

Role and Relevance of Theology for the Future of African Christianity (155A)

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(155A) ROLE AND RELEVANCE OF THEOLOGY FOR THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

James Kombo

Background to Study

The Pew Research Center has just released the first-ever formal demographic projections using data on age, fertility, mortality, migration and religious switching for multiple religious groups around the world. Both the data and the results released totally change the texture of theology as we face the 2050 mark. Although the Pew Research Center makes seven conclusions, four are particularly significant for this present study:

1. **Islam is the fastest-growing major religion. The determinants for this trend are the highest fertility rate and the youngest population.** On account of this, the Muslim population is expected to increase from 1.6 billion people (23% of the world's population as of 2010) to 2.76 billion people (30% of all people in 2050). By 2050, Muslims will nearly equal Christians, and the two are expected to be roughly equal in numbers by 2070.
2. The world's Christian population is expected to remain steady (at about 31%), but the regional distribution of Christians is forecast to change significantly. **Nearly four in ten Christians (38%) are projected to live in sub-Saharan Africa in 2050**, this being an increase from the 24% who lived there in 2010. Note also that the number of the world's Christians living in Europe has fallen from 66% in 1910 to 26% in 2010. The indications are that there will be a further decline to about 16% in 2050.
3. The number of religiously unaffiliated people is increasing in the United States and Europe, and the growth is projected to continue. Conversely however, the overall percentage of the **unaffiliated is expected to decrease between 2010 and 2050 (from 16% to 13%)**. This overall drop is attributed to the relatively old age and low fertility rates of large populations of religious 'nones' (those religiously unaffiliated) in China and Japan.
4. **Christians will decline from more than three-quarters of the population in 2010 in the USA to two-thirds in 2050.** The determinants of this are relative rise in religious 'nones', Muslims, Hindus and others.¹

Previously, scholars of African Christianity have observed that the African Church has in the last few years been growing exponentially at a time when the church in the northern continents is visibly shrinking.²

¹ Pew Research Center, *The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050*, 2 April 2015. www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/#projected-growth-map downloaded on 3 April, 2015.

² Scholarship on World/Global Christianity is generally agreed on this trend. Some of the kingpins of this persuasion include Philip Jenkins (*The Next Christendom: The Rise of Global Christianity*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), Lamin Sanneh (*Whose Religion is Christianity?: The Gospel Beyond the West*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World* (co-edited with Joel A. Carpenter). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1989) Andrew Walls (*The Missionary Movement in Christian History*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996; *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002), Kwame Bediako (*Jesus and the Gospel in Africa: History and Experience*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004; *Theology and Identity: The Impact of Culture upon Christian Thought*

Further predictions have indicated that ‘Africa has become, or is becoming, a Christian continent in cultural as well as numerical terms, while on the small scale the West has become, or is rapidly becoming, a post-Christian society’.³ Philip Jenkins repeats the same sentiment although with a different accent as follows: ‘All too often, statements about what “modern Christians accept” or what “Catholics today believe” refer only to what that ever-shrinking remnant of western Christians and Catholics believe. Such assertions are outrageous today, and as time goes by they will become ever further removed from reality.’⁴

It is now on record that the total sub-Saharan African population will grow at a faster pace than in any other region in the next forty years, and that this population is expected double from 823 million in 2010 to 1.9 billion in 2050. This population growth will catapult both Christianity and Islam to the point that both faiths will have doubled their adherents in 2050. Christianity will continue to be sub-Saharan Africa’s largest religious group, thanks to fertility, age structure, religious switching, as well as migration, growing from 517 million in 2010 to more than 1.1 billion in 2050, but there follow three important considerations: 1) The Muslim population will in this period grow faster than the Christian population (170% vs. 115%), rising from 248 million to 670 million; 2) the African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated will in the intervening period, rather than diminishing, record modest growth; and 3) **nearly four in ten Christians (38%) are projected to live in sub-Saharan Africa in 2050**, this being an increase from the 24% who lived there in 2010, thus confirming Africa as the undisputed centre of gravity for the Christian faith.

