehā woman has perceived the need for interdisciplinarity from another perspective again, with echoes of Liew’s earlier comment. She said, “The inheritance in Western theological circles of the distinct divisions between the theological disciplines...as far as I can see, rests on, and comes out of, a particular worldview that compartmentalises, that does separate out body, soul, mind. That is completely incompatible with many indigenous societies [for whom] that makes no sense. Everything is held in a balance and a creative tension and you talk about the whole and the flow between aspects of the whole. If we’re serious about intercultural theological formation and what it will mean to really value both present and historical context, those neat divisions, as far as I’m concerned, just don’t fit.” Indicated here is the need to reconfigure how Western dualistic thinking itself, which currently dominates, conceives of the world and thus of the components used to study and understand it. Overall, there is a need for far-reaching philosophical and structural change.

While the term “interdisciplinary” uniquely captures something of a sense of practising mutually active listening and speech and of building reciprocal, interrelated relationships between the various disciplines and their scholars, the comments made here seem to call also

³⁶⁴ “Ethnocentricity,” Hitchen said later in an email, is something “I believe is a foundational problem that plagues me as much as anyone.” Kogawa’s quote also supports this though her definition of it is perhaps different. Unfortunately, there is not space to explore this further here.

³⁶⁵ Joy Kogawa, *Itsuka* (New York: Anchor, 1992), 226.

for a more proactive and deliberately change-bringing stance.³⁶⁶ A term proposed by Liew offers a way forward.

Liew, in his writing, chooses to speak of being “transdisciplinary.”³⁶⁷ For him the word captures a sense of being transgressive, that is, moving across lines or space, as well as transformative. As such it suggests to him a more proactive approach, seeking thoroughgoing change to what is. While that dynamic sense of moving across disciplines and transforming our parochial interests brings an invaluable call for scholarship to break free of its own “ethocentrism,” however, a priority on mutuality of engagement seems to recede in the push to move through and beyond. Perhaps it is best to pursue transdisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity together for, if any of the discrimination that currently exists within theological scholarship is to be dismantled and genuine dialogical relationships established, it will require not only transgressive movements bringing transformation but also a commitment to sustained reciprocity.

Learning the politics of education

While each of the calabash breakers has much to offer from a range of life experiences and scholarly and teaching interests to this research, Te Paa is the only one for whom this kind of topic is actually a major area of specialisation. In her case, it has been a life’s work thinking through what it would take to realise truly bicultural theological education between indigenous people, namely Māori, and those who first colonised them.

As I invite Te Paa to speak
on what she believes people
and institutions
need to be learning,
can I just say
it was interesting for me
as a New Zealander
to note
that in the United States
work in intercultural/multicultural theological education
and talk about it
in my experience and reading
seems largely to forget
Amerindians.

³⁶⁶ For support for maintaining the idea of “inter,” see Te Paa, “Contestations,” 264.

³⁶⁷ Liew, “Introduction,” 3–4.

Here it has been embedded in our consciousness
as a “Western” nation
thanks to the hard work of activists
that if you cannot get the bicultural relationship right
with your indigenous people
you will never succeed at
being multicultural.
Even an Australian theologian
coming from a country
whose history with their Aborigines
is hugely different from ours
has understood
that the nation will only find its soul
and be able to flourish
when the long journey of reconciliation with the tāngata whenua
has been travelled.³⁶⁸

And so
here I want to say that
it is important to hear
Te Paa’s perspective.
Voices like hers have much to teach
the rest of us
about even broader projects
if we would only listen
before we speak.
What she has to say
is important
firstly as an indigenous woman
but also as a theological education specialist
who is also on faculty
in a bicultural theological education project.³⁶⁹

“Well I think the whole answer is bound up in the politics of education, well I mean the politics of epistemology, you know. Whose knowledges are validated? Whose knowledges are recognised? Whose knowledges count for anything?... I think it’s not enough for Western institutions simply to offer an accommodation on their terms of what could possibly be, and

³⁶⁸ Norman C. Habel, *Reconciliation: Searching for Australia's Soul* (Sydney: HarperCollins, 1999).

³⁶⁹ Te Paa’s Masters and PhD theses which detail some of the story behind the work she is involved in as Ahorangi o Te Rau Kahikatea (Principal of Te Rau Kahikatea), a constituent of the College of St John the Evangelist, Aotearoa New Zealand have already been mentioned. For another account of the bicultural (Māori-Pākehā) three stream (Māori-Pākehā-Polynesia) college see Judith A. Berling, “Getting Down to Cases: Responses to Globalization in ATS Schools,” *Theological Education* 35, no. 2 (1999): 112–15. For an in-depth discussion of the structurally embedded issues Jenny perceives the project at St Johns faces see chapter five of her PhD thesis: Te Paa, “Contestations,” 236–74.

then to clap themselves on the back and think, ‘Well, isn’t that wonderful? There’s our nod towards the indigenous project.’³⁷⁰ Ultimately it has to become a collaborative thing, an ongoing dialogue...[For indigenous peoples] it’s about your worldview, and inherent in that is your spirituality, you know, your connection to the land, your understandings of values, your moral thinking, your ethical [stances], the values you place on relationality. All of those kinds of things are so much an integral part of that project that unless you’ve got some sense of just how huge that issue is and how important it is for all institutions to enter into it and not in a token way. It’s a massive opportunity to be powerfully, powerfully reenriched...[but] what you tend to get are these kind of token political gestures to say, well that will...fix that itch. You know, they’ll go away now because ‘We’ve got Māori perspectives in the curriculum now *what* more do you want?!’...There has to be this kind of radical, substantive...but it needs to be done over the longest period of time.

“As long as bodies of knowledge evolve over eons so too the transformative project doesn’t need to be a piece of work that’s done and dusted. That’s as much about the environment within which we work, with mutual respect and tolerance and inquiry and curiosity and the desire to celebrate and flourish. So, if in our heart of hearts there’s this determination that each of us as God’s people deserve the opportunity for flourishing then we will be interested. How do indigenous people feel that profound sense of inner possibility and satisfaction and the opportunity to flourish? Well, by being treasured exactly as we are—as your institution needs us to be.”

She is talking from
an indigenous perspective
but it holds truth and relevance
for all.

I am learning that
transformation achieved at speed
only does so by using violence
and in that scenario
there are always winners
and losers.
Indigenous people
know this.

³⁷⁰ In her PhD thesis, Jenny notes some similarities between indigenous issues and those of other groups who suffer ethnic discrimination. It seems permissible therefore for others to hear resonances in her words and connections with them, as well as challenge. It must be said, however, that we should be careful in doing that not to fail to hear their uniqueness also. *Ibid.*, 240.

Te Paa knows.

Whereas
aroha,³⁷¹
aroha taking its time
aims to make
all
winners.

The impatient part of me
wants it all to be right,
now.
Te Paa's words
remind me that
this work
must
take its time...
somehow.

Te Paa thoughtfully continued, “I think that until we find ourselves prepared to negotiate for those kind of [flourishing] relationships—and that requires this whole paradigm shift in understanding—how all that works, how we decide...all that requires just a little traverse through philosophy and the Enlightenment and how racism, if you like, has developed in the mind, this sort of deep-seated sense that certain things are discreditable and unworthy and inferior in terms of intellectual rigour and value and so on. You know, you really do need to understand all that.

“None of my peers...have got theological education backgrounds...They're not educators and they're certainly not theological educators...[But] without that kind of background how on earth can you be a transformative agent because the politics of education, as you know, are very specific. It's not neutral turf. It's powerfully political stuff that you need to understand. And of course when you start to get into this whole realm of structural injustice and the way in which education itself is the primary site of bedding that injustice, unless you understand the mechanics of that then how can you possibly begin to transform it?”

Te Paa's own work is a prime example of a theological educator closely examining the “mechanics” in all their complexities, the wide history and philosophical underpinnings operating behind the particular context for the college in which she is a faculty member. It is

³⁷¹ Māori: aroha—love, though there is no real English equivalent as it contains the sense of creative life force.

her argument that unless a deep investment is made to first attend to the institutional framework and the historical and current politics that shape and manipulate it as a result, “then no educational model will work, no matter how sophisticated, how contemporary, how thoroughly well theorised it may be.”³⁷² Helping people to understand the interplay of structural injustice and educational practice is not, however, easy.

“[We had a seminar once and] the vast majority of faculty at that point still imagined that somehow curriculum was a neutral thing, that it’s disinterested. You just read the popular texts, the approved or recognised...or whatever and then you construct the curriculum and you feed it, but you don’t ever think about the context within which you’re teaching and how power relations are either enhanced...Who decides what bits go in? In whose interests?...They don’t ask those kind of critical questions...[I hoped] it would be really self-evident by the time we’d done this and they began to realise obviously if you delegitimise people’s whole world view by not including it, by not naming it, by not noticing it, by not inviting it into the conversation that they would immediately see that ‘My God! That’s a terrible oversight on my part and so I’ll begin to modify my teaching practice in order to...’ But there was none of that.

“Every time you enter into the classroom you do have power in that relationship and you have power over the minds of other human beings. That is an awesome, awesome power, never ever, ever in any way to be taken for granted, let alone abused...So to not have people prepared for that awesome encounter in any kind of substantive way I think is institutionally negligent, I really do.”

Selah.

Final thoughts

Mindful of what Te Paa has just said there are some last comments from three calabash breakers that are worth mentioning. Together they speak specifically about the characteristics they perceive should be sought in individual faculty and that should be typical of faculty teams if any of the learning that has been mentioned here is going to occur with the best possible chance of being successful.

³⁷² Te Paa, “Contestations,” 249–50.

The Ugandan man said, “So much of the learning in the theological college is by imitation but the scholars don’t seem to realise that. Yes, you speak, you read things, but how much you do students study a lot. They listen to you carefully and they...copy. Yes, there are a few things they don’t copy but...learning by imitation is really a big thing. So the type of people recruited is really crucial, and their attitudes...Are they just doing this to satisfy or are they doing it as a transformational work, making sure we are moulding something which is going out there to mould again?”

From another angle, faculty involved in the intercultural project will necessarily be personally familiar with the margins. Learning culture, other languages, being interdisciplinary and learning the politics of education will aid this familiarisation. Speaking from personal experience, Hitchen believes this will require depth of character. “Because you’re never quite accepted in one community or the other when you’re on the margin, it’s very easy to compromise or take the easy way out in a sense and say, ‘Well, I’ll just please this party, or I’ll just please that, or I’ll please either of them so long as the other doesn’t know about it.’ But that doesn’t lead to an integrated, principled stand on your part. It’s that principled stand which you’ve determined regardless of the expected pressures from both sides that, I think, is the character challenge which you have...I would want to stress the importance of the integrity of the faith and principled action.”

These comments by the Ugandan man and Hitchen of course impact on all those elements that have been discussed in this thesis, not least the wide issue of discrimination which has been the more particular focus of this chapter. Acting with principled and faith-full integrity as transformative educators will make a huge difference to the kind of graduates produced. Thus it is, as the Pākehā woman sees it, “a long-term project of creating with a staff team a particular culture and values and an ongoing commitment to those...You cannot do this in the short term because in many ways you are working counter-culturally...[You need] a preparedness to be living and working at those edges...and to be constantly working at those points of intersection whilst also achieving a kind of stability...I think that you would have to have a faculty that is deeply respectful of each other’s creativity and in no way sees each other as a competitive force or, yeah, a person to be defensive [around].”

