



Jnanadeepa

Pune Journal of Religious Studies

ISSN 2249-1503

www.punejournal.in

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.4249764

Beyond the Colonial Past: A New Story-ing

Kuruvilla Pandikattu

Abstract: On 12 May, 1998, the Discovery Channel transmitted an interesting and useful television programme in their “Mission Impossible” series. It dealt with human beings’ cherished desire to “conquer” space and to “colonize” stars and galaxies. Meticulous planning is needed to send human beings into outer space and it was suggested that we could even bypass Einstein’s limit of the speed of light by properly making use of gravitational waves. It was even hinted that generations of human beings could settle down in outer space with or without access to the parent planet earth. What struck me most in the whole discussion of this challenging topic was the frequent occurrence of the words “colony” and “colonization” to denote such a venture.

Keywords: Colonialism, Story, Conquering space, Colonisation

Cited as:

Pandikattu, Kuruvilla (1998). Beyond the Colonial Past: A New Story-ing . Jnanadeepa: Pune Journal of Religious Studies, Jan 1998 Vol 1/2 23-33 https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4249763

Updated on Nov 10, 2020

Beyond the Colonial Past

A New Story-ing

Kuruvilla Pandikattu, SJ

Dept. of Systematic Philosophy, JDV, Pune - 411 014

On 12 May, 1998, the Discovery Channel transmitted an interesting and useful television programme in their "Mission Impossible" series. It dealt with human beings' cherished desire to "conquer" space and to "colonize" stars and galaxies. Meticulous planning is needed to send human beings into outer space and it was suggested that we could even bypass Einstein's limit of the speed of light by properly making use of gravitational waves. It was even hinted that generations of human beings could settle down in outer space with or without access to the parent planet earth. What struck me most in the whole discussion of this challenging topic was the frequent occurrence of the words "colony" and "colonization" to denote such a venture.

In this article an attempt is made to indicate that this tendency of colonization is in-built in the story of our lives. Colonization as a political phenomenon, which is almost 500 years old,¹ is based on a story.² The process of colonization is enacting this story. We shall see in this article some of the assumptions and implications of this story. Further, we will argue that de-colonization requires a totally different story to be enacted. We will assume that the same story of colonization, however modi-

fied, would not enable us to live in a decolonization paradigm. What is needed is a radically different story, enabling us to live in a totally different paradigm. For this discussion we borrow insights from Daniel Quinn's *Ishmael* and his understanding of *Takers' story*.³

The method that we follow is philosophical. Drawing upon the recent hermeneutical studies on myth, metaphor and story, we deal with the topic of colonization from a theoretical perspective and suggest the model of a new story as the alternative paradigm of a life beyond the colonial past.

1. Human Living as Enacting a Story

Before understanding human life in general and colonization in particular as enacting a given story it would be helpful to understand what we mean by the terms *story*, *enacting* and *culture* here.

We could begin by understanding a *story* as "a scenario interrelating the human beings, the world and the gods".⁴ A story, like a myth or epic, relates human beings with God and the world in existential and enigmatic ways. Such a story gives a broader vision to

the burning issues of humanity and articulates a solution for the conflicting situation of human existence.

Further, “to *enact* a story is to live so as to strive to make [the story] come true.”⁵ Thus enacting a story enables us to make the story come true in our own lives. Conversely, we build on the story given to us by enacting it in our own lives. Collectively, we live the story and elaborate the story, modify it and to some extent make it our own. This story is handed on to future generations for their own appreciation, appropriation and further enactment.

Such a story is aetiological. It is a story that explains. It explains to ourselves and to our own culture how things came to be this way.⁶ Bridging the gap between reason and heart, such a story tries to reconcile the contradictory aspects of our lives. It gives us both a justification for our existence and a motivation for it.⁷

In short it tries to explain everything. A story that explains (and justifies) the meaning of the world, the intentions of God and the destiny of human beings is bound to have mythological characteristics and profound implications for our daily lives.