Theology Responding to African Christianity

With these demographics, one expects to see a fairly robust and agenda-setting theology in response both to the data and the identity of Christianity. Perhaps we could borrow from the experience of Christianity in its formative years in the second and third centuries. At that time, three things dominated the early church’s theological agenda: i) there was remarkable focus on articulation, teaching and promulgation of orthodoxy and standards of faith; ii) then there was greater emphasis on the institution of church leadership with particular emphasis on definition of the office of bishop as the primary protector and defender of the faith; and then iii) there was heightened focus on the necessity of centres for academic theology. Theology for Africa, in my opinion, should present the burgeoning African Christianity with these dynamics for its own Christianization in the next four decades.

*Theology for Africa must seek to inspire greater appreciation
for doctrinal grounding, catechesis and worship*

Note that sub-Saharan Christianity is largely touted as ‘a thousand miles wide and one inch deep’,⁵ and now an even more complex situation arises: the reality of the ever-increasing Muslim population in the same region, on the one hand, and the rise in the population of adherents of African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated, on the other. In this situation, one sees the major theological task of the

in the Second Century and in Modern Africa (Oxford, Oxford UK: Regnum, 1999 [1992]) and David Barrett (*World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World Volume I: The World by Countries: Religionists, Churches, Ministries*).

³ Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 2003: 36.

⁴ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom. The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002:3.

⁵ Those who think this way have not merely focused on the negative energies of the African Christianity. Generally the observation is that this is a blossoming Christianity that is weak in doctrinal grounding and devoid of discipleship. Some of the negative trends which have become part of African Christianity include the “Man of God” syndrome, “Cash for Christ” phenomenon, bossy and bully leadership, and to some degree, a *crossless Christianity* that preaches a *crossless Christ*.

church as formulating and teaching Christian doctrine in a manner which offers opportunity for deep, reflective, consistent and relevant interaction with both the African as currently presented, on the one hand, and in a manner that is consistent with the roots of Christianity in the early church, on the other. In this task, one sees focus on orthodoxy as a priority – recognition of false ideas, controversies, and internal inconsistencies. The need for strong pillars of orthodoxy is important primarily because of malignant controversies and internal inconsistencies within the African Church; and then in a secondary sense the need to challenge Africa's present reality which manifests increasing interest in Islam as well growing numbers among the African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated. This follows a lesson from the first Egyptian churches: although these churches successfully spread the good news in the Coptic language and planted robust churches throughout the interior of Egypt, the church in the region was tremendously weakened and reached near collapse, not on account of the onslaught of Islam or the growing interest in folk religions but by the emergence of false teachings and crippling internal theological controversies right from within itself.

One direction of holding this conversation is pinning it on the practical axis of advocacy for *catechesis*, on the one hand, and reconsideration for winning anew the largely ignored historical *creeds* of the church on the other. This strategy creates a culture and an environment in which the church is doing its catechesis around essential theological ideas and therefore becoming theologically astute while it at same time points the sub-Saharan African Church to its roots among the church fathers in the early church. In other words, the strategy is a demand on the church's commitment to methodological instructions in sound teaching that addresses both the historical and contemporary scandals of the church and society.

Note that *catechesis* and the *creeds* can very easily and inadvertently be an afterthought, particularly among African Pentecostals and charismatics, and even a blind spot, if the agenda is not raised high in the African Christian consciousness. However, at this time in the history of African Christianity, we must embrace the place of *catechesis* and win anew the early church's *creeds* as theological strategies for establishing the identity of the sub-Saharan African Church, and linking it with the early church, deepening the Christian faith among the converts, stimulating the mind with Christian content and satisfying the heart with the meat that is the gospel. The essence of this is knowing God and, as John Calvin wrote, 'To know God is to be changed by God; true knowledge of God leads to worship.'