In the end it is down to
those who shape and influence theological education
to model

and facilitate
deep engagement
with the o/Other.

As people involved
we believe
we have
Something
to offer.
Let us be very careful
and extremely thoughtful
about
what
that
Something
is.

Summary

This chapter has explored the fourth area arising from the interviews with the calabash breakers: dismantling discrimination. It has confirmed by way of stories of personal experience that theological education settings, places with a “franchise on the discourse of the things of God,” are not free of discrimination. Three issues were then presented that challenge any dismantling work, including—for both the powerless and those of the dominant group who would advocate for them—that of finding the space to speak and be heard, the issue of the internalisation of discrimination or privilege, and fact that there is a price that comes with the work. Finally, four areas of learning for those who educate and shape institutional culture that will challenge ethnocentricities have been suggested: learning about culture and cultures; learning language; learning to be interdisciplinary; and learning the politics of education.

Chapter Eight: Case Study—McCormick Theological Seminary

“Difference is hard...but it’s also amazingly enriching.”

Ted Hiebert, in an interview

In 1973, McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago embarked on a long journey toward becoming intercultural. Thirty-three years later, in 2006, fifteen faculty members from the seminary and the seminary’s president charted something of their story and thinking in a book entitled *Shaping Beloved Community: Multicultural Theological Education*.³⁷³ The research for this current case study was conducted in September and October, 2009, and draws from interviews with thirteen faculty and staff as well as the reflective observation of the researcher.³⁷⁴ The case offers a thoughtful picture of some of the operational and philosophical difficulties, as well as the theological and formational challenges, that the journey toward becoming intercultural raises, even for committed and experienced faculty in committed and experienced institutions. As such, it also offers a realistic and informative example from which institutions that are at the beginning of the journey can draw.

Beginning with a brief summary and discussion of the history of McCormick, this case will go on to consider aspects of its structure, curriculum, classroom pedagogy and community life. Integral to the conversation are the areas discussed in the previous four chapters: taking care for identity, listening to silenced voices, experiencing epistemic ruptures, and dismantling discrimination.³⁷⁵

The weight of responsibility to deal well with the words of those interviewed here, who have, to borrow Esterline’s words, “committed [themselves] to being as honest as possible

³⁷³ Esterline and Kalu, *Shaping Beloved Community*. Its main purpose was to reflect on and explore the commitments and practices they perceived necessary for moving “beyond diversity to the shaping of community and new ways of learning for both students and faculty” (page 1). For a review indicating the scope of the book see Rosemary Dewerse, review of *Shaping Beloved Community: Multicultural Theological Education*, edited by David W. Esterline and Ogbu U. Kalu, in *Mission Studies* 26 (2009): 280–281.

³⁷⁴ The full list of names of those interviewed can be found on pages 38–9.

Eight of those interviewed in 2009 had contributed chapters to *Shaping Beloved Community*.

Deborah Flemister Mullen and Laura Cheifetz have since moved on. Mullen became Dean of the Faculty/Executive Vice President at Colombia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA, in October 2010. In March 2010, Cheifetz became the Director of the Leading Generations Initiative for The Fund for Theological Education, in Atlanta, GA.

³⁷⁵ The interviews with the people profiled in this chapter in fact helped to confirm the importance of these four areas for the wider project.

about the institution [because they want]...the institution to continue,” rested heavily.³⁷⁶ Esterline observed, however, that “you’re a mirror to help us hear ourselves in a way that we can’t hear otherwise, I’m quite sure of that.” Vogel added, “Sometimes we trust an outsider more because we know that they’re here and...you see us differently than we see ourselves because we’re right in the middle of the stew.”

I do hope their
trust
is well-founded
for they were honest
at a time when things
were not easy
for their institution.

History

McCormick, a Presbyterian seminary, began its journey toward becoming intercultural when, in 1973, members of the Puerto Rican cultural identity group, The Young Lords, invaded the campus’s administration building and staged a sit-in, refusing to leave until the seminary committed itself to exploring “ways to serve the Latino community with the formation of leaders for the church.”³⁷⁷ While individual Latino students had studied at McCormick since the 1940s, the outcome of this protest was the establishment in 1976 of a Latino Studies Program, a deliberate act of partnership with the Latino community. According to Rivera-Rodriguez, subsequent decisions to establish a Korean American Center in 1988 and to launch the African American Program in 1990 “have less dramatic beginnings, but again it was an attempt of leaders to knock at our doors and say, ‘You know we need your help. We want to prepare our leaders.’” Daniels recalled it slightly differently. He said that the latter two initiatives were the result of key faculty responding to wider societal pressures, for example, the demands of the civil rights movement, and asking “How can we not?”³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ This was also noted in chapter three in regard to the words of the calabash breakers recorded in chapters four through seven.

³⁷⁷ Deborah Flemister Mullen, “From Sideline to Center: Teaching and Learning for a Racially and Culturally Diverse Church,” in Esterline and Kalu, *Shaping Beloved Community*, 87.

³⁷⁸ The choice of words used by Flemister Mullen to describe the beginnings of the Korean American Center and the African American Program in *Shaping Beloved Community* do not confirm whether Rivera-Rodriguez or Daniels is correct, whether leaders came to them or faculty initiated. *Ibid.*, 89, 93. A comment from Rodriguez-Diaz suggests it might have been something of both: “It’s something that comes out of the outside and impacts the institution...[although the Korean American Center] was also opportunist because the Korean

What I want to know is
does change have to happen in reaction?
Is that just the way of seminaries?
The Titanic has to hit an iceberg
before better ship designs emerge?
Others protest,
or local and wider contexts force an acknowledgement that things
are not the way they used to be
or should be,
or maybe
to add another motivation
financial strain forces one to look outward
to survive?

I guess one could see it positively and say,
as Daniels laughingly countered,
“or it happens in response to challenge and opportunity.”

One result of the “departmental” development, as Daniels observed, was that “people started speaking negatively of McCormick and called it four seminaries, but once we sort of realized that, then this multicultural vision emerges... We’re this sort of laboratory as it were. We’re one of the only places in Chicago, in the United States, which has a community that is Black, white, Latino and Asian, and we’re small enough to be a community. And so the key is how do we make it a community where people aren’t just going along on their separate tracks...[but intentionally] finding a way of intersecting.”

The danger of programme separation, as McCormick initially practised it, was something Flemister Mullen reflected on: “When I first came here, the special ministry programmes, which were the Latino, the Asian, the Korean, and the African American programmes, their directors were all offsite, out of the main building in a building of its own and I thought, ‘There’s something wrong with this: out of sight, out of mind.’ There was very little physical reason to have intercourse of the kind that would help shape and mould each other’s minds, and something needed to be done about that. I think also at that time, because of this nomenclature ‘special ministry programmes,’ there was something that telegraphed that these were not normative or regular. These are ‘special’ and ‘special’ doesn’t mean that

American church was growing fast.” Intriguingly, he remarked: “The response is the typical reformation of the paradigm but not the radical questioning of the paradigm.” Unfortunately, clarification was not sought.

everyone needs to engage that and so if we were truly committed to becoming multicultural and diverse that idea of ‘special’ had to be deconstructed in a way.”³⁷⁹

One of the ways, initially, in which McCormick tried to deconstruct the idea of “special” was a decision to move from having race-specific Doctor of Ministry tutor groups to having only multicultural ones.³⁸⁰ Daniels believed this was a “bad move,” for, in his opinion, “multicultural moments” would have been enough. “Multicultural is one means but not the only means. It would have been fine to have...race-specific groups as another means. My larger goal is transformation of the society. I don’t think to be committed [to that] you have to be exclusive [in your methods of engagement].”³⁸¹ Eventually, at curriculum level, the seminary ended up providing “multicultural moments” alongside more culture- and language-specific courses and opportunities. The introductory courses were one such example, as well as the single compulsory course ‘Pilgrimage in Faithfulness’ (PIF) for all those undertaking a Master of Divinity. Other “moments” were provided by courses such as the one initiated by Rivera-Rodriguez that enabled students to explore the various Diaspora theologies in greater critical and comparative depth than an introductory course could. Other spaces for culture-specific and multicultural moments began to make their way into the pedagogical practice of individual lecturers. Meanwhile, in a creative extracurricular move, the “Common Ground Project” was, by 2009, serving several constituencies by providing constructive opportunities for pastors and prospective students, Asian, Asian American, African American, and Latin@ to engage with each other.³⁸²

³⁷⁹ The use of Spanish in the Latino programme and Korean in the Korean American programme probably did not help the outsider’s sense of separation, though giving space to those languages was an important institutional acknowledgement of diversity of identity. According to Flemister Mullen, there was definitely a stage where the special ministry programmes had become “self-imposed ghettos and substitutes for engaging the whole seminary experience, because it was too hard to overcome the difficulties with language and differences in cultural understandings.” Flemister Mullen, “From Sideline to Center,” 90. This poses a huge challenge in itself, for reasons discussed in earlier chapters. It is important to persevere, however, precisely because, as Daniels argues in the next paragraph, specific groupings (and language helps to delineate those) need to be included as one means toward realising the larger goal of transformation.

³⁸⁰ A backdrop to McCormick’s efforts over the 1980s was the ATS work on globalisation and then, across the 1990s, the “decade of globalization.” Diversity continued to be a discussion topic into the 2000s. See footnote 1 for more information regarding the issues of *Theological Education* pertaining to this, as well as *Diversity in Theological Education: Folio* (Pittsburgh: ATS, 2002). This latter resource is superb, if context-specific, with excellent case studies, observations, discussions and questions for institutions keen to explore the implications of diversity for them.

³⁸¹ The material discussed on pages 96—97 of this thesis as to why it is important to maintain race specific groups offers support for this statement.

³⁸² For more information on the Common Ground Project, see <http://mccormick.edu/content/mission-vision>.

Another way of deconstructing the idea of “special” within the life of the seminary was by the establishment of the Language Resource and Writing Center (LRWC), originally a language laboratory but eventually a “center of hospitality, openness, care, and cross-cultural understanding.”³⁸³ It has, over the years, equipped many students, particularly international ones, with skills for operating in a context of cultural diversity.

A further way of deconstructing the idea of “special,” and McCormick’s most recent development, has been the Institute for Cross-Cultural Theological Education, a structural, philosophical and practical innovation.³⁸⁴ The idea of the Institute was born in conversations across 2006–2009 between the then Academic Dean and the leaders of the Latin@, Asian and African American Centers.³⁸⁵ As they increasingly shared leadership responsibilities they wondered how they could better collaborate and learn from one another while not denigrating their long-standing commitments to their cultural groupings. More will be said about the Institute in the section considering structures.

While much creativity and care has been invested over the years of McCormick’s journey, by September–October 2009, the seminary was, to use words of Esterline, “at a very vulnerable stage.” Vogel also used the word “vulnerable,” saying, “there’s been huge tensions, huge stress, people have been let go.” As Hiebert explained, “The challenges for us right now are financial because of the big crash in the economy and our endowment relatedness...Until the big crash we thought more expansively than negatively...[we thought] to raise the profile of our multicultural commitments rather than to scale it back...A lot of the discussion is around facilities and personnel at this point.” This topic will be revisited shortly.

From ecumenical to intercultural

McCormick’s story has been reflected over the years in the terminology used to indicate philosophically where the institution is or hopes to be. As Vogel noted, “We used to talk about being ecumenical and then multicultural and now we’re moving to intercultural.” She observed, however, “I don’t know that everybody knows what that really means yet. I’m not always sure.” Uncertainty over meaning or debate over understanding is perhaps inevitable

³⁸³ “Introduction,” Esterline and Kalu, *Shaping Beloved Community*, 2.

