

**NETWORK OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**NETWORK NEWSLETTER 12**

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**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  
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA**

**MAKUMIRA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
TUMAINI UNIVERSITY, TANZANIA**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, UGANDA**

## **A REALISED VISION OF SHARING IN RESEARCH COOPERATION**

We have a great joy and anticipation to announce the successful conclusion of our network project ‘Africanisation of Biblical Studies’ (2002-2006). The graduation of our three doctoral students on October 4, 2006 at UNISA in Pretoria, is a wonderful accomplishment and a testimony to the value and service provided by the research collaboration.

We are filled with expectations that this milestone on our research collaboration activities will practically continue to make an excellent scholarly work in our network institutions and beyond. But also it has given us yet another means of how to freshly look at key issues of relevancy to Africa as the new application to NUFU indicates.

Sincere congratulations to the doctoral researchers, their promoters and coordinators for the four years of sacrifice and hard work. It took them special dedication and perseverance to get through such a groundbreaking and demanding course of study that has earned a high credit to the network.

Sincere appreciation to the funding agencies, especially, NUFU – Norwegian Council of Universities’ Committee for Development Research and Education, the Norwegian Missionary Society and the School of Mission and Theology. Their valuable financial contribution facilitated the realisation of the project goals through professional, spiritual and personal interaction.

The accomplishment of the Africanisation of Biblical Studies Project is a challenging example set before all of our network institutions. We should aim at nothing less than excellence in our collaboration efforts. It is possible if each one of us plays his or her part with competence and commitment: “Where there is a will there is a way”.

Kimilike, Lechion Peter

## **PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS 2006**

### **The Africanisation of Biblical Studies Project**

This unique, exciting and important project has been successfully completed. Its achievements have exceeded the plans and expectations. In brief the project has trained three African researchers – Philip Lokel (Uganda), Lechion Peter Kimilike (Tanzania) and Goerge Razafindrakoto (Madagascar) – for senior positions in three Eastern African research institutions. This enables Makerere University (Uganda), Makumira University College of Tumaini University (Tanzania) and the Lutheran Graduate School of Theology (Madagascar) to fill in the lacking competence in the field of biblical studies. All three candidates have now been offered positions in the mentioned institutions.

Also the project is in the final stages of publishing two parallel editions: thirteen articles, by doctoral graduates and by the promoters Prof Willie van Heerden, Prof Madipoane J. Masenya, Prof Magdel leRoux and Prof Knut Holter. One is a special issue of the South African peer-reviewed journal *Old Testament Essays* in August 2006. This is aimed for the Western and South African scholarly audiences. For the general African scholarly audience a much cheaper volume for the same articles will be published separately by Acton Publishers in Nairobi (Kenya). In addition about ten articles based on the project are in the process of being published in various journals, of which four articles in a Festschrift to John Mbiti.

### **The Interpretation of Classical Religious Texts Project**

The Africanisation of Biblical Studies Project was at the core of the international conference ‘Interpreting classical religious texts in contemporary Africa’ at Makerere University in Kampala in November 2005. The goal of the conference was to relate the hermeneutics of the Africanisation project to a wider context (other texts, other religions) and provide a thematic link to the next intended research collaboration project. Two parallel editions of the papers are planned to be published, one in New York and another in Nairobi, to cater for the audiences as described earlier will be published to elaborate the thematic link: ‘the potential of religion in contemporary Africa to contribute to development and life improvement’.

## **The Africanisation of Pastoral Care Project**

The first international seminar of 'Africanisation of Pastoral Care Project' between 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> March 2006 at Makumira University College of Tumaini University (Tanzania) brought together eight researchers to be involved in the APC project under the Network of Theology and Religious Studies research collaboration programmes.

- The formal group comprised of Dr Oyvind Eide (School of Mission and Theology, Norway), Dr Leif Gunnar Engedal (Lutheran School of Theology, Norway), Rev Emeline Ndossi (Makumira University College, Tanzania), Rev Peter L Kimilike (Makumira University College, Tanzania), Rev G Olotu (Northern Diocese, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania), Rev Sabina Kihyo Lumwe (North-Eastern Diocese, Tanzania), Rev Edwin Ndundulu (Southern Diocese, Tanzania) and Rev Flora Mpayo (Moravian Church SWT Province, Tanzania).
- Rev Endrias Essay Tihit from Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary, Ethiopia, attended as an observer.
- The seminar formulated a method to be used to analyse cases and design guides for the intended objective of the project. The project aims to build on African strengths, achievements and vision to advance the contextualisation of pastoral care. Also the seminar tested the potentiality of the method by using some preliminary cases. And finally oriented the researchers in research methodology so that they can undertake assigned activities.
- Publications for Africanisation of Pastoral Series will be started with Makumira Publications. The booklets will be about 60 pages each. The contents will target parish pastors and evangelists. The introduction on each booklet will try to lift the African culture and the voiceless in the dominant narrative. The quality of the content will observe the critical contextualisation methodology.
- The second seminar of the 'Africanisation of Pastoral Care' for the eight researchers will be held at Makumira University College on 13<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November 2006. It will deal with two themes: (1) Domestic Violence Against Women in the Families, and (2) Contemporary Critical Issues in Youth Ministry.