We may understand *culture* as a group of people enacting one story in this background of enacting a story. Thus, human beings in one particular society enact their own story and it is in the enacting that they understand themselves, the world and the divine.⁸ Such a group of human beings enacting the same story constitutes a culture. For no single human being can invent a

story and enact it for himself or herself. The story is given to him or her by the culture. The culture enriches itself by the enactment of the story by its members.

In the context of the above terms we can understand human living as enacting a story. This is more profound than regarding human life as a story. Life is seen not merely as a story or as a plot, but life is seen as living out a plot (story) given to us by the wider community (culture).⁹ It is such a story that gives us meaning and orientation. It is the story that makes us what we are. The story explains and validates the prejudices, pre-understandings, the values, the vision and the goal of a culture. Such a story given to human beings by a culture has two mutually enriching aspects:

- a. humans are captivated by that story
- b. humans are captives of that story

The story that we are asked to enact is one that fascinates us, that goads us to further commitment and action. The story truly captivates us, we are enchanted by it, we find our lives fulfilled by it. We are ready to give up our most cherished selves for its sake. In this sense, the story takes precedence over the individual. In the case of Nazi Germany, for many Germans the story of Aryan supremacy was one that motivated them, fascinated them and inspired them. That story gave them “a reason to live and a reason to die”. The hardships that came their way could be faced because of the tremendous influence of the story. They were blinded by the story, they admired it, made it their own and lived it!

On the other hand, we are also captured by the story, and held captives by the story. The story given to us by our culture is not our own. We are not free to reject it. We are truly held in a cultural prison by the story that we are told to enact. This cultural prison, as opposed to the criminal prison, offers us no easy escape, no release. In the criminal prison, the wardens have the keys to take us out of the prison. But in the cultural prison, given to us by our culture, both the prisoners and the wardens share the same fate and they both know that there is no escape route.¹⁰ For instance, the Germans enacting the Nazi story of the supremacy of the Aryan race were not totally free to think otherwise. Even if they did think otherwise and were not convinced of this ideology, the propaganda machine, the story being enacted by the wider culture, prohibited them from actually living out a different story. Even unconsciously they were dragged into living out this story of the majority community. This story was being lived out in every sphere of the nation's life. So the only way to get rid of the story from their lives was by leaving the country or through physical death.¹¹

Such an understanding of living as enacting a story could be compared to speaking which could be considered as enacting a language. Going beyond the naïve view that we use words as means of speaking, we can very well affirm that language is a game being played by us using the rules given to us. It is in the use, that is, in the act of speaking that we are given the language. We are "forced" to follow the rules of the language. At the same time, we are at lib-

erty to invent new words and creatively use the language to exploit the ambiguities of linguistic rules.

As pointed out by L. Wittgenstein,¹² the words of the language acquire meaning in the context of the language game. Similarly, the actions of our daily life acquire meaning in the context of the story that is being enacted. We are not totally bound by language in speaking or by the story in living. We can creatively use both the language and story to go beyond their own limits. But our freedom is not unlimited. It is a "bound freedom", to use a phrase of Paul Ricoeur.¹³

In the process of development of both language (through speaking) and story (through living) we, the actors in the story, are invited to play the game "properly", that is according to the rules. Some ingenuity is encouraged or tolerated. Even the protesters or the rebels in the story are contributing their share to that game of "enacting" or "counter-enacting" the story. "Counter-enacting" can form part of the same story. We can even "play to the gallery." But to play a totally different story is difficult, if not impossible. A child who has not come in contact with another culture cannot talk a different language on its own. So, too, it is difficult to create a different story from within the story one is enacting.

Hence, human living could be visualized as enacting a story, a story given to us by the culture, a story reinforced by the life of other individuals of the culture. Colonization as a political phenomenon is the carrying out of a story, enacting a story which captivated

the colonizers and which held them captives. In the next section we see some of the guiding elements of the story of the colonizers. We would be assuming here that colonization would never have occurred without the *Takers*' story which they were enacting.