³⁸⁴ McCormick was preparing to officially launch this at the time these interviews were conducted.

³⁸⁵ The Director of the Common Ground Project was also included.

in an environment committed to transformation in a context of diversity. Esterline warned that “if you talk to eleven or twelve of us you might have eleven or twelve different sets of understanding, or at least nuanced in different kinds of ways.”

Interestingly, Rivera-Rodriguez and Rodriguez-Diaz were the only ones interviewed who were personally ready to talk of “interculturality.”³⁸⁶ Their colleagues were generally more comfortable with the terms “multicultural” or “crosscultural.” Daniels was a strong advocate for the former, arguing that it has been too narrowly interpreted. “Multiculturality,” he said, “gets attacked by ninety-four out of ninety-five people wanting to argue for crossculturality. They accuse multiculturalism of being static, of people being next to each other...only I don’t think all that’s true.” As a church historian who promotes a multicontinental approach exploring what he has called the encounter model, multiculturalism, to Daniels’ way of thinking, is dynamic and intertwining.³⁸⁷ He believed it simply had not received the right attention, losing out in the 1990s to the trendsetting arguments of those who advocated crossculturality.

“Crosscultural” was the term Esterline believed best described the positioning of McCormick in 2009. Rivera-Rodriguez, though personally looking toward interculturality, agreed with him. It also was in the McCormick byline: “reformed, ecumenical, crosscultural.”³⁸⁸ Rivera-Rodriguez and Esterline disagreed, however, as to whether *Shaping Beloved Community* belonged best to a crosscultural or to a multicultural phase. Rivera-Rodriguez thought the former, noting the evidence in the book of proactive and creative thinking and pedagogies designed to help people “understand difference, [and] engage in attentive and respectful dialogue” across denominations, learning styles, and race.³⁸⁹ For Esterline, however, to be crosscultural is not simply to be working “within a context that is

³⁸⁶ Interculturality has been a theme in Latin@ scholarship for at least ten years. See, for example: Raúl Fornet-Betancourt, *Transformación Intercultural de la Filosofía* (Bibao, Spain: Desclée de Brouwer, 2001); María Pilar Aquino, “Theological Method in U.S. Latino/a Theology: Toward an Intercultural Theology for the Third Millennium,” in *From the Heart of Our People: Latino/a Exploration in Catholic Systematic Theology*, ed. Orlando O. Espín and Miguel H. Diaz (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999): 6–48; Aquino, “Feminist Intercultural Theology”; and Orlando O. Espín, “Toward the Construction of an Intercultural Theology of Tradition,” *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 9, no.3 (2000): 22–59.

³⁸⁷ For an explanation of the multicontinental approach and encounter model, see David D. Daniels III, “Teaching Afresh the History of Global Christianity,” in Esterline and Kalu, *Shaping Beloved Community*, 216, 218–222.

³⁸⁸ This continues to be the McCormick byline, though “urban” was added sometime after 2006.

³⁸⁹ Noticeably, Rivera-Rodriguez, along with José Irizarry, used the term “intercultural” in their chapters within the book, unlike their other colleagues. Compare footnote 386.

diverse” but to have a “particular commitment against issues of privilege” and he felt the book did not show enough evidence of that.³⁹⁰

In Esterline’s thinking, there is a four-stage path to walk if crossculturality is to be realised in an institution. First, there must be an acknowledgement of diversity; second, the establishment of a climate of tolerance; third, “readiness to be changed: to learn from, listen to, and be changed by the interaction with someone else” and; fourth, there must be conscious work against racism and toward the dismantling of privilege.

Wait
I hear clear echoes
of the four areas explored in this thesis.
So what is the difference?
Why do I speak of interculturality
and Esterline of crossculturality?
No doubt Esterline has his reasons
as I have explained mine.
Such is diversity!

Rivera-Rodriguez’s definition of the term “crosscultural” offered a slightly different nuance: “we need to put three things together: the issue of human diversities—how do we recognize, and celebrate [and] empower all kinds of diversities; a standing commitment to racial justice...; and then what I and other people are calling the intercultural competence.”

Strong in both Rivera-Rodriguez and Esterline’s explanations is the emphasis on racial justice or the wider dismantling of privilege. Esterline is convinced it is at this point that McCormick cannot yet be said to be truly crosscultural, let alone intercultural. “I don’t think we’re there yet. McCormick has a reputation. In fact Deb [Flemister Mullen], who I think understands this all very well, said about a year ago to [the then President] and me, ‘You know that McCormick is the gold standard.’ And I was disturbed by that because we do not set a very good standard. To realize that we are thought of as a place that can do this but in fact the reality is...decisions are made by white folks, power is held in a particular way, there’s not real genuine sharing of how decisions are made across race lines because the

³⁹⁰ It also happened to be subtitled *Multicultural Theological Education* and the thinking within it revolved around the definition of “multicultural” provided by Esterline, one of the editors, in the opening chapter, “Multicultural Theological Education and Leadership for a Church without Walls.” Esterline and Kalu, *Shaping Beloved Community*, 17.

issues of privilege and power are still pretty much in place, even though we are very diverse.”³⁹¹ For Esterline, in particular, this is the crux.

I wanted to know
whether it is possible
to shortcut the process.
Can an institution become intercultural
faster than McCormick’s story suggests?

Esterline said “No.”
Rivera-Rodriguez said,
“It depends.”
It takes a critical mass of diverse students
and a critical mass of diverse faculty
and “out of that dynamic...
to name a different identity.”
That takes time
and
it won’t happen
with a homogenous group
of faculty and staff
even if the student body is diverse
because “of location and experience.”³⁹²

So then, it is a process
that must be wisely handled
creatively guided
and taken at the right pace
for each place,
with the right people.
There is no quick-fix,
perhaps even
none at all if the first ingredient
diversity
is missing
and dismantling privilege is an eon away.

Structure

As McCormick has discovered over the years, if anything is going to change, one of the areas that must be paid attention to is the structuring of an institution, for it sends crucial messages about priorities. Those interviewed specifically mentioned the importance of the

³⁹¹ Compare Vogel: “We’re really only on the first few steps of trying to be intercultural and I think it’s going to take a long time mainly because most of the people who are in power right now are Euro-American.”

³⁹² Flemister Mullen concurred: “Can a fairly homogenous faculty and faculty culture do that work? No.”

three Centers—Asian American, Latin@ and African American, the Institute for Cross-Cultural Theological Education, faculty diversity and student recruitment.

As we consider each of these in turn, it must be acknowledged that when money is tight—as McCormick was experiencing in September–October 2009—priorities come under scrutiny. If intercultural theological education is to be and remain the main goal, it becomes vital that everything that supports it is integrally embedded into the thinking and operation of the institution so that it can withstand any storm. Achieving that is a not-insignificant task.

Hiebert observed, regarding McCormick, that “I think we see multicultural theological education really as one of our most important distinctives. So, when seminaries are sorting themselves out, like ‘what do you do that other seminaries don’t do?,’ which seems to be the direction you go when competition gets tougher...this is such a big one for us. Even when things get tough, rather than pulling back on it we might even promote it more. So for us in our situation it’s kind of become so much who we are and our sense of what we can contribute to theological education more broadly, that it’s hard to think of us not being that.”

Here the question must be asked:
does getting to that point
of interculturality being “so much who we are”
require a good economy
for years
giving
plenty of
time
and room
to experiment?

Maybe not.

Matsuoka has suggested
that
it is possible
for a small seminary
to begin to move towards
becoming intercultural
precisely because money is tight.³⁹³

Flemister Mullen demurs:
“The impetus for survival is often

³⁹³ See footnote 349.

an impetus for creativity
but it depends on how healthy the institution is...
The wild card is
morale.”

And
having the President
and the Board
onside
will count for
a lot.

“One of our first roles as a faculty,” Flemister Mullen said, “was to educate our President who came here in 1995... She really looked to us to help her get it and she has been a student of getting it over the years, but that is absolutely incumbent upon the institution to provide leadership that gets it. And so her getting it has meant, then, that the board has been more engaged in ways to understand what is distinctive and unique about our mission.” Esterline concurred: “Our Board actually understands” the distinctive place of McCormick as a seminary working “across race lines...now. They didn’t some years ago. [The President] has recognized that...Our Board is one of the best Boards that I’ve ever come across and I do a lot of accreditation reviews of lots of Boards. I’m really quite proud of ours. It’s also very white and very wealthy...but they have come to embrace this commitment as at the centre of McCormick’s understanding.” He conceded, as Hiebert indicated, that it helps to occupy a niche in the market.

Esterline also observed, however, that prioritising a crosscultural, or intercultural, agenda “has to do with the structures as well. Decisions can’t be made only about money as defined by your usually white decision makers who are controlling the bank accounts with the investments or whatever. There have to be other ways for folks at different places in the power and privilege structure to have a say.”

The centres

As recounted in the section dealing with the history of McCormick, one of the most significant early moves the seminary made, and then subsequently, was to establish “three racial/ethnic ministries centers.”³⁹⁴ Essentially, these centres have been about giving Latin@s, then Koreans and later Asian Americans, as well as African Americans, the

³⁹⁴ Flemister Mullen, “From Sideline to Center,” 86.

opportunity and autonomy to pay particular attention to nurturing their own needs and to finding and asserting their voice in an environment dominated by another. As the years have passed, these centres have, according to Daniels, increasingly drawn and served three kinds of student: those for whom a given centre represents their racial/ethnic identity; those who feel called to work with that group though it may not be their identity; and those familiar only with their own racial/ethnic group who choose to study courses set in another for the purpose of growing understanding and getting a sense of the broader church.

While according to Rodriguez-Diaz, “it is essential to continue” the independence of the centres, granting each the ability to “maintain their own integrity so that we can really affirm the identity of the center and its mission without losing ourselves in a blob, at the same time a common ground where we can really engage in conversation and challenge each other” is also needed. He was not the only one of this opinion and so the Institute for Cross-Cultural Theological Education was born.

The Institute for Cross-Cultural Theological Education

By October 2009, the Institute had not yet officially begun its work. Esterline, on sabbatical, was to lead it but said that “the institute is Luis’s [Rivera-Rodriguez] idea, it’s not mine.” Rivera-Rodriguez, who had just replaced Esterline as the Dean of faculty, Vice-President of academic affairs extended the credit for the initiative to others also.

As Rivera-Rodriguez explained, the purpose of writing *Shaping Beloved Community* “was not to create consensus, but to express ideas. Then we were anticipating a time when we say, ‘Okay, now we have spoken explicitly; let’s sit down and review what we are saying and start thinking: What does this mean for us?...But unfortunately, probably for many reasons, that conversation didn’t happen...David Esterline will be the director of this Institute and we are calling him to do several things: help the faculty continue this conversation and provide for faculty training...So we can say, now...on behalf of all the faculty, help us move that agenda and help us get better trained...It’s a way of institutionalizing in a sense and operationalizing the value. So, if you ask, ‘Well, what does crosscultural mean for you and how do you do that?’ we’ll say ‘These are the ways in which we do it and there’s a team of people that are leading the faculty but for the sake of integrating it into the whole of the faculty.’ The idea is not that these people will do the work but that these people will lead us

all to do the work.” Structurally, the Institute would not replace the centres but instead facilitate conversation between them and the wider faculty. It was also intended that the Language Resource and Writing Center would come under its umbrella, as well as the Common Ground Project.

