



The University of South Africa's contributions to Lutheran theological training in higher education



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The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) through its Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College and Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College has been largely involved in the history of Lutheran theological training with the University of South Africa (Unisa). The ELCSA was very passionate to improve the quality of theological training and decided to further train their theological students at a university level. Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College (OLTC) leadership started negotiations with Unisa for its theological students to be trained at Unisa.

Intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary implications: This article focuses on the history of Lutheran theological education in Southern Africa. It discusses a cooperation of Lutheran theological students to be trained at Unisa, the importance of Lutheran Pre-seminary School as a foundation of theological training, a spouse theological training programme, a struggle of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (UELCSA)'s white theological students training and a call for Africanisation and decolonisation of Lutheran theological education.

Keywords: Africanisation and decolonisation; higher education; Victor Vivian Msomi; Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College; Umphumulo Teachers Training College; University of South Africa; wife theological programme.

Introduction

Towards the end of 1950s, Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College (OLTC) attempted to create a Lutheran theological education programme to be offered in cooperation with the Faculty of Theology, University of South Africa (Unisa). Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa enrolled their theological students at OLTC to become future pastors for these churches. The church name the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) is used here in a context of regional Evangelical Lutheran churches, which were established by Lutheran mission societies and are discussed in the next sentences. This is different from the later development of the regional churches, which united to establish the ELCSA on 16 December 1975 as opposed to 18 December 1975 (Mutshekwane 1976:5). Theological students from these regional Evangelical Lutheran Churches are ELCSA Zulu Xhosa Swazi Region later renamed ELCSA South Eastern Region, ELCSA Rhodesia, ELCSA Cape Orange Religion, ELCSA Zulu Church of Hermannsburg Mission, ELCSA Batswana Church later renamed ELCSA Tswana Region, and ELCSA Transvaal Region, Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church, ELCSA Transvaal Church, ELCSA Cape Church, Moravian Church Eastern Cape, Moravian Church Western Cape were required to study at OLTC and Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College (ULTC). The synods Southern Transvaal Synod of the Berlin Mission Church, Northern Transvaal Synod of the Berlin Mission Church, Orange Free State Synod of the Berlin Mission Church and Cape Synod of the Berlin Mission Church sent their missionaries and theological students to study theology at OLTC and ULTC. American Lutheran Mission, Berlin Mission Society, Finnish Mission Society, Hermannsburg Mission Society, Norwegian Mission Society and Rhenish Mission Society were members of the Council of Churches on Lutheran Foundation (CCLF) including these churches and synods (CCLF 1965:1). The mission societies, churches and synods background are mentioned here to give a context of the study with special reference to explore an effective study around these threefold higher education institutions. The article examines a historical contribution of these threefold higher education institutions, Lutheran Pre-seminary School, Africanisation and decolonisation of higher education, training of black and white Lutheran theological students and a brief recent history of the Lutheran theological education in the 21st century. A collection

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of more primary data such as reports, minutes and others and secondary data such as books and journals are critically analysed within a qualitative method.

Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College and Lutheran theological education negotiations with Unisa

Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College was initially the Oscarsberg Lutheran Evangelist School established in 1908 at Oscarsberg, Dundee, Natal by the Church of Sweden Mission (CSM). The task of the Evangelist School was to train evangelists. This Evangelist School was later converted to the Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological Seminary (OLTS) (Leisegang 1933:15; Zikode undated:20). The collective mission societies of Berlin Mission Society (BMS), CSM and Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) at their General Lutheran Conference held on 12-13 January 1910 at Dundee, Natal established the Cooperating Lutheran Missions (CLM) and appointed its Executive Committee responsible for Lutheran education programme. This establishment was to improve the quality of Lutheran education institutions for the benefit of black people in South Africa and southern Africa. Hermannsburg Mission Society (HMS) and Hanoverian Free Church Mission, which was a break away from HMS were not present in this constituency as they were not willing to be part of this Lutheran collective and development (Schlyter 1953:15-17). The first CLM Executive Committee meeting began its actual administrative work on 10-16 January 1912. In fulfilling the decisions made at this General Lutheran Conference, CLM restructured the Lutheran education programme according to the requirements of South African education government. In this very meeting, the CLM restructured the following educational institutions: OLTS was renamed OLTC and is an official institution to train African pastors. Emmaus Lutheran Seminary was earmarked to train evangelists at BMS institution and Umphumulo Teachers Training College (UTTC) trained teachers at Umphumulo, an NMS institution (Homdrom 1962:7-8,11; Zikode undated:20-21). Evangelical Lutheran Churches in southern Africa had always been passionate about the quality of education as the means to be relevant to the African people. The restructuring of Lutheran education programme was more to equip the indigenous people.