2. The Story Enacted by Colonization

Against this background of human living as enacting a story, we shall now describe some of the features of the story being enacted by the colonizers.¹⁴ It must be remembered that the colonizers were, like most of us, well intentioned people, not necessarily villains out to conquer and kill. Our aim is only to look at some elements of the story that moved, guided and inspired their actions. Thus, we shall be able to see how they were really motivated to enact the story of colonization, how they could live for and even die for this story. This will enable us to understand even the more heinous aspects of colonization from their world view, from the story they were enacting.

a. *Its Premise: World for Colonizers*

"Every story, is based on a premise, is the working out of a premise."¹⁵ The most appealing premise of the colonizers is that "the world was made for us". From this premise it follows that "if the world was made for us, then it belongs to us and we can do what we damn well please with it".¹⁶

So the premise of the colonizers is that the world was made for them and they were made to rule it, to conquer it or to colonize it. Not just the world, but

other civilizations and people are objects of colonial subjugation. "You hear this fifty times a day. You can turn on the radio or the television and hear it every hour. Man is conquering the deserts, man is conquering the oceans, man is conquering the atom, man is conquering the elements, man is conquering outer space."¹⁷

For conquering the world and other civilizations, human beings have to pay a heavy price. But the role provided by the story makes human beings willing to pay a price bravely and gladly, however high it may be. What they do not realize is that "the price ... is not the price of becoming human. It's not even the price of having the things you [need]. It's the price of enacting a story that casts mankind as the enemy of the world".¹⁸ It is the price paid by the colonizers and by the colonized because of the story being acted out by the colonizers.

b. *Its Method: Cut-Throat Competition*

There were three methods¹⁹ the colonizers followed which are never practised in the rest of the community of life and these were fundamental to their culture and civilization. It may be noted that the examples given here are to be understood within the frame-work of the original agricultural farming community. We would be contrasting the life style of Takers (or better, the Taker farmers) with that of the animals to get a better insight into their method of operation.

Firstly, colonizers deny their competitors access to food and thus to life.²⁰

In the wild you may deny your competitors access to what you are eating, but you may not deny them access to food in general. For example, a lion in the forest does not claim that all gazelles are his and others should not eat them. The lion naturally defends its kill but does not regard the herd as its own. The jackal also can eat of a gazelle when its turn comes. Unlike the lion, the colonizers seem to take full possession of the herd, ready to defend it and deny it to their competitors.

Secondly, colonizers systematically destroy the competitors' food to make room for their own. In the natural community, the rule is 'take what you need and leave the rest alone'. No wild animal, for instance, destroys the whole habitat of its enemy or the enemy's food.

Finally, they physically exterminate their competitors, which is something unheard of in the larger community of (biological) life. In the wild, for instance, animals will defend their territories and protect their kills, but they never hunt competitors down just to kill them. What they hunt, they eat, unlike what ranchers and farmers do with game.²¹

c. *Its Law: Unlimited Growth*

The law followed by enacting the colonizing story is that of unlimited, unbridled development:²² Not just settlement and growth, but unlimited settlement and growth. This leads to unlimited production and uncontrolled expansion. When they do not achieve satisfaction and fulfilment in their lives by the production and use of one car,

the solution, it is suggested, lies in the production and use of better or more cars. So, too, if one is not satisfied by possessing one house or one estate, it is hoped that possession of unlimited houses or estates will bring joy and satisfaction.

d. *Its Way: One Right Way*

The colonizers' story has another dimension. They are convinced that theirs is the right way, the only right way. So they force everyone else in the world (or in the colonies) to do as they do, to live the way they live. Everyone has to be forced to live like the colonizers, because they alone have the one right way of existing.