From Esterline’s point of view, the Institute would also finally be a way of officially beginning to address issues of power and privilege within the institution which he said is normally “very, very difficult to do” because “those words are very offensive to many.” Thus, as he put it: “An objective of the Institute would be for white faculty to understand [the needs of minority faculty] and have it as part of our regular everyday mode of operation. Just as we know our discipline, we would be as sensitive to and aware of the issues being faced by those who don’t have the same privilege that white folks have.”

Flemister Mullen noted that it was the opinion of the centre directors that having Esterline, a white man, as the Dean would be crucial to making the Institute a success. “It’s not inconsequential...It’s to help other white people see this is not a minority programme...it’s not token. It’s very strategic...First we have to educate the President and the Board—it’s an ongoing process. That loop’s not closed. And then we have to really go deeper with ourselves as a faculty. And so the genius of the Institute is not just that it’s an umbrella structure for the Centers. The genius of the Institute [is that] it says that now all of the faculty are part of this [crosscultural project] in some new ways.” A metaphor she offered was that of a jellyfish, “because sometimes in looking at jellyfish you can’t tell where the water ends and the organism begins.” A comment from Esterline brought to mind Paul’s metaphor of the body in 1 Corinthians 12: “Fundamental to this...is for white faculty not to say, well that’s about a person of colour so it’s over there and not my concern, but that everything is my concern as a member of this community.” Rodriguez-Diaz added: “We need these three Centers and the Institute to be at the core of our teaching on a regular basis. The faculty, the curriculum needs to be impacted...The intercultural experience is more a footnote to the whole experience...not central.”

Faculty diversity

It has already been said that faculty diversity is imperative to the success of the cross- or intercultural project. Six of those interviewed expressly mentioned this. While McCormick is diverse in some regards, there is still a way to go to realise it fully, even after all these years.

Diversity, of course, operates on many levels. McCormick, for one, is an institution that, despite belonging to the Presbyterian denomination, is self-labelled “ecumenical.” In 2009, there were faculty from the Presbyterian, Mennonite, Episcopalian, Jewish Reformed, and Baptist traditions. Theologically they ranged across the spectrum from liberal to evangelical to Pentecostal. Rivera-Rodriguez and Case-Winters both believed the seminary was a place that created, to borrow the words of the former, a “middle ground...because you cannot explain the presence of almost half our students who come from the more evangelical churches...without having a faculty that somehow, even though in its majority is more bent to the liberal side, is respectful enough and willing to engage.” Case-Winters claimed, “There is a spirit of welcome. We’re very hospitable...or I think we mean to be. I don’t think we’ve got that a hundred percent but I think that opens the door and the classroom situation.” Esterline, however, was less optimistic in his assessment: “We are not as inclusive theologically as we should be. We have students from an evangelical...framework...who feel themselves quietened, if not shut down, by the dominance of the liberal agenda. That’s something that we really struggle with and I hope that we talk about it a fair amount.”

As far as gender diversity was concerned, McCormick displayed similar proportions of men and women on faculty.³⁹⁵ When it came to educational and class diversity, however, they did not score so well, at least in the opinion of Cheifetz. “All these people went to private schools, not to public schools...Basically you get privilege by having privilege...For the most part, I think there are only a couple of people who are like first-generation college educated, but it’s not normal, not typical. There’s a tendency then to underestimate some students because they come out of some crappy state school but they’re brilliant and have all this experience.”³⁹⁶

³⁹⁵ The website listing as of 16 March 2011 shows a 50/50 gender balance of faculty.

<http://mccormick.edu/instructors>.

³⁹⁶ Flemister Mullen noted that “the privileged culture here is academic and the professors are at the top of the heap. So we can be as sensitive as we want to be or say we are but unless that opens us up to doing some new

Age was another area of concern. As Caldwell put it, “We’re tipping at the other end now and we’ve got to be hiring young.” Flemister Mullen observed that “we’re not unlike our faculty was back in the eighties, you know? The majority of us have come in at the same time...and now we’re the ones that are going to be going out all at the same time. We have absolutely repeated the pattern of our predecessors and so in ten years this is going to be a brand new place...There is a future, it just depends on what we do with it and what will continue to be those abiding marks. Will it continue to be crosscultural, urban, reformed and ecumenical or will the balance flip in any of those?” Time may well place pressure on priorities.³⁹⁷

Ethnicity is another obvious area of diversity. Interestingly, according to one of those interviewed, in the last twenty years or so, only one hiring of a person of colour at McCormick occurred in the context of an open search.³⁹⁸ All of the others were targeted, or, in other words, cases of positive discrimination. The result of such care, however, was that, by the mid-nineties, according to Daniels, more than one-third of the faculty were people of colour, that is, ten out of twenty-five or twenty-six. Consequently, “because there was more than one person in each of these areas [Latino, Asian American and African American] and our personalities were all so different, you couldn’t stereotype.” In September–October 2009, the faculty was no longer that size. Instead, the number was more like six people of colour out of seventeen.³⁹⁹ As Daniels said: “We’re still at a third but it obviously feels different...Six and ten...There’s something about the numbers, the energy, the diversity. We were all different and there were different alliances. It was wonderful. You didn’t have to side-up with the only other person.” The smaller number was of concern to Case-Winters. “With the economic downturn the prospect of when positions become open not being able to fill them [arises]. I’m a little concerned about the diversity of the faculty. I think we need to be diverse in order to do the work of diversity that we want to do...If our numbers shrink it’s

things in our classrooms that are going to make space for people that ordinarily have not had space, or been privileged in those contexts, we can keep doing the same thing we do, without change and be complacent.”

³⁹⁷ Interestingly, Caldwell noted that McCormick is a institution where “we will close a search rather than hire the wrong person. We’ve gone sometimes two and three years on a search to find the right person who will fit here.” Whether that level of care is able to continue will remain to be seen.

³⁹⁸ The person who offered this information asked to remain anonymous.

³⁹⁹ By March 2011, according to the information on McCormick’s website, the proportion was three people of colour out of sixteen. <http://mccormick.edu/instructors>, (cited 16 March, 2011). This was largely the result of retirements, death and faculty moving on. Because the institution has not been in a position to hire new faculty the balance has not yet been restored. Whether it will be, or not, and how long that will take, remains to be seen. According to Daniels, there are enough people of colour available: “In the 1970s it was very hard to find people of colour but Black theology in particular has become very attractive.”

that much harder.” Rodriguez-Diaz was also worried: “One of my fears is because of the economic situation of the institution that could impact negatively the composition of the faculty.” Hiebert agreed: “It’s just a big challenge and we would love a faculty that reflects the demographics of our student body, or something approximate.” As Esterline observed, “All of a sudden we’ve become quite white...and students notice this very quickly and talk about it⁴⁰⁰ ...I’m absolutely convinced that you can’t do this if there are only white folks in the room, so it has to be diverse. And persons of colour must be in leadership positions in which there is genuine authority and responsibility. For me, especially when I hear about congregations or worshipping groups, they want a diverse community but only white people are leading. Well, this isn’t really rocket science, folks. You have to change that. The people at the front have to be people of colour if you want people of colour to come.”

A further interesting angle on the issue of ethnic diversity was introduced by Cheifetz. “At some point I realized I was in a room with people who were from mono-racial families.” She herself was the daughter of a Japanese American mother and a white Jewish father. Her brother had married a woman of Irish, Chinese and Libyan descent with a Muslim father and a previously Catholic but now atheist mother. Interculturality, but also the interreligious dynamic, was integral to her personal landscape. “And so, oftentimes, when people say, ‘oh it would be really important to talk about inter-religious relationships,’ it’s like, ‘Okay for you, because you don’t do it at home.’” She suggested that having on faculty some who do “do it at home” would help ensure that intricate conversations in the classroom around topics like evangelism could be better facilitated. “Sometimes difficult conversations in the classroom don’t really go anywhere because not all the faculty are equipped to lead those conversations, or to allow them to happen.”

A final point regarding diversity, which throws another light on the value of hiring faculty with intercultural personal landscapes, was raised in passing by Rodriguez-Diaz. He firmly believed that not only should hiring people who are bi- or multilingual be a priority, “because it greatly defines the vision that you have,” but also people who are able to lead interdisciplinary studies, ideally because they are interdisciplinary themselves. “We need to have the Bible field engaging in a course with the history field or the theology field, to

⁴⁰⁰ Cheifetz told a story of a first-year Japanese American student who came to her wanting to know “what’s up with the faculty?” An international faculty member had not been granted tenure and her leaving had created some fallout. Cheifetz concluded: “That’s another factor for this intercultural, this cross-cultural education, is that for every time you mess up, it’s just so big.”

question some of the assumptions, for instance, that are taught. That in itself is a model for intercultural learning because you are engaging different past cultures and worldviews in the teaching moment.”

Growing and maintaining diversity,
I can see
will be a battle
on many fronts
demanding diligence
and determined commitment.
There’s so much to it.

It will be inevitable
that
to be truly diverse
in its faculty
an institution will need to exercise
positive discrimination.
This
will not always be
a popular move
unless people understand
and some are willing to sacrifice.
How determined
the vision?
According to Esterline
diversity is the first ingredient.
If you listen to Rivera-Rodriguez
faculty diversity is crucial.

Student recruitment

5pm October 13, 2009
Compulsory M. Div. course: Pilgrimage in Faithfulness
Topic: Worship

Present was the full cohort of students accepted for study in 2009:

- 17 white students
- 1 Amerindian
- 3 Latin@s
- 14 internationals (13 Korean, 1 Armenian)
- 18 African Americans
- 7 Asian Americans

from a range of denominational, theological and class backgrounds
men and women (close to 50/50)

They were led by
a Puerto Rican guest lecturer
and 5 faculty—
2 white women
1 Asian American man
1 African American man
and 1 Latino man
plus the seminary President, a white woman.

The richness of this carefully and prayerfully constructed group was profound.

McCormick has been in the privileged position of being able to carefully select the students who participate in its course offerings year by year. Recruitment draws on a variety of sources and connections that have been built up over time. As Rodriguez-Diaz noted, “one of the things that saves this institution is that it’s ecumenical. If it was only Presbyterian it would have died many years ago. [Being ecumenical] enables the institution to get a new vitality with the presence of so many voices here.” One of the challenges, however, is not to restrict recruitment to traditional routes because they do not necessarily provide a wideness of ethnic diversity. For example, as Rodriguez-Diaz explained, “Among the Latinos/Latinas many are from non-mainline churches...Traditional routes are mainstream, so if you have a culture of recruitment trying to match the culture of the institution, exclusion happens naturally. You don’t even see it. But,” he worried, “what time do you have in an office [to explore other routes] where you have one recruiter travelling like crazy to make sure that at the end of the year you have sixty students?”

Rodriguez-Diaz was one faculty member who would have loved to have seen more than three Latin@s in the 2009 PIF class. For one thing, it would have ensured a healthier number of students in the Center for Latin@ Studies. McCormick, however, operates a cap, for financial reasons.⁴⁰¹ “If you have a cap for financial reasons then you have to determine how many of the pool from Asian Americans, African Americans, Anglos, Latin@s and so forth you can admit. There can’t just be 30 or 40 Latin@s...[but] I was always fighting here with the Dean and the admissions people because I said, ‘I can’t slow down what I’m doing because next year I won’t have any applicants.’” There is a tension, then, which must be astutely managed, keeping a number of factors in mind: financial, resourcing, philosophical,

⁴⁰¹ Students from more economically disadvantaged backgrounds need financial assistance and so the student demographic must be carefully judged to ensure that the seminary can support all those it accepts through their academic journey.

but also relational. Flemister Mullen particularly observed that paying attention to maintaining links with “constituencies that are critical to this seminary’s life as an intercultural institution” is vital. “If those churches stop feeding us with the people they send here and trust in us to teach and to push out the edges for those folks, when that pipeline dries up we become something quite different.” Recruitment must, therefore, be seen as more than just a “fiduciary” exercise. “These folks send the gift of their students, their persons, their future leaders and entrust us.”