## **NEW APPLICATION TO NUFU**

By June 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 an application entitled *Reintegration of Female Ex-Child Soldiers in Eastern Africa: Religious, Ethical and Practical Perspectives*, was submitted to the next funding period (2007-2011) of the Norwegian Council of Universities' Committee for Development Research and Education.

### **Project synopsis**

The reintegration of thousands and thousands of child ex-soldiers into the society of northern Uganda – as well as other Eastern African contexts – represents tremendous moral and practical challenges, not least with regard to the reintegration of female child ex-soldiers, whose background and experience prove particularly difficult for society to handle. The project responds to these challenges by developing knowledge of how religious communities can develop new methods for reintegration of female ex-child soldiers by drawing upon religious traditions as a strategic means of transition out of violent conflicts.

### **The research will provide new knowledge about**

- the background of the phenomenon of female child soldiers, with particular reference to how religion is used for legitimizing purposes,
- the potential of religious communities to provide religious rituals and narratives as means for reintegration of female ex-child soldiers, and
- the reintegration of female ex-child soldiers as ethical and moral challenges to religious communities.

### **The project includes the following researchers**

- Research team at Makerere University: Prof Serapio Kabazzi Kisirinya (Southern Coordinator), Dr Lubowa Hassan Tugume, Dr Robert Bakeine
- Research team at the School of Mission and Theology: Prof Baard Maeland (Northern Coordinator), Assoc Prof Thor Strandenaes, Prof Knut Holter
- Three Ph.D. students from Makumira University College – Tumaini University (Tanzania) and Makerere University (Uganda).
- Two Master's students from Congo: Universite Evangelique en Afrique

- Four more Master's students with other funding: One from Makerere and one from Makumira on the quota program, and two from Norway on regular Norwegian student funding.

The project is organized according to a four years sandwich model for the Ph.D. students, with four months per year in Stavanger and eight months at Makerere/Makumira. The Master's students will follow normal Master's programs in Stavanger, but with a special focus on the reintegration question.

As in our recently concluded project such an application faces a very hard competition. There are probably many more similar applications from Norwegian and African universities and institutions and perhaps there is also a less budget for sponsoring. We pray that our project will go through.

## **NETWORK NEWS**

### **From Tanzania: Makumira University College of Tumaini University**

Rev Lechion Peter Kimilike, the General Coordinator of the Network of Theology and Religious Studies, Tumaini University of Makumira University College, Tanzania, together with the family and their colleagues at Makumira University College cordially extend their gratitude to the Network institutions and individual persons for the condolences sent them on the passing away of Lessy (Kimilike's wife) by a car road accident on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2006 at Makumira.

### **From Norway: School of Mission and Theology**

Now in August 2006, the School of Mission and Theology opens up a new Bachelor program in Bible Translation. The linguistic part of the program is operated in collaboration with Canada Institute of Linguistics, Trinity Western University, Canada.

There are some changes in the academic staff in the School of Mission and Theology. In the Department of Historical and Systematic Theology, Professor Jan-Martin Berentsen (Science of Mission) has retired, and his position is still vacant. And in the Department of Practical Theology, Dr Øyvind M. Eide has been promoted to Professor, and Dr Hans

Austnaberg has been appointed Associate Professor. Both have previously served in other institutions within the Network of Theology and Religious Studies; Dr Eide in the Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary (Ethiopia) and Dr Austnaberg in the Lutheran Graduate School of Theology (Madagascar).

## **BOTSA ELECTRONIC FORUM**

*Bulletin for Old Testament Studies in Africa* (BOTSA) has for a decade been published by Professor Knut Holter in the School of Mission and Theology, Norway. In the latest issue, number 20 (May 2006), it is announced that as from June 2006 BOTSA is being converted into a web publication: [http://www.mhs.no/article\\_533.shtml](http://www.mhs.no/article_533.shtml) under the new name *BOTSA Electronic Forum*. Those who want to be informed – through an email message – when new material is available in BOTSA-EF, are asked to send an e-mail to the editor, requesting to be on BOTSA-EF's mailing list: [knut.holter@mhs.no](mailto:knut.holter@mhs.no).

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Network Co-ordinator / Editor of the *Network Newsletter*: Dr Peter Lechion Kimilike, Makumira University College, P.O. Box 55, Usa River, Tanzania. Phone: +255 755 573 911. E-mail: [kipeter@hotmail.com](mailto:kipeter@hotmail.com)