If the *catechesis* and the *creeds* are about knowing God, and therefore about his worship, then one would as well conclude that by theology focusing the African Church along the paths of *catechesis* and the *creeds*, it is in fact stating the future of the African Church as essentially worship. The best example of what happens when proper worship is pushed to the periphery is well captured in Kuzimierz Bem's article 'Christianity Cannot Survive the Decline in Worship':

Around the year 1510, a delegation of Christians from Sudan, which had been recently overrun by Muslim conquest, went to the Christian Ethiopian court and begged the emperor to send them bishops and priests. The Christians remaining in Sudan needed clergy to lead worship, administer the sacraments, and teach the people. But the emperor refused, sending them away empty-handed. With no Christian worship, within 100 years Christianity in Sudan became extinct and forgotten until the twentieth century.⁶

Theology for Africa then must guide the African Church towards a balance between *logos* and *praxis*, doctrine and devotion, word and spirit. There must not be a *theologia dogmatica* within the African context that is separated from *theologia vitae spiritualis*. Theology in this context must then indicate that the interest is not merely assenting to *creeds* and opening up to the possibility for *catechesis*, but more importantly, an engagement with the word that leads to experience with the infinite – a personal encounter

⁶ Kuzimierz Bem, 'Christianity Cannot Survive the Decline in Worship', www.faithstreet.com/onfaith/2015/01/23/christianity-cannot-survive-the-decline-in-worship/35932. Downloaded on 2 May, 2015.

with God's word and a zeal for the glory of God. This engagement must be 'robust, faithful, engaging' but at the same time its focus 'must be the God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, God's free, abundant, deep grace and love shown for us on the cross.'⁷

*Theology for Africa should prioritize the formation of leadership for itself,
the wider African society and the African migrant communities of the diaspora*

Leadership of the church injects completely new dynamics – nobody has prepared African church leaders for the dynamics raised by the findings of the Pew Research Center. Indeed, since Ali Mazrui's idea of Africa's triple heritage, there has not been a real follow-up on the status and actual proportions of the population of Africa's faiths (Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religions) going forward. How is the African Church to respond to the need for reliable leaders for contemporary Africa, let alone forming dependable church leaders that will match the reality of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa church? It appears that the African Church has yet to respond to this question. As a matter of fact, the African Church is still unaware of these trends and is promoting a leadership that is a replica of what is available in the larger African society in which 'the high ideals of democracy, of an independent judiciary and economic growth gave way to autocratic rule, either in one party states or military dictatorships, where repression, injustice, human rights abuses, mal-administration, misappropriation of public funds and other resources, as well as corruption became the order of the day'.⁸ Kretzschmar and Heifitz particularly speaking both to the African Church and the society write:

Among the growing calls for the 21st century to be the African century, all Africans, including African Christians, need to pay serious attention to one of the vital components that will effect genuine transformation, namely, that of authentic leadership. Given the situation in Africa today, plagued as many countries are with leadership problems in government, business, churches, and civil society as a whole, there can be little doubt in our minds of the vital importance of the issue of leadership for our continent.⁹

There is every justification therefore for theology to focus for the start on leadership – a leadership that is 'expected to live by example, be socially and environmentally responsible, be ethical and moral, have a certain degree of humbleness, aim to serve and inspire others, promote leadership based on respect and love, not fear'.¹⁰ Theology for Africa takes this position because we are well instructed by Linthicum that: 'Without leadership development, everything you have done will pass away. But with it, the future is constantly being created anew for the people of your community.'¹¹ The reality of African Christianity is that it desperately needs a critical manpower who will not only be capable of creating the future for the African Church and society, but a leadership that will steer the church in a generation where the demographics of religion will increasingly be driven by fertility, age structure, religious switching and migration.

⁷ Kuzimierz Bem, 'Christianity Cannot Survive the Decline in Worship.'

⁸ PGJ Meiring, "Leadership for reconciliation: A Truth and Reconciliation Commission perspective." Downloaded on 16 Feb, 2015 in www.ve.org.za/index.php/VE/article/viewFile/1235/1677.

⁹ Kretzschmar, L 2002: "Authentic Christian leadership and spiritual formation in Africa", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 113 (July 2002): 41ff. See also Heifitz, R A 1999. *Leadership without easy answers*. London: Harvard University Press, 51ff.