The first mission work of white Lutheran missionaries was to learn and know native people's language, customs and convert them to Christianity. Native people taught missionaries their languages and customs. This stage was an important work of evangelisation. Second stage: young and old people were taught in schools about spiritual and secular matters. They received Christian instructions in preparation for their baptism and confirmation. Missionaries brought European civilisation (Farup 1940:1). Before the missionaries' arrival, native people had their united and progressive *tlhabologo* meaning civilisation (Setiloane 1978:402). A third stage was for missionaries to develop a self-supporting, self-

propagating and self-governing power of the Native Church. This was earmarked for the native Christians to be responsible for their Native Church. Evangelistic and Christian education were the centre of mission work and development. Initially, Christianity was not welcomed by native people as there were wars between the missionaries and native kings (Farup 1940:1). According to Saayman (1991:23), 'It was under the pious gaze of the "universal" and "orthodox" theology that the whole system of colonialism and capitalism was established in South Africa'. Missionaries were 'part and parcel of this capitalist exploitation' of native people and had a greater responsibility for the consequences of colonising Africans than colonists. 'The missionaries consciously aimed also at "colonising the mind", at changing whole systems of beliefs and practices. Missionaries disapproved of African dress, music, religion, education, housing, etc' (Saayman 1991:24-25,31). This European civilisation was very foreign within native people, who had their own native civilised life with stable economy, leadership and infrastructure, which was based on the united culture, religion and tradition of native people. Missionaries brought their European Christianity, which was a divide-and-rule method of the injustices of colonialism. The founding of theological institutions by missionaries is very bad news when founded on colonialism and capitalism reasons. Missionaries' establishment of theological institutions was for community development, which becomes good news only when African cultural life and realities of music, religion and education were incorporated, respected and embraced by missionaries.

According to Farup (1940:2), Lutheran missionaries in South Africa must be directed towards strengthening and training the Native Lutheran Christians and their leaders so that they can take over this serious responsibility. Financial self-supporting is very necessary, but unless the pastors and leaders of the Native Lutheran Church have the required spiritual maturity, our efforts to develop self-governing will end in failure.

In 1960, Lutheran mission synods merged to form a regional church except for the Hermannsburg synods. During the period of the white bishops' leadership, white missionaries served the black Evangelical Lutheran regional churches. However, white missionaries resigned to serve the black regional churches under the new leadership of black bishops. Some white missionaries returned to Europe, and others served in white congregations (Makhathini 1975:135). Missionaries spent their time in equipping native people to inherit the European Church with its church traditions and structure, which became a serious financial burden to native Christians. Missionaries were already experiencing financial crisis to run this church; hence, they shifted this responsibility to Native Christians. Native Christians promoted Western Christianity with its doctrines and traditions, which was a serious crisis amongst native Christians and natives in general. African Traditional Religions and Western Christianity were constantly inharmonious in terms of beliefs, culture and spirituality.

Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College taught theological education subjects such as Oral Teaching and Pastoral Care among others in Zulu language before 1920, and from January 1922, the required teaching and learning language was only English. However, the Zulu and English languages were compulsory subjects to be learnt at OLTC. A full 4-year course in Exegesis, Historical, Systematic, Greek, Hebrew and Practical Theology was studied. The designed course was offered according to students of theology in Europe and America. Textbooks from Europe and America were used to teach African theological students. In 1938, for the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew was introduced and taught in detailed exegesis with Greek of the first six chapters within the context of synoptic gospels. The Old Testament focused on authorship, time and place of written books and areas such as canon and history of Hebrews, translation and the Pentateuch. Church History focused on the Ancient Era of the Christian Church, the Medieval Church and Reformation. Systematic Theology was taught in two areas. Dogmatics on doctrines of Christian religion and ethics was based on moral being, natural human being, moral law and human and divine. Practical Theology was divided into three Homiletics, which were theory and practice of sermon preparation, Catechetics on history and theory and Pastoral Theology. The entrance requirement to study theological education was only for theological students with a teachers' certificate. Theological students from southern African countries such as Southern Rhodesia were studying at OLTC (Farup 1940:3-6,8; OLTC Executive Committee 1922:1). The teachers' experience and qualification were the only entrance requirement to study theology. Farup (1940) affirms:

[F]ormer graduates of Umpumulo Institution, and nearly all students have had a teaching experience. Some have taught school for several years; and the result of this very valuable preparatory training and experience is that the majority of students follow the theological course. (p. 3)

Bible classes, general history, hygiene, music, Zulu and English languages, sewing, knitting, cooking and banking and the care of children for students' wives were taught for 4 years (Farup 1940:5). This wife theological programme was of great value for the future of pastors' wives to be taught and skilled in service of the church and community.

However, the South African Department of Education rented at UTTC. Umphumulo Teachers Training College registered under an administration of NMS was closed in 1961 (Johannsmeier 1960:4). On 20 March 1962, the Council of Churches on Lutheran Foundation's eighth annual meeting received a report that OLTC would be transferred to UTTC in Natal, which was amongst the Evangelical Lutheran Church teaching institutions in southern Africa. It was also reported that in 1956 OLTC started its negotiations with the University of South Africa to establish a 4-year Bachelor of Arts in Theology (BATheol) degree to be taught at OLTC (Lislerud et al. 1962:35; Pakendorf 1962:2). Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College developed a renewal process of improving theological education

to address the emerging southern African changes. Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College decided to incorporate its theological education programme with the Faculty of Theology, Unisa for its new BATheol qualification as part of meeting the South African changing demands. What was very interesting was that the qualification would be under the administration of OLTC, although in partnership with Unisa.

Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College operated at CSM farm at Oscarsberg near Dundee. The apartheid government reserved this area only for white people. Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa (ELCSA) had major plans to build more educational buildings a plan made as far as in 1958 at OLTC. However, questions were raised whether OLTC would exist permanently owned by the church. In April 1962, the Evangelical Lutheran Church received a letter written by the Bantu Affairs Commissioner that OLTC and Oscarsberg farm tenants were to be removed from that land. The Evangelical Lutheran Church was violently affected by the Group Areas Act. Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College was unable to secure its land from the apartheid government. Because of this negative political development, OLTC was transferred to the Umphumulo Teachers Training College at Umphumulo, which was an area reserved for black people. Evangelical Lutheran churches in South Africa, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and its member churches were very unhappy about this situation. LWF escalated this matter to the World Council of Churches (WCC) to put pressure on the South African apartheid government to stop oppressing black people and the church. However, WCC had not succeeded in challenging this apartheid government, but mobilised other countries in the world to challenge the government (Johannsmeier 1960:1; Kistner 1993:41-42). Rindahl (1967:1) states 'One of the reasons for moving the Theological College from Oscarsberg to Umpumulo was to make the College more accessible to visitors successfully'. This was not necessarily the main reason to transfer of OLTC to UTTC. This was in line with racism and apartheid system. This political situation disrupted OLTC cooperation plan of its Lutheran theological education with Unisa, an educational plan that was earmarked to improve the quality of theological education offered at a university level. New buildings that were supposed to be built at OLTC were not built. This was a serious threat to the future of Lutheran theological education integrated with a university.

Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College established its First Commission of Inquiry for theological training, which was held at OLTC on 31 August 1960. According to Johannsmeier (1960:5), the report recommended the following:

- Development of a central theological college on a higher level, discouraging regional or local training.
- Formation of a new College Board and Executive.

- Entrance qualification for the seminary to be raised to matric within the next 5 years; for the Pre-seminary to Junior Certificate accordingly.
- As facilities and opportunities at Umphumulo outweigh those of Oscarsberg, the commission unanimously voted for the transfer of the seminary to Umphumulo, which, however, does not mean that Umphumulo is considered to be the only and best place for all Lutheran churches of southern Africa for all times.

A transfer of OLTC required a serious investigation to place it on a safer and better future. This was of vital importance to sustain theological training within the circles of ELCSA.

Lutheran Pre-seminary School: A foundation of theological training

Lutheran Pre-seminary School (LPS) was an important aspect to lay a foundation of theological education for students who wanted to study theology. Cooperating Lutheran Missions established LPS at Untunjambili in 1955. Men who passed standard VI would additionally study for a 2-year matric at LPS before they enrolled for their theological studies at OLTC. Lutheran Pre-seminary School was a successor of American Lutheran Mission Catechist School in 1955 (Homdrom 1962:9). Initially LPS was supposed to be simultaneously transferred to ULTC in August 1962; however, the transfer happened on 02 October 1962. In 1966, seven students from the Evangelical Church in the South-Eastern Region of southern Africa, and eleven students from the Anglican Church enrolled and others from their churches at LPS. Anglican Church pastors were allowed to lead divine services and minister Holy Communion for the students and staff (Lindberg 1966:1; Zulu 1992:4; Lislerud et al. 1962:35). Lutheran Pre-seminary School was an ecumenical and relevant teaching institution, which attracted other churches to allow their students to be given a pre-theological education in preparation to enrol for theological education towards the ordained ministry. This foundation of theological education was very central to be integrated with OLTC and other ecumenical institutions in South Africa.

In 1963, LPS revised its pre-theological training curriculum. A preliminary 1-year course was introduced. English and Greek languages were offered in a basic formal grammar within the context of easier theological or devotional literature. Biblical Studies was offered as a biblical general knowledge from Old Testament and New Testament. Study areas such as history of Israel outline on the patriarchs and prophets and history of Jesus Christ forming the social, cultural, religion and political aspects. History was offered from a Church History perspective and theology. Early Church and Middle Ages were important epochs of the study (Mamokgobo 1964:1-2). This pre-theological programme offered an important basic of theological education. It would have added more value when the African culture, religion and sociopolitical life were incorporated in this theological programme to take seriously the African context and spirituality. This would be meaningful for theological

students to be very embracing and conscious about African realities and concerns.

In 1966, proposals were made regarding the reorganisation of LPS administration to ensure that ULTC and LPS were well coordinated (Rindahl 1967:2). This theological institution restructuring was of critical importance to meet the change and demands of higher education in southern Africa. Theological institution had to be relevant to church and communities' contexts.

An historic cooperation of Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College and Unisa

In a process and transition of the merger of regional churches, namely ELCSA, the Evangelical Lutheran churches in southern Africa were training their theological students at OLTC as a central theological training. In 1960, OLTC commission of inquiry unanimously agreed to transfer OLTC to UTTC. Evangelical Lutheran churches in southern Africa were not happy about a decision of the commission of inquiry. Lecturers were appointed according to the various Evangelical Lutheran churches in southern Africa to teach at ULTC (Johannsmeier 1960:5).

