

Editorial

SHE is 40 years old

This is the final issue of the 40th volume of *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* (SHE). Yes, indeed, SHE has been in existence now for 40 years. On 16 August 2014 this was celebrated at the University of South Africa during a gala dinner that coincided with the Annual Conference of the Church History Society of Southern Africa (CHSSA). At this conference, which was financially supported and attended by the Dean of the College of Human Sciences, Prof Rosemary Moeketsi, the founders, editors and authors of SHE were honoured. In attendance were, *inter alia*, Prof HOFFIE Hofmeyr who has been a member of the CHSSA since the early 1970s; Prof Mandy Goedhals who joined in 1992 as one of the first woman members of the CHSSA and one of the few women authors of SHE; and Prof Paul Gundani, a previous chair of the CHSSA and at present the co-editor of SHE. From KwaZulu-Natal Dr Radikobo Ntsimane, a previous member of the executive of the CHSSA, attended, as well as Dr Stephen Joshua, who won the CHSSA Prize for the Best Doctoral Thesis in 2012. From the Cape we welcomed Dr Charles Flaendorp and Prof Mary-Ann Plaatjies van Huffel. Both of them finished their doctoral degrees under my supervision and today are prolific academic researchers and writers. Plaatjies van Huffel excelled in becoming the Moderator of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (previously known as the Dutch Reformed Mission Church); she is also Africa's representative on the World Council of Churches. Also present were the professors from the Research Institute for Theology and Religion at Unisa, where SHE has been housed the past ten years. They are Proff Cornel du Toit, Naas Swart, Sam Tshehla, Masilo Molobi and I. Finally, we were honoured by the presence of Dr Susan Veldsman from ASSAF, the Academy of Science for South Africa, which recently gave SHE a very positive write-up in their evaluation of theological journals. Short speeches of congratulations and good wishes for the future were given, and those present were each given a celebratory cup with the emblem of the flame engraved on it that has become so typical of SHE. It was indeed an evening to remember.

In 40 years SHE has grown into an accredited journal of high repute, that publishes three issues annually of 17 peer-reviewed articles each, with authors and themes coming from the whole of Africa, and beyond. It is available on Scielo, the Scientific Electronic Library Online, "South Africa's premier open-access searchable full-text" as it explains itself. In short, then, the articles published in the hard copies of SHE are also available on open-access and are highly popular amongst academic readers, being visited in high numbers.

This issue of SHE

The present issue of SHE deals mainly with the theme “The histories of Christianity and War.” This was the theme of the 2014 Annual Conference of the Church History Society of Southern Africa that was held at the University of South Africa in Pretoria from 14 to 16 August 2014. Seven of the papers read at this conference have been peer-reviewed and published. With these articles it is *ad fontes*, back to the fountains, with authors reading and interpreting primary sources that have not been subjected to academic scrutiny before. Retief Müller, Johan van der Merwe and Robert Vosloo reinterpret aspects of the Dutch Reformed Church’s views on war, and especially on racial warfare for which the Dutch Reformed Church became known. Julius Gathogo describes the causes and faces of the Mau-Mau war in Kenya and the church’s reaction to it. Allan Henriques critically analyses the papal reaction to the “Jewish question”, and Robert Matikiti draws lessons on peace and violence from the early church for Independent Zimbabwe.

This issue of SHE also gives due attention to issues of gender and how they have manifested in the history of Christianity in Africa south of the Sahara. Gender, then, is the focus of Rosinah Gabaitse and Simangaliso Kumalo’s story of Nokuthela Linderely Dube, Christina Landman’s story of the first generation German women in South Africa, Lilian Cheelo Siwila’s story of the ecological footprints of our foremothers in Africa, and Itumeleng Mothoagae’s story of Robert Moffat’s gendered God.

This issue too deals with the different faces of African Christianities and their histories. Sibusiso Masondo writes on the growth model in an African Presbyterian Church, and Thias Kgatla compares the Psalms of deliverance with African songs, while Elelwani Farisani compares an apartheid reading of the Bible to that of an African reading. Obed Kealotswe analyses the theological and social agendas of several African Independent Churches, and Williams Mbamalu looks at the challenges of theological education in the Assemblies of God in Nigeria. Dr Charles Manda, a postdoctoral fellow at the Research Institute for Theology and Religion at the University of South Africa, wrote the history of PACSA, the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action, from 1979 to 2012.

Finally, there are two essays that remind us of variations on the core business of *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*. Leepo Modise reminds us that church polity belongs in SHE with an essay that deals with a very topical issue about the legal position and challenges of a Minister of the Word who enters into an arrangement with a political party to represent them in public. This makes interesting reading, as does the article of Erastus Jonker on Gnosticism, reminding us that the history of the Early Christian Church is very much the business of SHE too.

Saying goodbye and hello

This is the last issue of SHE that will be administered by Mrs Nonnie Fouché who retires in February 2015. For ten years Mrs Fouché has diligently received the manuscripts submitted to SHE, handled the peer-review process on instruction of the editor, dealt with the language editing process, and did the layout of SHE. She also administered the subvention fees and related correspondence. She executed all these skilfully, with care and enthusiasm. She will be sorely missed.

From 2015 SHE will be published by Unisa Press. Manuscripts are still to be sent to me at landmc@unisa.ac.za.

The next submission date is 15 February 2015.

What remains is for me to wish you, on behalf of myself as editor and Prof Paul Gundani as co-editor, a blessed Christmas and a prosperous research year.

Kind regards

Prof Christina Landman

Editor SHE