¹⁰ Mwambazambi, K. & Banza, A.K., 2014, 'Developing transformational leadership for sub-Saharan Africa: Essential missiological considerations for church workers', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 35(1), Art. #849, 9 pages. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ve.v35i1.849>, 6.

¹¹ Linthicum, R.C., 1991, *Empowering the poor: Community organizing among the city's 'Rag, tag and bobtail*, Marc, Monrovia, 93.

PACLA II,¹² a follow-up to PACLA I and convened in Nairobi, agonized with the idea of church leadership and networking with specific interest on the theme ‘Developing Godly Leaders for Africa’. The question raised by PACLA II was how Africa in its multifaceted crises was to focus on the task of building networks and developing godly leaders capable of dealing with its questions in every sphere of life. Among the issues identified and raised at PACLA II for in-depth consideration were leadership emergence, selection, development and succession. Note that this agenda has not included the present reality of sub-Saharan Africa in relation to Islam, the African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated. At the theological and ministerial formation level, I do not see significant activity towards the achievement of the PACLA II ideals. Consequently, the PACLA II agenda risks stagnation; meanwhile, significant time will be lost as theology struggles to grapple with the implications of the Pew Research Center’s conclusions for the leadership of the church in sub-Saharan Africa.

What PACLA II envisioned for the church appears to have been the concern of Irenaeus. He, however, held the conversation within the confines of what he saw as the job description of the Bishop – leader *par excellence*. For him, the bishop represented a leadership that ably addressed the orthodoxy-heresy onslaught. The holder of this office did not only exhibit the much-needed traits of transformational leadership¹³ in respect to defining orthodoxy that resonated both with the church’s own life and experience as well as with its future, but he also modelled Spirit-led worship, administered the sacraments, and taught his congregations.¹⁴ The clearest articulation of Irenaeus’ idea of a church leader is captured in his *Adversus Haereses* 3.3.3:

When the blessed apostles had founded and built up the Church, they handed over the ministry of the episcopate to Linus. Paul mentions this Linus in his Epistle to Timothy. Ancletus succeeded him. After him Clement received the lot of the episcopate in the third place from the apostles. He had seen the apostles and associated with them, and still had their preaching sounding in his ears and their tradition before his eyes – and not he alone, for there were many still left in his time who had been taught by the apostles. In this Clement’s time no small discord arose among the brethren in Corinth, and the Church in Rome sent a very powerful letter to the Corinthians, leading them to peace, renewing their faith and declaring the tradition which they had recently received from the apostles... To this Clement there succeeded Evaristus. Alexander followed Evaristus; then, sixth from the apostles, Sixtus was appointed; after him, Telephorus, who was gloriously martyred; then Hyginus; after him, Pius; then after him, Anicetus. Soter having succeeded Anicetus, Eleutherius does now, in the twelfth place from the apostles, hold the inheritance of the episcopate. In this order, and by this succession, the ecclesiastical tradition from the apostles, and the preaching of the truth, have come down to us. And this is

¹² To understand Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly (PACLA), one has to go back to the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization held in Lausanne, Switzerland. At the meeting, 45 Christian leaders from Africa broke into a group that discussed the possibility of a Pan African meeting of church leaders to discuss the challenges of the burgeoning Christian community on the continent. This group nominated Bishop Festo Kivengere of Uganda and Michael Cassidy of Africa Evangelistic Enterprise to explore what could be done. In February 1975, the Kenyan leaders put together an informal meeting to begin thinking through the concept. This *ad hoc* committee chaired by Osei-Mensah invited representatives from the rest of Africa to larger meeting in Nairobi. After about a year of planning, PACLA I was held in Nairobi Kenya, December 9-19, 1976. For an in-depth analysis of PACLA, refer to www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/172.htm.

¹³ Mwambazambi, K. & Banza, A.K., 2014, 2-5.