Of course, being proactive about finding the right kind of student is also part of the challenge of recruitment. Caldwell noted as one example that McCormick deliberately recruits people from the Presbyterian Young Mission programme. “We’ve gone after recruiting them because we know their lives have changed because they’ve had the experience of other, of difference...So we go after them and say, ‘Well, what about theological education?’” Knowing that diversity is a priority in the faculty make-up as well as the student make-up provides a strong base from which to attract such people, along with those from ethnic and multi-ethnic congregations.

It boils down to
seeing students as gift
pursuing
trusting
valuing relationship
balancing
being wise
with dollars and sense

Curriculum

In reflecting on curriculum at McCormick, Caldwell made the following observation: “If I taught in another place with less diversity then I would just be able to be familiar with Presbyterian curriculum...I can’t do that here. I’ve got to be multi-tasked...That’s hard. It’s easier not. It’s easier to live in your own world.” Rodriguez-Diaz had this to add: “In an intercultural environment you have to be always questioning what’s normative in you. If you don’t, you could be stereotyping your reality in a particular way that is not really a reflection of the complexity of the many voices that you’re listening to.”

For Rodriguez-Diaz, a key area in which the challenge to multi-task and to always be questioning what's normative, whether because of denominational background or ethnicity or other aspects of difference, arises in bibliographic decisions across courses within a curriculum. "Cultural entities have their own kind of bubble. We have to break the bubble by questioning bibliography, by asking... 'Why that particular author? Why are you interested in that particular line of studies?'" He went on to critically muse on his perceptions of McCormick's resourcing. "If the faculty doesn't engage in questions of coloniality, of postcolonial studies, I think we will lose the edge in terms of being critical, being able to take more distance about what I teach and how I teach it because I think we are part of a legacy of domination that we are not necessarily aware of. For instance, as a male person I have to take distance from my own identity as a male teacher because there are so many things that overdetermine my own teaching. If I don't own that, I won't even be able to look at other readings, other sources, because I won't see them...Bibliography is determined too much by my own social location."

The point of critically engaging, for Daniels, is to help people "figure out how to be genuinely Christian in places that are structured so that they might be divided or in hierarchical relationships or in oppressive relationships. I'm interested in the church being an agent of social change...announcing the reign of God...anticipating it, enunciating it...being the leaven in the loaf." Curriculum, therefore, while certainly needing to be deliberate about exposing students to different ways of thinking and identifying and "debunking, dismantling, interrogation and unmasking" must also, in Daniels' opinion "be part of a larger project" of transformation. On a practical, resourcing level, it does mean that "Black studies," for example, "needs to be more than a footnote. Black studies needs to be more than a page. Black studies needs to be more than a chapter that doesn't fit the narrative flow [because when this is the case]...we cannot figure out how to tell a story," learn from it and bring change. Available scholarship is not always helpful in this regard, sometimes simply because not enough work has yet been put in to collect the stories of those like Blacks in the United States.

From another angle altogether, Rivera-Rodriguez and Caldwell noted the importance of an emphasis on formation in McCormick's curriculum. While much of it, as Caldwell observed, "happens in so many places: in worship and the way worship is led and modelled...; in table

conversation...; around meals...; [and] in study breaks,” Rivera-Rodriguez said that they have been responding to a perceived desire on the part of students for more opportunities for formation by, among other things, offering the option to participate in spiritual direction. PIF is an in-class opportunity for intentional cross- or intercultural formation in a setting using open lecture and question time, communal mealtime, small group, chapel time and diverse faculty leadership, and drawing from a wide bibliography. Mentoring is another significant offering. This will be described further in the section entitled Community Life. The fascinating thing is, however, that at McCormick, the area of concentrated and formal investment in cross- or intercultural formation on the part of individual faculty is most clearly seen in classroom pedagogy.

Classroom pedagogy

“At McCormick,” said Hiebert, “we have a tremendous opportunity to help people become more adept at intercultural living and in some ways McCormick is a comfortable place. It’s a place that has welcomed different people and I think students come here for that reason. It’s a big, big piece of why they decide to come to McCormick, whether they’re white males or not. And so it selects those people, and I think just living among each other does that to a certain extent, too. But I think there’s also a need to engage it very self-consciously. You mentioned ‘It’s easier to talk about it than achieve it,’ and in some ways I was going to, I guess, change that and say ‘It’s easier to live together but not talk about it.’ So we can have classes that are very multicultural but it might not be that the richness of those different perspectives ever gets out on the table in those classes. So for me, the big challenge I see here is to exploit what we’ve got and to use it as a real laboratory for learning how to do it better.”

Hiebert’s approach in that laboratory was featured in *Shaping Beloved Community*. In a course entitled “The Tower of Babel and Cultural Diversity,” he and his students committed themselves to a collaborative book-writing project. Each person wrote a chapter, the result of their analysis of a particular interpreter drawn from a broad range of possibilities across cultural, historical, and theological spectrums and their perspective on diversity in the story. The group process of editing further developed skills of critical engagement with the

“other.”⁴⁰² This experiential model of education is one he has used more than once because it proved so effective.⁴⁰³ In the autumn semester of 2009, Hiebert was running a course entitled “Biblical Perspectives on Multiculturalism.” In essence it was closely examining key Old Testament texts, considering the viewpoints expressed by the authors on identity and difference. Students were asked to compare these viewpoints with their own, noting similarities and differences, and then to reflect on the lessons for ministry in their own cultural context. As Hiebert said, “The challenge...is how do we create opportunities where we’re not just passing each other in the halls but we’re actually saying, ‘How do we do this?’”

7 October, 2011

Course: Biblical Perspectives on Multiculturalism

Text under study: Genesis 21:8-21

Hagar and Ishmael sent away

The students arrive bringing
their cultural self-description work
break into multicultural discussion groups
look for the descriptors of “us” and “them”
used by the writer in the text
compare it with their own
ask (as instructed by Hiebert)
“Are biblical writers using the same cultural markers
we are
or different ones?”
then, reconvene as a larger group to discuss findings.
Talk gathers around puzzlement over the label
“concubine”
a Chinese student aids understanding by explaining it
from her perspective.
At this point I have to leave but

⁴⁰² For more detail on the course, see Theodore Hiebert (Instructor), Jennifer Blandford, Andrew Davis and Hardy Kim (students), “The Tower of Babel and Cultural Diversity: A Case Study on Engaging Diversity in the Classroom,” in Esterline and Kalu, *Shaping Beloved Community*, 128–141. Note that the pedagogy facilitates both race/ethnic-specific work (each student as a chapter author engaging with voices they choose) and multicultural moments (group editing work towards the mutually positive goal of producing a publishable script).

⁴⁰³ In the 2005 spring semester, Hiebert’s class “The Book of Isaiah and the Prophetic Vision” collaborated to publish a book. The result was Ted Hiebert, ed., *Words of Warning, Visions of Hope: A Commentary on Isaiah by Students at McCormick Theological Seminary* (Chicago: McCormick Theological Seminary, 2006). In 2009, the first issue of a special journal was produced, the result of a class project facilitated by Hiebert and Caldwell. Elizabeth Caldwell and Theodore Hiebert, eds., *Beginnings: Children’s Stories from Matthew and Genesis*, volume 1 of *Transforming Traditions: A Journal Featuring the Students and Faculty of McCormick Theological Seminary*, (Autumn 2009).

the next task of the class will be to
ponder
“What relevance does the biblical text have for us
if the writer is using different markers?”

“My vision,” Hiebert explained, “is that each student would see that it’s important and welcomed that their cultural setting would be part of our theological deliberations—‘In my church, this is how that sounds,’ ‘How do we talk about that in that context?’—so that rather than them being self-conscious or hesitant to say that, all theological discussion would take place with our different cultural settings in mind as a kind of starting point⁴⁰⁴...So it would be the multicultural experiences of the students in a way that would drive the discussions. You’d still put the tradition out there [or a particular reading] but it would be discussed in that light, not in some sort of neutral or nuanced light. And in that regard, a pedagogy that is discussion oriented, to me that’s important.”⁴⁰⁵

Taking a more facilitative role can be very challenging. Rodriguez-Diaz admitted that “sometimes in this kind of setup where you are aware that the students must be engaging also with other authors, other voices in the conversation, and the temptation because of my long experience in teaching is to really become ‘it.’ That’s a temptation I have to overcome constantly in my teaching because I have read so much...I try to pace myself in my classes so that I don’t take charge.”

“If there’s anything we learn in the multiculturalism,” Case-Winters observed, “it’s that bridging, openness, listening, waiting to hear from the other who they are and how they understand things rather than imposing our assumptions, is central to what we do here.” One way of facilitating this in the Introduction to Theology course that Case-Winters co-facilitates was that “we’d set up learning partners and ask the students to choose someone across those differences—it could be across the theological spectrum, across race or culture or whatever...They would do their readings, write their paper, but then they would have a

⁴⁰⁴ Hiebert’s approach is different from his colleague Yamada’s, who also cares about social location. Hiebert is a “heavy-duty author guy” who begins with the text and then engages what has been learned with the social location of students. Yamada not only uses historical-critical tools but also postmodern ones and begins by asking students “in a disciplined way to think of their own identity and social location and how that makes a difference for how they understand themselves and the way they understand God and do theology.”

⁴⁰⁵ A metaphor from Rodriguez-Diaz complements the vision: “There are all kinds of colors and music and actors playing but the centre is not in one person or two. It’s the whole event.” Caldwell is another lecturer who, like Hiebert, prioritises discussion: “if you came to my class you would see very little lecturing.” Freire, with his hatred of the “banking” concept, is her particular inspiration.

conversation and then in that encounter write the last third of their paper in reflection with another person.” These papers and conversations would happen and be due weekly. “The first part of the semester it will usually be ‘Oh, it’s so hard to schedule a time together.’ Always, on the evaluations, ‘learning partner’ was just the best thing.” The class also frequently uses small group discussion where students self-select their group, though these change each class-time, as well as exposure trips locally. From another angle, Case-Winters clears space for English as a second language speakers and those who are more shy, both in class time and in assignment work, as part of her effort to wait to hear from the other. “And we do explicitly talk about things in class in terms of the deconstruction of power and make sure basic knowledge of what the world is like outside this context is part of that...Integration is really so important and I think, unfortunately in many contexts, that it’s left to ‘You go figure that out on your own. We’ll give you the ideas then field ed. will give you the experience and then you put it together...[In fact] we used to couple courses where you would couple your field ed. experience with one of your courses and there would be an intentional interfacing of the two...They haven’t done that lately. I’m not sure why that went by the by.”

For Case-Winters theology is
a living
doing
thing
and students are theologians
for “this is something people who think about their faith do.”