It is going to be very hard for the colonizers to give up their way of life, because they are sure that what they are doing is right, and that they have to go on doing it even if it means destroying the world, the other civilizations and humanity with it.

e. *Its Task: The World Police Force*

In enacting the story they had a noble purpose, a holy task: to civilize the world. For without them the world was unfinished, was just nature "red in tooth and claw".²³ It was in chaos, in a state of primeval anarchy. Their task was to come in and straighten it out; to give order to this world and its people; to give to the world a sense of harmony and morality which it otherwise lacked; to bestow on the other people a sense of decency and civilization that they never could dream of; to impart to them a sense of values, which they never possessed'. So conquering and colonizing the world was a holy task to

make it financially, morally and spiritually viable. In performing this task, they became a world police force.

f. *Its Consequence: Colonization*

Nothing much needs to be told about the consequences of enacting the story of the colonizers²⁴ since we are witnesses to its effects. It includes both the few positive as well as the many devastating negative aspects associated with colonization: openness to other cultures, utter destruction of other cultures, unimaginable economic calamity, inhuman bondage, physical slavery, economic misery and mass extermination of people!²⁵

3. A Different Story Enacted by Decolonization

If colonization was enacting a story, decolonization can only be enacting a different story. From within the colonizing story itself, it is not possible to be “liberated” and to be decolonized, just as, from within one language family, we cannot speak a totally different language. Decolonization is speaking a different language, playing a different (language) game. So it is to be noted that even the radicals or the rebels within a story cannot create a new story, they can only alter the story here and there. Such efforts will end up only in slightly changing the plot, or some grammatical rules of the game. They will only make “the oppressed the oppressors,” and not alter the game totally.

Moreover, the decolonization story is not just one story as opposed to that of the colonizers. They are different stories, which would be opposed to the prominent traits of the colonizers’ story. It is not our attempt to give a full

account of the decolonizers’ story. We only wish to indicate some of the salient features of this different story, which could act as a paradigmatic alternative to the colonizers’ story.²⁶ We do not claim that we are able to formulate an alternative story that could replace the colonizers’. Ours is merely an effort to explore some of the possible avenues that the new story could point to. Hence, the following suggestions are tentative.

a. *Its Premise: Humans in the World*

The story of decolonization, unlike that of the colonizers, is a story whose premise is that human beings become human by living in the hands of God. Human beings do not need to bring order to the world created by God. Further, the world does not belong to human beings, but human beings belong to the world.²⁷ “Man was born to the world. [He is] being shaped,”²⁸ and not the other way around.

Since the world and human beings are God’s creation, growth and development goes on forever in one’s own as well as in others’ culture. This is to be positively appreciated. God made humans for the world, in the same way he made salmon, sparrows and rabbits for the world; this seems to have worked pretty well so far, so we can take it easy and leave the running of the world to God. So the world is in fact God’s garden, the Garden of Eden.

b. *Its Method: Limited Competition*

The world in this story also will not be the place of perfect peace and harmony, like the Kingdom of God or *Rāma Rājya*. We cannot imagine this

world to be a place of peaceful co-existence. There is scope and need for the law of limited competition²⁹ There would be general laws guiding the growth of life, laws derived from life and not from parliaments.³⁰ Here human beings will not play the role of annihilators³¹ There could be sometimes “erratic retaliation” to make the other aware of one’s own existence.³² Such an “erratic retaliatory strategy” has been found to be viable and community sustaining from the very beginning of life.³³

c. *Its Law: Sustainable Growth*

Unlike the law of unlimited growth, the law followed here is that of sustainability and viability. It is a law that has been in existence for the last three million years and has proved to be viable.³⁴ This law of sustainability is in-built in the (evolutionary) mechanism of the growth of biological life and the role of human beings is to discover this law and to live in accordance with it. Thus the ecological concerns of today will be significant here, not from an anthropological perspective but from a cosmic one.