¹⁴ Mwambazambi and Banza argue that “spirituality is an important aspect of leadership which also determines whether someone’s leadership is good or bad.” Spirituality in this case as explained by Mihai (2009:1) “is more about how people identify themselves, how they view the world, interact with others, and make decisions.” (Mihai, J., 2009, ‘Spirituality and leadership: Would an organization benefit from spiritual leaders?’, Spirituality in Higher Education Newsletter 1(4), 1–2).

most abundant proof that there is one and the same vivifying faith, which has been preserved in the Church from the apostles until now, and handed down in truth.¹⁵

The new leadership of the African Church, like the succession of bishops in Irenaeus' mind, must direct itself and its audience towards a new and a different identity away from borrowed convictions, rootless beliefs and mere religiosity well informed by current demographics. Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, once said: 'Men, give them something to believe.' This is the yearning of the African Church – it is looking for something to believe, a different thing, the truth that it has ownership in. The worshippers are waiting for guidance, they must be pointed away from mere pietistic and charismatic forms of Christianity which neglects wisdom, discernment and holiness and knows far less about the Bible and the faith than one would hope. Theology therefore must show direction in forming leadership that will guide the African Church and its diaspora down this already beaten path.

Spaces for theological and ministerial formation have decreased significantly in recent decades

One would have expected that with the understood phenomenal growth of Christianity in Africa within the last few decades, there would be a corresponding expansion of theological and ministerial formation and specialization in areas of theological interest. At least, this is the pattern we see in the patristic period of the early church. During this period, the church responded to the needs of the church by opening up Alexandria which specialized in Greek philosophy and produced Clement, Origen, Didymus; then there was Antioch which emphasized the moral example and humanity of Christ as well as interpretation of Scripture in the light of the historical context, and producing such theologians as Diodore of Tarsus, John Chrysostom, the Cappadocian Fathers, and then the Western North Africa which in fact was the centre for Latin theology, and was more practical than their philosophically-minded Greek counterparts. Some of the well-known products of this school include Cyprian, Tertullian and Augustine.

This, however, is not the case here. The past two decades, 1990s and 2000s, were phenomenal for the rise of Christian university in the majority of Africa. During this period, practically all the renowned degree-granting theological colleges and seminaries in East Africa, for instance, transformed themselves into private Christian universities. The table below shows ten institutions in this category:

Theological College/Seminary	University and year of change of status
1. Scott Theological College	Scott Christian University (1997)
2. Pan Africa Christian College	Pan Africa Christian University (2008)
3. Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology	Africa International University (2010)
4. Nairobi International School of Theology	Africa Leadership University (2010)
5. Kenya Highlands Bible College	Kenya Highlands Evangelical University (2011)
6. Bishop Tucker Theological College	Uganda Christian University (1997)
7. Lutheran Theological College Makumira	Tumaini University (1996)
8. St Paul's Theological College	St Paul's University (2007)
9. Kaaga Rural Training Centre and Methodist Training Institute consecutively	Kenya Methodist University (2006)
10. Graduate School of Theology, under the name, Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa (CHIEA).	Catholic University of East Africa (1992)

¹⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 3, Chapter 3 Verse 3. Translated by Alexander Roberts and William Rambaut. From *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1. Edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight.

Note the following features: a) the institutions listed constitute what used to be East Africa's premier theological and ministerial schools from the 1960s-1990s then dedicated only to theological training and ministerial formation; b) all the listed institutions have since transformed into multi-faculty private Christian universities; c) the institutions continue to receive financial and material support from founding missions although the bulk of their support is locally generated from tuition fee collection; d) for all practical purposes, theology in all the new universities is no longer the institutions' flagship programme and therefore does not occupy a privileged position, other programmes have taken over; e) the phenomenon which indicates that theology is no longer a flagship programme and that it is steadily diminishing in prominence in the institutions is true for the protestant universities as it is for the Anglicans, the Catholics and the evangelicals; f) Kenya seems to be more affected than its neighbours; for instance, out of the ten institutions listed, eight are Kenyan.