“We often talk about the work of theology as an intersection of circles of conversation with the tradition [with scripture at its heart] and experience and context, and theology happening at the interface,” Case-Winters continued. The discoveries thus made provide a deeply owned Christian base for even wider multicultural bridging, listening and waiting. As she pointed out, “We do a fair bit of interfaith work here.”

While faculty at McCormick like Hiebert and Case-Winters are committed to exploring a range of methods toward realising truly cross- or intercultural theological education, teaching that is serious about intercultural engagement will bring potentially deep theological challenges with it. Cathey’s work in religious pluralism is starkly illustrative of

the kinds of issues that will need to be grappled with no matter what the definition of intercultural.⁴⁰⁶

Friday 25 September, 2011
Course: Religious Pluralism

Cathey is away this class
his co-facilitator welcomes me
a woman wearing a hijab
I am intrigued.

As the class progresses I realise
this woman is a practising Muslim
and an amazing advertisement for
interreligious dialogue.
Comfortable in her own skin
she engages the Christian students
with care and respect
gently tells them not
to assume that the lessons they drew
during their recent mosque visit
from the prayer and fasting they experienced
are to be equated with
how she understands and practices
prayer and fasting as a Muslim.

A Jewish visitor to the second half of the class
puts her finger on it,
a necessary
I am coming to see
for genuine
intercultural
engagement:

*“I hope you are here because you want to try
to understand
others
as they
understand themselves.”*⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁶ One of the courses he ran in recent years is detailed in Robert A. Cathey, “*Le Gran Encisera:*’ Barcelona and Education for Interfaith Ministry in the Shadow of Terror,” in Esterline and Kalu, *Shaping Beloved Community*, 170–185.

⁴⁰⁷ Rivera-Rodriguez later observed: “It’s only before the other, as the other, and with the intent to interact with the other, trying to know the other’s perspective, that something different will happen.”

As Cathey put it: “In both interreligious learning and intercultural learning, it’s a natural human tendency to try to find in your own experience and memory analogies to the ‘other,’ and it’s particularly a temptation to Christians living in Jewish-Christian dialogue: that is like that, the other is like me...[but]warning bells should go off.” The analogy, as he explained, could mean something very different for the other person, though it is significant to oneself, and when you adopt that analogy, “you’re immediately transfiguring it in ways that change it” from what it means to the other. To combat this pedagogically Cathey said that “any kind of teaching I try to do in this area I try to accentuate the differences as much as the commonalities.” Students may be amazed by Muslims praying five times a day, for example, but this may obscure what prayer means for a Muslim. “One of my goals eventually is that I hope students will value those differences because if they learn how to ask questions appropriately, the answer will surprise them.” Case-Winters agreed: “It’s important that differences be received and understood, not just masked over and obliterated...The kind of reductionism that simplifies and doesn’t deal with difference, I think, doesn’t take us very far.”

In order to help students learn to value difference, alongside using resources that are written by, for example, Muslims writing about Islam as opposed to Christian “specialists” writing about Islam, Cathey invites those who identify and practice the religions under study to speak from their own perspectives, and takes students to sites of worship to observe and critically reflect on their experiences and reactions. “Whether, [however], in a two- or three-year curriculum...you can [help students value difference] is very hard,” Cathey said. If a student comes from an area of the world where difference brings conflict, this can introduce real complexity for the educator to negotiate. For educators who themselves come from a context of interreligious or intercultural conflict, it can be personally and emotionally risky.

If one is to value difference and try to understand the other as the other understands him- or herself, Cathey has learnt that it is important that people know their own faith tradition deeply, particularly those studying toward ordination, who need, as part of their responsibility, to “be able to present that in the strongest possible way.” Meanwhile, for those engaging in the interfaith movement, while some are “excited about the possibility and synergy... for others once you blur the boundaries between traditions and communities...it

just becomes the worst kind of relativism. Intense and formative” knowledge of one’s own tradition, Cathey believes, is crucial.

In the course profiled in *Shaping Beloved Community*, which culminated in attendance at the World Parliament of Religions in 2004, Cathey and his faculty colleague first asked their students “to research what did their own denomination say about the religious other and present that in class and then write about and present on what was their own theological understanding, vis-à-vis their denomination.” This activity he found “valuable.” Interestingly, Cathey has also found that another effective way to help students grow personal faith knowledge “is to detour outside your tradition and ask questions like ‘Well, what is the significance of Jesus’ Jewish identity for Christian Christology?’” In other words, engaging difference can help grow the personal depth and surety needed to value difference.⁴⁰⁸ In a course he led in 2007, looking at atonement, the students were asked to spend the first third of it exploring the passion narratives from their own and other Christians’ perspectives. They then read Jon Levinson’s book *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* and assessed reviews from Christian and Jewish scholars, as well as Levinson’s subsequent response. Finally, Cathey invited an orthodox rabbi to speak on Genesis 22 from a Jewish perspective. “The students,” he said, “were very impressed.” As the group assessment, students then had to run a public debate. Musing on the benefit of engaging difference in this way, Cathey observed, “I think it’s interesting when you take a comparative approach that there are things about our tradition that we may be embarrassed about, or have forgotten or are unaware of that will be cast in a new light by our interfaith partners and in a sense they’ll hold us to account for our own distinctives in our tradition which they have to be aware of.”

Knowing one’s own faith tradition intimately while being deeply committed to understanding others as they understand themselves raises the key theological question of how then is one to understand the *missio Dei*. If intercultural theological education demands equal respect for oneself and the other, what are we to do with Christian mission, which presumably (most of) those attending a seminary like McCormick, whether lay or training for ordination have some calling to. This is something Cathey said he would love to explore in a dedicated course. He is especially conscious of the particular conundrums it can raise in

⁴⁰⁸ As discussed in chapter four, detouring outside one’s own culture does, ironically, often result in a deeper self-understanding.

the interfaith context. 2 Corinthians would be where he said he would start. There, “the ministry of reconciliation is given to the church, but the outcome—and this would also be true of the way the gospel is presented in the parables—of the church’s witness to the gospel and witness to the reign of God...is not something that the church or the disciples of God control. So they cast a seed but the harvest comes in eschatological proportions that no human farmer can engineer. And the ministry of reconciliation in 2 Corinthians is between Jews and Gentiles who are living in this mixed community in Corinth but it’s not a ministry that, in the scope of Paul’s writings, erases this Jewish community...So, how could it be possible for Christians to engage in evangelism and mission in other ways [knowing that]...conversions still occur?”

To grapple with such a topic Cathey sees is an important responsibility of the intercultural seminary, especially in a context where increasingly the younger generations have friendships across faith boundaries. “One of the challenges this presents to the church is young people will be watching the way Presbyterians and other mainline Protestants define evangelism and mission. If it’s completely counter to their social experience growing up in a society like this, then that’s going to create, at least for some of them, some degree of cognitive dissonance in terms of is it really my responsibility as a self-aware Christian to convert my Jewish friends or what does it mean to have a kind of identity which includes proclamation of the good news?”

Educating
for and in
an intercultural world
without losing
the essence
of the call to follow Christ
and
make disciples
it seems to me
will ask of us
that we pull down our fences
and instead
start sinking wells.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁹ This recalls an article by New Zealand spiritual director Sheila Pritchard, “Wells or Fences? The Risk of Spiritual Growth” *Reality* (Feb/March 1994): 21–25. Pritchard is arguing that rather than spending our time setting up boundaries and deciding who is in and who is out, using doctrine, the study of scripture or verbal commitment to Christ as “fences” to define disciples, we should work on deepening “a dynamic life-style

Am I prepared for the conversion it may require of me?

Before we consider community life, a final point worth noting in this section is that Hiebert, Case-Winters, and Cathey—Anglo American faculty—each have personal stories of, to borrow the term from chapter six, epistemic ruptures that have informed and continue to inspire their pedagogical approaches.⁴¹⁰ Hiebert experienced a significant epistemic rupture as a young man while on short-term cross-cultural work in Nigeria when he came across a comment in an article by Chinua Achebe.⁴¹¹ Hiebert paraphrased: “You’ve done a lot for us, given us a lot of education...but you’ve taken the one thing from us that we needed the most and that’s our self-respect.” This gave him pause for thought, and other cross-cultural experiences since have continued to challenge his teaching. Case-Winters has long been deeply involved in the World Council of Churches and ecumenical debate. Cathey is seriously involved in interfaith dialogue, especially with Jewish and Muslim leaders in Chicago, and the lessons he has learnt and is still learning, as have been described, now inform not only his classes in pluralism but also Christian theology. As Hiebert said, the value of such experiences are that they enable one to look “at difference differently.”

Community life

What happens in the “white spaces,” or wider community life of an institution, is, one would think, almost as key to the overall effectiveness of its ethos as classroom practice, if not as key—a case of walking the talk in all areas to produce a consistent message.⁴¹² Interestingly, while McCormick does have some positive investment in this regard, some of those interviewed spoke also of, in their opinion, areas needing improvement if McCormick’s vision was to be integrally realised inside and outside the classroom.

Part of the challenge for McCormick regarding community life has to do with a changing and difficult context. For one thing, in the past all students lived on-campus and so it was possible to try to grow an overall culture. Those days are now gone. In 2009, Vogel noted

which is moving towards Christlikeness,” sinking wells that will motivate people to grow in their relationships with Jesus and others.

⁴¹⁰ It was not intended to feature only the pedagogical approaches of Anglo-American faculty at McCormick. The conversations just happened to focus on that with these three people, while others focused on other aspects.

⁴¹¹ The details of the article are lost. Chinua Achebe is a Nigerian novelist, poet and critic. His best-known novel is *Things Fall Apart: The Story of a Strong Man* (London: William Heinemann, 1958).

⁴¹² The term “white spaces” comes from Mark Strom, a past-principal of Laidlaw College, Aotearoa New Zealand.

that “We’re almost 50/50 now in terms of residential versus commuters and that makes a real difference in terms of the way the student body can have community life.” One might add: or whether for part of the student body this is even feasible. Increasing numbers of students were, in fact, taking evening classes after work, and doing so part-time. How committed and/or able the faculty are to spend time on relationship-building, as opposed to the academic duties of their job, is another factor. So, too, is whether they are able to do so in a flexible landscape. To these, Flemister Mullen added and queried, “In a climate such as the one we’re existing through right now, when so much is on the table like the building, like the residence halls, like losing critical mass of faculty of color—not replacing them—what is it you end up with?”

Across the interviews, six particular features of McCormick’s current white space were commented on: the use of informal and inclusive language, the architecture, the anti-racism committee, the staff-faculty divide, mentoring, and chapel time. While they by no means cover all aspects of community life, each one raises useful pointers and/or questions for institutions looking to become intercultural and needing, therefore, to anticipate the endpoint in order to ensure that choices made along the way affirm it.

The use of informal and inclusive language

Promoting equality and breadth of voice is an important element of the journey towards becoming intercultural. McCormick, as Flemister Mullen said, “has this culture where we are very comfortable with students calling us by our first names. Well, that’s not comfortable for many students of colour—national or international...It’s very hard for some of those students to do that but we just insist on it. That is just a small lens. Inclusive language: language for God. We have a standard that says the language for God should be expansive, not androcentric, not only male. That’s very difficult for people—mostly everybody else.”

Language
the words you insist on using
are the shopfront for what you believe
or hope to grow into.

If you believe and hope for something deeply enough
you will make sure your words match.
If your words jar
they

will be what is heard
by those listening
what is read
by those watching
they
will send the strongest message

like your choice of house.

