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Ponovo o religiji: povratak ikonoklazma u Južnoj Africi nakon Apartheida

The images to be discussed in this paper are a series of etchings by Derek Zietsman which ‘Revisit’ certain seminal stories from the old and new testaments. They respond directly to the tumultuous post-apartheid era of political and social change in South African history to reveal entrenched patterns of thought and behaviour that continue to restrict the development of a just and equitable society, particularly in sectors of the Afrikaner society who previously ruled the country. David Morgan’s (2005:117) discussion of the history of iconoclasm points out that the destruction of one image is necessary, not just to remove it entirely but in order to replace it with a new construction or tradition, so iconoclasm becomes a “strategy of replacement”. Zietsman’s images iconoclastically revisit (replace) the religious iconography that once underpinned the Afrikaner nation and their belief system. His images are deliberately provocative as, through ambiguity and satire, they visually explore how Afrikaner Calvinist beliefs and patriarchal hegemony persist, thus creating an existential crisis in post-apartheid South Africa that is exacerbated by uncertainty. In this paper Zietsman’s images are compared with expectations of sacred iconography that have been entrenched by historic repetition, showing how the iconoclastic differences lead to a disruption of complacent viewing. I argue that the purpose of this disruption is to promote a thinking viewer and to encourage criticality of both the past and the present in the hope that it may lead to a renegotiated future.