d. *Its Way: Many Ways*

Here the exclusive claim is not made that there is only one right way, the way of the colonizers. Since other ways are acknowledged, space is given to other cultures in which they can live and flourish in their own ways.³⁵ Respect for diversity is encouraged. Diversity is seen as a survival factor for the community and is therefore prized. The problems emerging from plurality and diversity are tackled, and not de-

nied and allowed to explode. Each society is allowed to live in the way it prefers without canonising one particular way as the way for the whole human community. The success of this way of life is affirmed by the existence of human beings for three million years without feeling the need to colonize others.³⁶

The colonized never were obsessed by the delusion that what they were doing was right, that everyone in the entire world had to practise agriculture, that every last square yard of the planet had to be devoted to it. They said to the hunters: “You want to be hunter gatherers? That is fine with us. That’s great. We want to be agriculturists. You be hunter-gatherers and we’ll be agriculturists. We do not pretend to know which way is right. We just know which way we prefer.”³⁷

e. *Its Task: To Shepherd*

Since human beings are in the world, their task is to live according to the laws of God, not according to the laws invented by them. In the decolonizers’ paradigm it is clear that the laws of God are the laws of life.

So what is required is a healthy respect for the world and for the other living creatures and societies. The particular task of a community or society is to be a trail-blazer or pathfinder in the full development of other cultures and the universe.³⁸ One can certainly invite the other cultures to learn from the discoveries made by one’s own community, but cannot force them to do so. Space must be given to the other communities to live the way they prefer, without, of course, being detrimental to the common good of the

“community of life”. Thus, human beings are called to shepherd and guide the other communities of humans as well as those of the animals.

f. Its Consequence: A New Humanity

The consequence of such a new story cannot be totally imagined. It can, however, be maintained that such a story leads to more humanization and freedom and opportunity for all communities to shape their life and destiny the way they see fit. Mutual enrichment and dialogue, but not intolerance and annihilation of groups, be they political, economic, cultural or religious, would be the guiding principle and practical consequence of such a story. The tensions that inevitably arise would be solved in ways which are fair to the human societies concerned.

Conclusion

So, for a society attempting to go beyond the colonial past, the challenge is not just to revise the old story, nor to modify it, nor even to improve on it. The challenge is to create a new story. A new story based on a different premise, with different methods, tasks and goals. Such a story can lead us to a society with a different dream, with a different vision and with a different culture. Only such a story can give us the impetus to build a truly decolonized society. Otherwise, the danger is that colonization will continue to exist in

different forms, (like economic, cultural or religious colonization instead of the political one) or in different modes (where the actors or agents of colonization will change). Going beyond colonization calls for a new dream and a new story, which can be enacted only by a new culture. It is a mistake to think that the new story of decolonization would be a story of turning the clock back or of denying scientific progress. It does not lead us merely to a utopian world of primitiveness.

The new culture could be as technologically advanced as today's or even more advanced.³⁹ It would not be improper for such a society to delve into the galaxies to probe the inexplicable mysteries of the cosmos. But the motive must not be to “conquer” and “colonize” but to “encounter” and to “relate”. It would be a technological advancement with a “human face” (or better with a “cosmic heart”) that can respect the other for the other's sake, that can let the other be itself.

Therefore, the challenge for us moving beyond the colonial past is to dream a story which is more human and more cosmic unlike that of the colonizers, and to enact it. The call is to have a re-vision of the whole cosmic adventure so that we can live in tune with the cosmic rhythm. The process of decolonization calls for a new mode of living, a new narration of a story and a new enactment of this story.

Notes

1. We recall that a few years ago the 500th anniversary of the “discovery of America” was celebrated and in this year we remember the landing of Vasco da Gama in India 500 years ago. This article is based on a course given by me at JDV in 1997 to the

theology students entitled “An Alternative Vision of Humanity”. I am grateful to the students for their creative participation and suggestions.