Architecture

22 September, 2009

I enter the lobby of McCormick
for the first time.
It is light.
Glass walls reach up two levels on both sides
reception is in front of me
a circular staircase leads to the mezzanine staff floor.
I like it.
It gives a feeling of there being
no separation
between
the world outside
and the world inside
and no separation of
worlds within worlds.
But then I discover that
to get to the faculty offices
I must
enter a lift
use a swipecard.

McCormick is
the fourth side of a square
with a grassy courtyard inside.
A Lutheran school owns the other three sides.
They have the library
the chapel
the café
the lecture rooms.
McCormick has
corridors
and offices
one common room
a handful of meeting rooms.
I meet almost no one
as I explore

bump into very few
in coming days

Architecture is, it seems, often underestimated for the power of its silent message regarding what an institution believes itself to be and how it goes about realising that. Money, of course, is often a factor. McCormick built and moved into that fourth side of the square in order to save on costs and to consolidate resources. Space and flexibility was also important. They left an old stone building needing renovation and moved into a brand new three-storey wing. However, as Vogel noted, the new building “is very hierarchical...It does not facilitate easy interaction...[Moreover] people have told you, I presume...that the chapel’s not ours, that we are sort of there as guests? When we worship, because we’re worshipping in space that is not ours—and it is beautiful space—we’re really constricted. We can’t move the furniture around. We’ve got to put everything back in exact order. If we want to move the communion table, for instance, I have to ask permission.” For Vogel, creativity and community were the two major sacrifices that had been made in the move to this particular building, and as the recession bit deep, there was talk of moving lectures, chapel and community life also into that one wing already dedicated to offices.⁴¹³ The full power of architecture and the apportioning of physical space to impact vision has yet to be fully played out in McCormick’s current story.

Anti-racism committee

Racism is an area that McCormick has been consciously trying to work on addressing in its community life. The reason for this is given by a comment that Flemister Mullen made: “I don’t think we are anywhere near pronouncing the end of race as a dominant paradigm in intercultural relations...[and so] we have to continue to allow it to speak to us and challenge us and to contest with us as an institution.” According to Esterline, “many seminaries are diverse but not at all anti-racist.” One development at McCormick designed to contest with this, as Vogel explained, has been the establishment of “an anti-racism committee which is made up of faculty, staff and students, and administration.” The aim of the committee, in Esterline’s words, was “firstly to make these issues about race, and where power and privilege are, more obvious so we can actually deal with them.” As a result, in his estimate,

⁴¹³ Meanwhile, Vogel mentioned that “we’ve only been in this building for about four years and it’s on the market, for sale.”

the committee has been “a place where there is a possibility of [talking about] these issues completely openly that I’ve not experienced before.”

Those on the committee were the first to go through anti-racism training. Vogel was one: “Some of what we’re learning [is] how do we refer to ourselves, how do we feel comfortable, how do we self-identify, and how do others identify us?...For me taking [the training] opened my eyes in a different sort of way to my own unintentional racism, just by virtue of the privilege I have by being white.” In the opinion of Esterline such training is something that must be undertaken by everyone across the institution and it must be repeated on a regular basis across a person’s life. “It needs constant tending, something that probably my faculty colleagues might say, too often.” The Institute was to take up the role of oversight, and more. As Esterline explained, “The Institute’s job is to bring the anti-racism trainings [and] do the racism audit that I think needs to be done so we can see where the racism is in the institution and become clear about that.”

Staff-faculty divide

While McCormick has, over the years, worked hard on trying to ensure that those who study and work there are diverse, and was, in 2009, trying to address issues of power and privilege in the establishment of the anti-racism committee, Cheifetz was one who felt strongly about what she perceived to be a divide between the faculty and staff, and the consequent discrepancy it raised for the vision of crossculturality. She herself was in an interesting position, technically staff but working alongside faculty and therefore very aware of the separations between the two. “Oftentimes, staff will want to invite faculty to something but we know we don’t get invited to what they have...Their meals are paid for; we have to potluck ours...The faculty do have this academy and the academy works in a certain way...And staff, I think, oftentimes think they’ve a very active role in the lives of students but that’s not necessarily recognized as part of the curriculum...So there’s this funny thing that happened in a staff meeting where someone was like ‘There’s no pictures of staff on any of our publications, not even on the website where you’re clicking on staff stuff. It would be nice on the website to have some’...I think that to have something that’s truly intercultural and truly recognizes everything that’s going on within a place of theological education, you kind of have to be clear about all of it...I’ve had many differences with administration over these things...This is a cultural clash that happens here.”

So, to be consistent
means looking
critically
over all of it.
Power and privilege
issues can be found
everywhere⁴¹⁴
even—especially?—in those places
you might think are taking care of themselves
or you haven't properly thought about yet.

Proactive and far-reaching
honesty
and action
are required.
And not just in certain directions.

Mentoring

Evaluating the learning of the students and mentoring them toward the stated vision of becoming crosscultural is something McCormick has tried to be very intentional about. Of course, as Caldwell noted, “some people never make the shift, but that’s beyond our control. We can offer. We do a lot of evaluation. We do a lot of assessment of human learning. We have a lot of things we’re looking for. We do a lot of course evaluations and so we’re constantly critiquing ourselves and we have a system of reviews. Our first review [is one where] they respond to some questions and we monitor those very carefully...Every student gets a faculty advisor who walks with them through their time here, unless you want to change. We have online registration. You cannot register for your classes until you’ve met with your faculty advisor who has to release you to register. Then in November they have to go to meet with their faculty advisor [and again] in March or April...And in between they’re doing their reviews. So at least twice a year they’re face-to-face with their faculty advisor. That’s required [the meeting and the meeting face-to-face].” Caldwell did admit that sometimes it can be a challenge to keep faculty on task. To address that, “we’re starting to do advising niches, so we ask faculty, ‘What do you want to advise?’...We then assign students to them based on what they want to do, thinking that...if they have some choice about them maybe they’re going to be really invested with these students.”

⁴¹⁴ It is interesting to note that “diversity” can at times be used rather narrowly to refer only to race/ethnicity. Such is the case with the already mentioned, though otherwise excellent, *Diversity in Theological Education* folio.

What do you do?
Make it compulsory
or invitational?
Build fences
or sink wells?
There's an eternal dilemma.
If you box it
you slowly lose it
like grains of sand escaping a clenched fist
but there are those who
don't seem to value it
as they should.
Why is that?

Formation is where
talk becomes walk
ideas are lived
authenticity forged.
It's whole-of-life stuff
hard and demanding.

Whole-of-life.
Education.
Do they match up?
Should they?

Chapel time

Chapel time in many ways exemplified the dilemma that the question of formation can bring. While in many instances the classroom at McCormick is a genuine site of intercultural formation, should life beyond it, yet still within the context of the institution, make every effort to consistently assist that? If, in an increasingly part-time world, students only come for classes, what then? Is intercultural formation within the classroom allowed to be enough?

As Dean of Student Affairs, Vogel was caught right in the middle of this dilemma—Rand also, as the one-day-a-week seminary musician. Both were passionate about the potential of chapel to exemplify something of what an intercultural Christian community could look like in practice. Vogel said, however, “I’m aware of the fact that among the Presbyterian seminaries in the United States there are eleven of us and McCormick is the most intentional, ecumenical, multi-crosscultural, but we’re the only one that doesn’t worship every day...This seminary has never made it such a priority...[Additionally] I find it a real challenge to try to do worship here because there’s not a huge amount of support...We have

trouble getting faculty to come to worship, and if they're not coming to worship, the students feel it's not particularly important, it's optional...It's a tension that I've never known how to deal with. If it doesn't come from the President and the faculty as modelling its importance...."

She continued: "I would love to see worship three to four days a week with rotating teams of students from every denomination, every country, working together to try to find ways not to homogenize their uniqueness, but bring it in to make a different kind of whole. And we do that do a degree. But I think if we could worship more frequently with more intentional support from faculty and staff, it would really begin to take hold." She added, "I would definitely want support in terms of time and no classes."

"My dream would be that worship would be integrated into the community life, not only in terms of the space but in terms of the time and the participation. I don't think I'll see it in my time here...Many of our faculty who have PhDs, who really value the life of the mind even more than they value the life of faith, they feel they're here to teach. They're not here to form people...We've become so enamoured of the intellectual part."

Rand concurred: "This seminary is hard-pressed to give the attention to spiritual formation and worship...I think there's always a dilemma in an academic institution. It's set up: really the structure of the seminary is a traditional European school and grades are very important, academic research is very important, and all of those things are given a lot of attention...Worship services are hard pressed to find a time...where people are not busy." He went on to observe, "There are many students who don't feel like worship here meets their needs and I think that we face the issue of a multicultural worship service nobody likes all the time." Rand laughed ruefully. "I don't think there's any way we can make it feel like home to them all the time. It's part of the multicultural problem...They have to buy into the fact that it's not going to be like them all the time but there will be things that they'll benefit from because of it. I think there has to be a lot of teaching about why it's good and I'm not sure that we get a lot of teaching like that around here."

So there is a difference between
teaching
and practice,
the intellectual
and the formational

and the former in each case
will not always
directly address
and inform
the latter,
perhaps simply through neglect?

If the answer happens to be
“yes,”
what then is the point of what is done in the classroom,
dare I ask?
You glimpse something of another world
talk about a better way of interacting
begin to do it even,
but beyond that
should we expect anything more than
status quo?
Am I just too impatient
too idealistic
expecting that this intercultural project should infiltrate
every corner of life
and the seminary can at least begin that holistic work?

McCormick
is working on it.
There is much to admire
even while it
has a ways to go (as people there freely admit).
It is easy to judge.
Much harder to live.

The welcome table

McCormick faces many challenges and is still walking the path toward intercultural theological education. Caldwell acknowledged, “This is hard work. It’s creative work. It’s demanding work but I wouldn’t be doing anything differently because we’re training people to live in the world of difference, of interculturality...It is the tower of Babel...Diversity is not God’s punishment but diversity is really part of God’s big plan. It is God’s plan for the world to live like this and we live into that vision at McCormick. We take it on and we don’t do it perfectly and it’s messy. It’s not all nice and neat but at least we’re working at it and we think we’re onto something.” The lessons learnt, including those unfolding within the current story, have much wisdom to offer others who would travel the same journey.

23 September, 2009
Caldwell is officiating
warmly inviting everyone to
the Welcome Table
(faculty and students present
are preparing for communion)
we are singing, true gospel style
dancing
Black, white, Asian, Asian American, Latino, Amerindian
“We’re gonna sit at the welcome table...
All kinds of people”

*That chapel service remains a lasting memory
imprinted
resonating...*

A communion invitation
found later
in a Mennonite Hymnal
uses words
I think
you would hear if you
were at McCormick:

This is the Welcome Table of our Redeemer,
and you are invited.
Make no excuses, saying you cannot attend;
simply come,
for around this table you will find your family.
Come not because you have to,
but because you need to.

Come not to prove you are saved,
but to seek the courage to follow wherever Christ leads.
Come not to speak but to listen,
not to hear what’s expected,
but to be open to the ways the Spirit moves among you.
So be joyful, not somber,
for this is the feast of the reign of God,
where the broken are molded into a Beloved Community,
and where the celebration over evil’s defeat has already begun.⁴¹⁵

Amen.

⁴¹⁵ “Worship Resources,” in *Sing the Journey, Hymnal: A Worship Book—Supplement I* (Scottsdale, PA: Faith and Life Resources, 2005), no. 170.