The shift of domicile of theology from the theological college to the university is in my opinion a boon to the discipline. For the first time, theology in Africa can be said to have attained independence from the prying eyes of the missions abroad. Here, then, is another unnoticed but major shift: now theology has local initiatives as its major support base. The other important gain is what Dietrich Warner sees as the strategic role and accountability of theology to the society.¹⁶ With this role highlighted, theology does not only ascend to its own platform but its position attains higher levels of recognition and transparency – that theology programmes in the universities are themselves accredited by the national regulatory bodies is itself a statement of endorsement by society; and now theology is respected as a significant contributor to the national grid and as an academic discipline in its own right. This has happened because it is understood that the environment in the university encourages quality assurance, inspires research and emboldens engagement with new knowledge. But there is a warning. The presence of theology in universities means that there has to be some engagement on how or in what form theology is to exist in universities. First, there is the increasing pressure of Islam and other religions to be balanced against the missionary agenda of theology; and then there is increasing secularization of the universities as environments for ideological discourses. These questions are being raised in the context of Europe where theology has always been in the universities; we too must raise them in the context of Africa.

Five conclusions, however, can be made from this shift: 1) that the African academy is experiencing a positive change of attitude towards theology and a clear break with the past thus admission of theology into its ranks. 2) It appears that this positive disposition to theology now means that the discipline is no longer functioning in a protected environment and therefore has to compete with other disciplines on the same footing. 3) For the first time, theology is really becoming independent from mission headquarters abroad and is adjusting to the dynamics of new and local forms of support. 4) Part of this adjustment has manifested in marked recession of academic theology in comparison to its global performance in previous years. 5) With time, and as the fledging universities solidify denominations, universities are increasingly doing in-house theological training. This approach means a complete remodelling of theology: less emphasis on academic rigour and a greater interest in enabling the faithful to understand the faith more fully and to equip them more diligently for witness to their faith in Christ.

Concluding Remarks: What Does the Church Do with the New Demographics?

This paper highlights three main things it sees as the areas the church in sub-Saharan Africa must pay attention to in the next few decades: 1) Greater appreciation for orthodoxy, catechesis, and worship; 2) prioritization of leadership formation; and 3) creating spaces for theological and ministerial formation.

¹⁶ Dietrich Werner, "The future of theology in the changing landscapes of universities in Europe and beyond." www.globethics.net/web/the-future-of-theology-in-europe/mission.

Whereas this agenda is buoyed by a similar position taken by the patristic church, the recently released research conclusions by the Pew Research Center offer a particularly compelling justification. Its research indicates unprecedented growth rate of the Muslim population in sub-Saharan Africa by 2050; confirms that, in the intervening period, nearly four in ten Christians (38%) are projected to live in sub-Saharan Africa in 2050; then it reveals that African Traditional Religions are likely to experience some nominal growth in the next four decades. Although, on the whole, the African Christian situation appears optimistic, the global picture is rather pessimistic. The Pew Report indicates that ‘people are leaving Christianity in droves. About 106 million Christians are expected to switch affiliation from 2010 to 2050 while only about 40 million people are expected to enter Christianity’.¹⁷ This is the state of things for the church in sub-Saharan Africa. Theology must do something about this state of things. Perhaps in thinking through new trends, it may be important to listen to the counsel of the General Secretary of WCC, Dr Olave Fykse Tveit. For him:

Theology is an imperative for ecumenism. And ecumenism is an imperative for doing theology today. Theological reflection today requires attitudes, a culture and structures of mutual accountability of theology within the wider ecumenical context. We all need to be challenged by others. And we also need to be able to challenge others in an accountable way. Ecumenical sensitivity and competence in theology and theological education widen the horizons of denominational theology. Proper Christian theology relates to, reflects and nurtures the mission of the church to serve the one humanity and the one creation, building a culture of a just peace day by day. Denominational identity and reference do not have to be contrary to ecumenical theology and theological education, but there is no future for any denominational identity or theology without solid ecumenical accountability and global responsibility.¹⁸

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¹⁷ Pew Research Center, The Future of World Religions.

¹⁸ Olave Fykse Tveit, “The future of theology in the changing landscapes of universities in Europe and beyond”, Oslo Consultation, 6 June 2012. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/speeches/keynote-address-on-theology-and-unity-in-oslo-consultation>.

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