Again, in the case of Muslim respondents, the curriculum does not contribute positively or negatively to a decline in the religious minority’s attitude towards the religious out-group. A similar tendency is found with respect to the absence of any significant contribution of multi-religiosity in the regression analysis of the results of Muslims. The research would more probably have yielded more interesting results if a fair number of Muslim and Hindu children were included in the main empirical study. The small number of Muslim children in the research pictures a somewhat negative image of the Muslim child frequenting Roman Catholic and Protestant church schools. This child emerges as a passive recipient for the effect of the curriculum. One striking feature of Sterkens’ research is the absence of comparisons involving the multi-religious curriculum of the Roman Catholic and Protestant church schools and the curriculum of Islamic schools in the Netherlands. The research on inter-religious curriculum would have gained more perspective if the curriculum and/or children following lessons in the Islamic primary schools in the Netherlands would have been brought into the picture.—Dr. Redouan Saidi, Islamic University of Rotterdam.


Inus Daneel is a missiologist and specialist in Southern Shona Independent Churches. As a scholar he uses his expertise not only in academia but also, if not foremost, in practical applications. After having obtained his Ph. D. at the Free University of Amsterdam in 1971, he initiated in 1972 Fambidzano, an ecumenical movement of Zimbabwean Independent Churches, which provided Theological Training, and stimulated socio-economic development work. Recently Daneel embarked on the topical issue of ecology, an issue of great concern because of wide-spread environmental degradation in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. To counteract this degradation Daneel had mobilized Independent Churches into an Association of African Earthkeeping Churches (AAEC), and traditional religious leaders (chiefs and spirit mediums, traditionally custodians of the land) into an Association of Zimbabwean Traditional Ecologists (AZTREC). Both movements are coordinated by the Zimbabwean institute of Religious Research and Ecological Conservation (ZIRRCON) which in the early 1990s consisted of three departments: research, ecology, and financial administration.

Volume 2 of African Earthkeepers describes the Christian wing of ZIRRCON. It has three parts. Part 1. Environmental ministry and changing images of the church deals with the church as healing liberating...
institution (ch. 1), and with green rituals and liturgies (ch. 2). Part 2 examines the trinitarian characteristics of an emerging African theology of the environment: Mwari, the creator as insider (ch. 3), Christ the earth-keeper, with reference to his Lordship as the cosmic Christ (ch. 4), and the Holy Spirit in creation, as ‘Fountain of life’ and as healer of people and as healer of the land (ch. 5). Part 3 envisages current developments and future challenges: ZIRRCON’s expanding organisation and environmental concerns, not only afforestation, also wildlife and water resources (ch. 6), widening horizons towards an African Earthkeepers Union, and becoming part of a global green revolution (ch. 7).

In concrete terms it is the planting of trees that counteracts the environmental degradation, but the planting is enacted within ‘earth healing’ (maporesanyika), eucharistic ceremonies held by the earthkeeping churches. During these ceremonies participating communicants confess their sins against the earth, often understood as reservations in applying the body of Christ to the earth, often understood as the body of Christ. Some professional theologians will surely have reservations in applying the body of Christ to the earth, but it should be understood in terms of Christ’s cosmic lordship. Further, according to Dana L. Robert, series editor, “the incorporation of environmentalism into the heart of Christian sacramental life demonstrates a holistic mission model that potentially could be applied in other parts of southern Africa” (xvi). This, of Course, is an extension of a conventionally understood missiology, and one wonders in how far this new vision and interpretation of mission are carried by the Independent Churches or whether they are merely an imposition by Daneel who exercises this issue, and indicates a number of safeguards into AAEC theologising “to prevent it from becoming a one-man show (9). We do fully support Daneel’s own suggestion that “other observers may be able to judge this at some future date with greater objectivity than I am capable of” (9).

Daneel’s ambition reaches, however, beyond mobilizing AAEC and AZTREC for treeplanting. He envisages an expanding organisation and an additional environmental objectives for ZIRRCON with five departments (Ecology; Training; Administration; Water and Wildlife; Research) and five desks (besides AAEZ and AZTREC: Development; Women; Youth), all focused on Grassroots Communities in a mutually perceived inter-relationship (238). ZIRRCON, in addition, looks even beyond Zimbabwe towards a connection in South Africa, towards an African Earthkeepers Union, and even beyond Africa. As long as Daneel will be chairman of ZIRRCON trust and head of its research department, the Zimbabwean institute for Religious Research and Ecological Conservation will undoubtedly pursue its goals. At the moment ZIRRCON has more than 40 salaried employees in Masvingo Province, among them fifteen administrative