Findings

Drawing from McCormick’s experience, for a theological institution to work toward becoming intercultural the following ingredients are necessary:

- a board and president who “get it” and are proactively committed to the vision
- robust, mutually respectful partnerships with constituencies from across a range of races and ethnicities
- internal structures that allow for race/ethnicity-specific space, as well as “multicultural moments,” and that tackle the deep-seated issue of power and privilege in an ongoing way
- likewise a curriculum and its resourcing (for example, course bibliographies)
- a diverse faculty
- an approach to recruitment that operates within and outside of traditional routes
- a serious commitment on the part of all faculty to creatively exploring, experimenting with, and reflectively utilising pedagogies that facilitate intercultural engagement
- a community life that consistently affirms and strengthens the vision and invites all people to begin to practice and apply what they are learning in a way that is mindful of the accompanying and inspiring presence of God.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

This thesis has sought to explore my conviction that the purpose of theological education is to model and facilitate deep engagement with the o/Other, for transformation comes through relationship and the Christian life is about transformation. In the interests of not simply talking about this, but living it, I have embarked on research that, in its method, has sought to honour the Buberian-derived idea of dialogical relation by paying careful attention to *I*, *Thou*, and *It*—subjective reflection, the voice of the other, and objective analysis. In its essence, therefore, this project has emphasised turning towards, questioning, listening, meeting, and critical reflection.⁴¹⁶ The specific research and analysis tools used to facilitate this have included semi-structured reflexive interviews, a research journal, autoethnography and modified grounded theory.

While this research has been particularly directed towards the context in Aotearoa New Zealand, it has drawn from the thinking of scholars in a number of so-called “Western” countries, notably the United States. It has operated around the belief that theological education needs to work toward becoming truly intercultural if it is to make an appropriate response to what now is an increasingly culturally diverse context. Conscious that theological education here has long been dominated chiefly by those who are ethnically white, I decided to work with the critical hermeneutic of Jung Young Lee, who claimed that it is “new marginal” people, those who stand with their feet in two or more cultures and see “in-both,” “in-between,” and “in-beyond,” who hold the key to realising multicultural theology for a multicultural context. While Lee’s thinking proved to be limited in that he focused on the contribution of immigrants and did not include those who are indigenous, inter-racial or inter-ethnic, 1.5-, second-, or third-generation people, it nonetheless provided a helpful starting point for identifying the kinds of individuals I needed to be listening to. In total, I interviewed thirty-seven people whom I came to call “calabash breakers,” not all of them immigrants and including white men and women with crosscultural experience. Between them, these calabash breakers, so named because they are people who cross boundaries and break the rules set by the powerful, identified four areas needing attention if

⁴¹⁶ This emphasis reflects something of the elements that Te Paa claimed were appropriate for an approach to bicultural theological education: “respecting, acknowledging, understanding, and empathising with context is prerequisite to the sacred work of teaching and learning.” Te Paa, “Contestations,” 260. Given that it was only possible to speak with the calabash breakers for one to two hours each, this project certainly fits the sense of preparing the prerequisite ground for sacred work.

theological education is to become truly intercultural: caring for identity; listening to silenced voices; experiencing epistemic ruptures; and dismantling discrimination.

The four areas that have been presented in this thesis are by no means meant to be seen as part of a linear progression, but, rather, they spiral in and out of each other, creating ongoing work for an ongoing journey. The case study of McCormick Theological Seminary, conducted in September–October 2009, has helpfully illustrated their integral and intersecting nature across structures, curriculum, pedagogy, and community life in an institution committed to becoming cross- or intercultural.

Essential to this thesis has been the sense that the work of becoming intercultural is necessarily formational. As Honoré noted, “It’s an enormously complex and rich set of circumstances that we’re trying to manipulate in a way that helps people become more human, become more sensitive, become what we call reflective practitioners. It’s really much more about forming character than it is about [simply] pouring some knowledge into these people.” That the work is difficult and complex is not in question, yet, as the Ugandan man declared, “We in the theological college...if our work is about transforming the people of God and we cannot rethink our curriculums and methods in a way that can transform the people of God, we must be pitied.”⁴¹⁷

I want to leave the last word
to the African American woman
for she
reminds me
where the strength
for this work
ultimately
comes from,
this work conducted by
people
in the name of their God
for the sake of a vision
that is good.

“We ourselves on our own are not going to be able to do any type of changes in the sense of theological education. But if we allow ourselves to be open to the presence of God and the

⁴¹⁷ He went on to observe that “most of the things I’ve seen that are going wrong in the churches, you can clearly trace the background and find that the roots are in the theological colleges...That, for me...makes this work very crucial, very crucial.”

Spirit of God...it's amazing what change can come forth. And see, that's...why I say you gotta pray. Your prayer life's gotta be in order 'cause if it's not, you gotta take care of yourself and the thing about taking care of yourself healthwise or whatever, because you're gonna have to be in it for the long haul. And this is what I find, I find this with professors, with faculty: there's some who have burnt out, there's some who have lost hope, there's some who are angry...And I think, 'yep, it's the prayer life's not working, because that's where you get your strength, that's where you get your hope, that's where you're able to keep on going.' That's why I'm not an angry black woman, and I could be."

Appendix I



Level 3
Fisher Building (Building 804)
18 Waterloo Quadrant
Auckland, New Zealand
Telephone 64 9 373 7599 ext.86676
Facsimile 64 9 373 7015
www.theology.auckland.ac.nz

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019

Auckland, New Zealand

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

(Individual academic)

Project title: A Dialogue of Equals: Realising and modelling genuine cross-cultural dialogue within Western theological education settings.

Name of Researcher: Rosemary Dewerse

Researcher Introduction: I am a PhD candidate with the School of Theology at the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Project description and invitation

The centre of gravity of the Christian church has, in the last thirty years, shifted from the West to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Meanwhile Western societies themselves are becoming increasingly multi-cultural. Despite these realities, however, theological education in the West, or in Western-led institutions, still largely operates with the assumption that Western theological and academic thought and processes are superior and the norm for all. Critique from Majority World⁴¹⁸ scholars has particularly drawn attention to this. In order to produce graduates equipped and open to engaging with these new realities it is important that Western Christians work hard to genuinely dialogue with others as equals.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research by providing your perspective on, and constructive suggestions regarding the situation and project thesis described above. This is in order to fulfil one of my research objectives, namely:

⁴¹⁸Here 'Majority World' refers to those born in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, or the Pacific and/or racially not Caucasian.

1. To obtain the opinions and suggestions of a selection of individual academics in regards to Western theological education settings realising and modelling a genuine dialogue of equals between cultures.

Project Procedures

I would like to interview you by phone, face-to-face or email, whichever is more convenient. This would take one-two hours of your time.

Before interviewing you I would ask you finish reading this Participant Information Sheet, ask any questions for clarification that you have, and then to fill out the Consent Form that accompanies this Information Sheet and hand or email it back me. If it is not possible to obtain your signature, and I am to orally interview you, I will open the interview by recording your oral confirmation of consent. This will be stored separately from any interview data.

NOTE: Participating in the interview is entirely voluntary.

The findings of the research, presented as part of a chapter of the PhD will be available to you once completed if you so desire.

Data Storage/retention/destruction of oral interviews and future use

For oral interviews, it is intended that interviews will be either electronically recorded, if conducted by phone, or audio-taped, if conducted face-to-face in order to allow for natural conversation flow. However, you will have the option to decline to be recorded, in which case notes will be taken. If you are being recorded you can ask for this to be stopped at any time without needing to give a reason.

Audiotapes or electronic recordings will be transcribed and analysed by the researcher. All data will then be stored until the submission of the PhD at which point it will be destroyed.

Right to Withdraw from Participation

You have the right to withdraw your participation at any time and can withdraw your data from the research up to two months following the interview. You also have the right to decline to comment on any questions which you deem inappropriate for any reason.

Participant Observation

If it is appropriate, you will be asked whether you would be willing to allow me to attend, as a participant observer, any lectures in an educational setting that are being taught or led by you and for you to nominate which ones. The purpose of such a visit would be to observe the ways in which you are seeking to integrate your thinking with your practice. You have the right to decline this without giving a reason.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

In this research confidentiality with respect to your identity is assured unless you choose to allow me to use your name in my write up. The Consent Form asks you to clearly indicate your understanding of my assurance but also to indicate your choice as to whether you prefer anonymity or not. If you wish to remain anonymous, I will refer to you in my findings simply by indicating the continent, country or ethnicity you come from, depending on what you state as being your preference.

Contact Details

Researcher: Rosemary Dewerse
rosemarydewerse@gmail.com
 Address: 21 Taipari Road
 Te Atatu Peninsula
 Waitakere 0610
 New Zealand
 +64 9 8344502

Supervisor: Dr Susan Smith
s.smith@ihug.co.nz
 Address: 454 Owhiwa Road
 R. D. 1, Onerahi
 Whangarei 0192
 New Zealand
 +64 9 4365554

HOD School of Theology (Acting)

Dr Mary Caygill
m.caygill@auckland.ac.nz
 Address:
 School Of Theology Office
 Room 313, Level 3
 Fisher Building
 18 Waterloo Quadrant
 Auckland 1010

New Zealand
+64 9 3737599 extn 86670

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The university of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142, New Zealand. Telephone +64 9 3737599 extn. 83711.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 11th March 2009 for (3) years, Reference number 2009/040

Appendix II



Level 3
Fisher Building (Building 804)
18 Waterloo Quadrant
Auckland, New Zealand
Telephone 64 9 373 7599 ext.86676
Facsimile 64 9 373 7015
www.theology.auckland.ac.nz

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019

Auckland, New Zealand

CONSENT FORM (Individual academic)

THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS

Project title: A Dialogue of Equals: Realising and modelling genuine cross-cultural dialogue within Western theological education settings.

Name of Researcher: Rosemary Dewerse

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and have understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I understand that this research will require no more than two hours of my time.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw participation at any time up to two months beyond the interview date.
- I understand that if I deem it to be inappropriate to answer a question that is asked I have the right to decline to comment.
- I understand that the researcher will undertake to protect my identity as best they can, though my *continental background, country or ethnicity* (please circle or highlight one) will be referred to.
- I understand that data will be kept until the submission of the PhD at which point it will be destroyed.
- I agree/do not agree to the interview being recorded.

- I understand that I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time without giving a reason.
- I am willing/not willing for the researcher to attend a lecture(s) led by myself and nominate

(course title/event, date, time).

- I wish/ do not wish my name to be kept confidential in the research write-up.
- I wish/do not wish to receive the summary of findings.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 11th March 2009 for (3) years, Reference number 2009/040

Appendix III

Interview Schedule

Individual Majority World academic

This provides a basic outline to what is intended to be a semi-structured interview.

1. Obtain a brief summary of the participant's personal experience of Western theological education settings – study or teaching experience. (This is to help the researcher locate them and will be used very carefully if at all in the write-up of the findings, keeping in mind the need to honour the requests of the participant on the Consent Form).
2. In the opinion of the participant how well, currently, do Western theological education settings realise and model a genuine dialogue of equals between cultures? Please explain and illustrate. (The researcher will be keeping in mind possible topic areas such as theologically, philosophically, pastorally, educationally/pedagogically and staffing-wise to use as prompts if needed).
3. What does the participant see are the key elements needing to be addressed if Western theological education settings are to realise and model a genuine dialogue of equals between cultures? Explore.
4. What suggestions, or words of advice, would the participant want to give to a Western theological education setting serious about realising and modelling a genuine dialogue of equals between cultures?

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