2. This has quite a lot to do with the recent studies on story, myth, and metaphor. Though we are appreciative of “story-theology” we do not make any explicit reference to it in this article. This article does not belong to the category of story-theology. Here story is seen as more primordial.
3. Bantam Book, New York, 1995. More about the author and his ideas could be found in the very informative web site <http://www.ishmael.org>. Detailed description of the fans club, of the universities where courses based on Ishmael are given and of the possible ways of supporting this venture are given in the same site. It might be noted that Ishmael operates basically on the two categories of *Leavers* and *Takers* and their different stories. Leavers are those who are left out of the race, the conquered, the uncivilized, the primitive and Takers are the conquerors, the civilized. This article does not equate the Takers with the colonizers nor the Leavers with the colonized people. But we assume that the colonizers’ story is linked to the Takers and a decolonizing story could draw its inspiration from Leavers story.
4. *Ishmael*, 41. See also Kuruvilla Pandikattu, *Metaphorising of Reality*, JDV, Pune, 1996, for another discussion of story, myth and symbol.
5. *Ishmael*, 41.
6. Cf. *Ishmael*, 43.
7. Thus through the story the people have been given an explanation of how things around them came to be this way, and this stills their alarm. This provides them with a sense of justification for the calamities they inflict on others and on themselves. This explanation covers everything, including the deterioration of the ozone layer, the pollution of the oceans, the destruction of the rain forest, child molestation, subjugation of millions, slave trade, inhuman flesh and drug trafficking!
8. *Ishmael*, 34-36, 40-44 & 62.
9. It may be noted here that by story we understand here not the story of the individual lives; but we mean the story given to the whole community by the culture. It is this larger story with its plot that gives each individual a role, an identity and meaning. It is this story that enables the individual to live in the community. Such a story is intimately linked to the culture.
10. Such an understanding could be compared to that of *Weltanschauung* or horizon of understanding or living. *Weltanschauung*, like horizon, is something beyond the grasp of the person concerned, but he or she is profoundly influenced by it. Cf. E. Coreth, *Grundriss der Metaphysik*, Tyrolia, Innsbruck, 1994, 54.
11. Cf. *Ishmael*, 252-253. Obviously the choice of leaving the country is practically ruled out in the case of the wider story that is being enacted by the larger world community of colonizers.
12. L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus*. DF Pears & BF McGuinness (ed. & tr.), Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1971, *passim*.
13. Or the *gebundene Freiheit*. See Paul Ricoeur, *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary*. E.V. Kohak (tr.), Northwestern Univ Press, Evanston, 1966, 41f.
14. It may be noted that the author D. Quinn uses the two terms *Takers* and *Leavers* to denote the two types of stories prevalent in our world. We take the liberty to identify the features of Takers (conquerors, civilized, survivors) to be those of the colonizers and those of Leavers (defeated, vanquished, “uncivilized”, primitive people) with those of the colonized. We do not assume that the colonized are always the Leavers.

But we assume that the colonizers did enact the story of the Takers and the decolonizers could be inspired not by the Takers' story but by the Leavers'.

