

Network of Theology and Religious Studies

Network Newsletter 10

October 2005

**Institut Luthérien de Théologie, Cameroun
Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary, Ethiopia
Lutheran Graduate School of Theology, Madagascar School of
Mission and Theology, Norway
Lutheran Theological Institute, South Africa
Makumira University College, Tumaini University, Tanzania
Dept. of Religious Studies, Makerere University, Uganda**

We will strengthen the network collaboration

In the last week of November, representatives from all seven network institutions will come together at Makerere University in Uganda. The meeting will have two foci:

- A network conference (Thursday 24 to Saturday 26 November): This is a scholarly conference, where new knowledge will be developed and disseminated.
- A network consultation (Monday 28 November): This is a consultation on the infrastructure of our collaboration, where we will seek to find better ways of interacting.

The purpose of the meetings in Kampala is a strengthening of the network. By standing together and by sharing resources we will grow, both as a network and as institutions.

Knut Holter

Network conference

“Interpreting Classical Religious Texts in Contemporary Africa” – is the topic for our conference at Makerere University, from Thursday 24 to Saturday 26 of November. Representatives from all seven network institutions will come together; one, two or three from most of the institutions, and for obvious reasons a higher number from the host institution. In addition, we have also invited a few other scholars, from Kenya (University of Nairobi) and from South Africa (University of South Africa).

A survey of the papers is given below, and as anyone can see, this will be a conference with a number of interesting contributions. Our researchers are not hiding in ivory towers, they have their feet firmly planted on the ground, with one foot in the life experiences of fellow human beings and one foot in the critical tradition of academia.

Many others would obviously have wanted to participate in the conference and listen to the papers. The former cannot be done, for economic reasons, but the latter will hopefully be achieved, as we plan to publish the papers in a conference volume. As such the insights and experiences expressed at the conference will be heard far outside Kampala.

THURSDAY 24TH NOVEMBER 2005

What is a ‘classical religious text’ and what is ‘contemporary Africa?’. By Professor Jesse Mugambi (Kenya).

Religious texts in critical contexts: The interpretation of classical religious texts in contemporary African academia. By Professor Knut Holter (Norway).

Interpreting strange texts: Hermeneutics as distance overcoming. By Professor Bard Maeland (Norway).

African Hermeneutics in a global context: Reading religious texts in contemporary Africa. By Dr Deusdedit Nkurunziza (Uganda).

Reading African Traditional Religion in contemporary Africa, (ATR as an event): an epistemological approach. By Professor A.B.T Byaruhanga Akiiki (Uganda).

Reading religious texts at Makerere University. By Professor S. Kabazzi-Kisirinya (Uganda).

Reading Anglican Provincial Synodal texts. By Dr Medard Rugyendo (Uganda).

The Kairos Document. By Dr Musawenkosi Biyela (South Africa).

FRIDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2005

Reading Catholic religious legal texts in contemporary Africa. By Dr Gerard Banura (Uganda).

Reading liturgical texts (prayers and hymns: a philological and semantic approach). By Dr Muranga (Uganda).

Reading Orthodox texts in contemporary Africa. By Dr Matovu (Uganda).

Reading the Bible in Ethiopia. By Rev. Abidsa Etana (Ethiopia).

Reading Islamic classical texts in contemporary Africa. By Dr Abbas Kiyimba (Uganda).

Reading Hindu religious texts in contemporary Africa. By Dr Chandrakant Bhatt (Uganda).

The life giving spirit vis-à-vis the Malagasy belief in ancestors. By Professor Mariette Razivelo (Madagascar).

‘It is on the old mat that one weaves the Next one’: The dialogue between African proverbs and Bible texts. By Professor Willie Van Heerden (South Africa).

[Paper title not given yet]. By Dr Sylvester B. Kahakwa (Tanzania).

SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2005.

‘The Poor are not us’: An exploration into Old Testament proverbs and African proverbs on poverty. By Rev Peter Kimilike (Tanzania).

Moses and his Cushite wife: Reading Numbers 12:1 with the undergraduate students of Makerere University. By Fr Philip Lokel (Uganda).

The Old Testament outside the realm of the church: A case study for Madagascar. By Rev George Razafindrakota (Madagascar).

The Lemba, the people of the book in Southern Africa: Using Africa to interpret the Old Testament. By Dr Magdel LeRoux (South Africa).

Religion and women in the H.I.V/Aids African context: An African women’s analysis. By Professor Masenya Madipoane (South Africa).

Paul's collection to the Jerusalem church: An African interpretation. By Rev Baba Tonga (Cameroon).

An African interpretation of biblical 'shalom'. By Ms Helen Nambalirwa (Uganda).

Network consultation

On Monday 28 of November, we will have a network consultation, where the experiences so far with the network, and the wishes for the future, will be voiced and discussed. The agenda for the consultation is as follows:

1. Introduction

2. Research collaboration within the network

- Experiences so far: mainly the 'Africanization of biblical studies' project
- Wishes for the future: twofold: partly to have one or two current large scale projects, and partly also some small scale projects, where two or three researchers in two or three institutions do something together

3. Exchange programs within the network

- Experiences so far: some exchange programs north>south and south>north are operative
- Wishes for the future: more programs, and especially programmes for south>south exchange

4. Infrastructure development: collaboration within the network

- Experiences so far: much to do, little has been done, except the textbook project
- Wishes for the future: a library project, enabling southern institutions to participate in the library resources of northern institutions

5. Organisational structure of the network

- Experiences so far: a need for stronger prioritising of network collaboration
- Wishes for the future: each institution must have a network coordinator

There will also be an election of a new network coordinator, this time from one of the southern institutions. And on that background will I – Knut Holter, who has served as network coordinator the first five years – say thanks to all those who have participated in the network development till now.

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