15. *Ishmael*, 60.
16. Daniel Quinn, *The Story of B: An Adventure in Mind and Spirit*, Bantam books, New York, 1997, 279-280. See also *Ishmael*, 61.
17. *Ishmael*, 73. Note the similarity with the conquering of the outer space mentioned in the introduction.
18. *Ishmael*, 75.
19. Cf. *Ishmael*, 126-127. These rules are adapted from the life style of the Takers' as given by Quinn.
20. In *My Ishmael* (Bantam books, 1997) Daniel Quinn observes that our modern society (or for that matter, the society of the colonizers) is the only society which keep food under lock. This control of food enables the society to maintain itself. In other societies where food is not kept locked up but freely available (like for animals and birds) people cannot be forced to live this one way of the colonizers. See *My Ishmael*, 50-57.
21. There is a fourth law mentioned by Quinn as characteristic of the Taker civilisation, that is, storing food for the future. He remarks that the lion does not kill a second gazelle to save for tomorrow, but the Takers do.
22. Cf. *Ishmael*, 134.
23. *Ishmael*, 71.
24. We assume that the story of the "Leavers" as told in *Ishmael* will foot the bill here. We assume that the Leavers' paradigm could be equated to that of the decolonizers. Further, it may be noted that when India exploded the nuclear bombs it was playing according to the rules of the game set up by the industrialised, nuclear powers. By this explosion India became part of the nuclear club following the rules of their game. Defeat and success in a game (or war) belong to the set norms of the game and defeat does not enable you to exit from the game. Due to lack of space we do not elaborate that this story of the Takers (or colonizers) is a self defeating story leading to the utter destruction not only of their own culture but also of the whole living planet. More could be found in *Ishmael*, chapter 6, where the colonizers' civilization is compared to a flying contraption made out of only pedals and falling from a high cliff. While it falls the occupant thinks that he or she is flying without imaging the impending doom.
25. Further it may be noted that the story of the colonizers had its origin about 10,000 years ago when one group of people took up agriculture in the Fertile Crescent. This story cannot have a future since it has inevitably led to the utter destruction not only of its own culture but also of the entire living world. Therefore the only way to get out of the story of the colonizers is to live a radically different story.

We cannot modify the story of the colonizers and make it a decolonizers' story. That would be like adding new vocabulary to make a new language. Such a counter-story would be absorbed by the story of the colonizers in due time.

The new story of decolonization is like speaking a totally different language with radically different linguistic and grammatical rules. This is a new way of looking at the world, a new way of living in the world, a different way of being. The encouraging aspect of this is that such a story (or more properly, stories) is about three million years old, the stories which are as old as human being, the stories which make human life on earth sustainable, viable and humanizing.

26. It may be noted that some of the features of Indian Independence could be seen as forming part of such a different story. The way Gandhiji got independence for India

does not fully fit in with the Colonizers' story as perfected by the British. Facing bullets with bare hands or using non-violence to fight the mighty English does speak of another story by which Gandhiji lived.

27. This could be compared to the role of Dasein in the two phases of Martin Heidegger.
28. Daniel Quinn, *Providence: The Story of a Fifty-Year Vision Quest*, Bantam Books, New York, 1996, 149. It may be noted that the "gods" of Ishmael is being replaced here by God from a Christian perspective.
29. *The Story of B*, 252-253.
30. *My Ishmael*, 85.
31. *My Ishmael*, 87ff. Here the general law could be "give as good as you get" and "Don't be too predictable". An elaborate discussion is found in *My Ishmael*, 87-111.
32. *My Ishmael*, 110. By 'erratic retaliation' is meant retaliation to an event but in unexpected ways and at unforeseen times. The retaliation can not be fully predicted by the enemy. This keeps the surprise in retaliation making the attacker not fully sure of the mode of response. So it is implied that the method of competition, as long as it does not become a cut-throat one, is tolerated or even needed in every community of life.
33. *My Ishmael*, 106.
34. This is the claim made by D. Quinn. According to him the Leaver story is being enacted from the very beginning of human appearance. We assume this to be true and assert that such a Leavers' story could lead to a decolonizing story.
35. *Ishmael*, 246.
36. This is an assumption we make. We think we are right to assume that colonization with its ugly face is of very recent origin.
37. *Ishmael*, 167. Here we are again assuming that the colonized were not acting out the Takers' story, but the Leavers' story. Even if it is not historically right our assumption it is that only a Leavers' story could serve as a paradigm for a decolonizing story. The Takers' story leading to colonization can never serve as the paradigm for the Leavers' story.
38. *Ishmael*, 242f.
39. There is not much space to elaborate this point here. It must be affirmed that the marvellous technological advance of our society has to do with its story, but it is possible to have a still more technologically advanced and morally humane society which is enacting a different story.