Cooperating Lutheran Missions moved OLTC to the former Umphumulo Teachers Training College and became Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College, which was established on 02 October 1962 (Mashabela 2020:63). According to Kistner (1993), ULTC:

[A]ttracted students from Namibia and from the Moravian Church in South Africa. For a number of years, the College also provided theological education for a number of people from the African Independent Churches. In 1963, a number of Anglican students who later became ministers in the Anglican Church took part in a pre-seminary course. (p. 43)

Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College inherited the former Lutheran theological education programme and plans as an ecumenical institution by embracing not only mainline churches such as the Anglican Church, but more importantly the ecumenical African Independent Churches' students trained at the belly of the Lutheran theological institution. According to Johannsmeier (1960:5), LPS was integrated to ULTC, and a title deed of UTTC was transferred to a new Lutheran Theological College Governing Board (LTCGB). Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College was under the CLM administration for a period of 50 years, 1912-1962. Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College had a dominance of white missionary lecturers and principals or rectors. This included a transfer of these teaching institutions (Becken 1973:2-3; Johannsmeier 1960:5). Umphumulo Teachers Training College was a great advantage for teaching and learning purpose. It had ideal teaching, meetings and accommodation facilities, which were of great value and space to equip future pastors (Rindahl 1967:1). The historical task of OLTC became more progressive at ULTC. The future of Lutheran theological education was becoming more productive in service of ELCSA and for the benefit of the ecumenical church.

In 1964, LTCGB established at ULTC. Lutheran Theological College Governing Board and Faculty of Theology, Unisa signed a first memorandum of agreement between January 1965 and 1966. Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College taught BATheol as a cooperation qualification with Unisa and matriculation was obtained from LPS, which was an entrance qualification to enrol for theological education for both Diploma in Theology (DTheol) and BATheol. Students with lower records in Junior Certificate (JC) were not allowed to study theology. However, those with outstanding records were admitted to study theology (Beyerhaus 1964:22; Rindahl 1967:2). Lutheran Theological College Governing Board and Faculty of Theology, Unisa signed a second memorandum of agreement between 1969 and 1970 to introduce a BATheol/Bachelor of Divinity (BD) degree studies (Nsibande 1992:12). On 07 October 1969, LTCGB decided to deregister BATheol and replaced it by registering a BD in the Faculty of Divinity, Unisa, which started in January 1970. This was implemented in line with ULTC reviewed its theological curriculum asked Unisa to change the BATheol. The review of theological curriculum was based on BATheol being more on further education and knowledge instead of theological training for the church ministry. The reviewed curriculum was presented and welcomed by Unisa with critical engagement. However, the Faculty of Theology, Unisa viewed ULTC theological curriculum as irrelevant (Loken & Sander 1969:2). Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College recognised itself as the teaching and learning and research institution, which continued to be the essential task of the church in service of community. The two signed historical memorandum of agreement serve to support and promote ULTC and Unisa potential commitment to provide quality theological education.

In 1971, the 16th LTCGB meeting identified and surveyed the University of Zululand, University of the North, University of Fort Hare and Unisa for the future of its theological students to study a BD degree at ULTC (Nielsen & Becken 1971b:4). On 11 October 1972, the Faculty of Divinity at Unisa reviewed its theological curriculum according to ULTC demands to sustain its cooperation of theological education with ULTC (Nielsen & Becken 1972:3).

A call for Africanisation and decolonisation of Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College

In 1966, LTCGB received a serious pressure from African Lutheran pastors that ULTC would employ more African lecturers. Lutheran Theological College Governing Board developed an employment criterion that African lecturers who served several years in congregations of their Evangelical Lutheran churches were qualified to be theological lecturers. Teaching, research and serving the church were amongst other expected outcomes as a lecturer.

Lutheran Theological College Governing Board appointed an additional African lecturer who would start working at ULTC in 1968 (Rindahl 1967:1). Decolonising and Africanising ULTC was critically important to ensure that African lecturers were empowered to advance theological education. The employment of lecturers' criteria was aligned to ensure that teaching was relevant to preparing future pastors.

Lutheran theological education curriculum

Wives of theology students studied basic theological education at OLTC. They were taught subjects such as Bible-Knowledge, Hygiene, Needlework and Cookery. They organised themselves within a women's prayer group where they had meetings, preaching, singing and other activities. They visited and prayed for the aged and sick people in their homes and local hospitals. 'The pastors' wives must know "what their husbands' beliefs, responsibilities and liabilities consist of" in order to assist him either indirectly or directly' (Beyerhaus 1963:25). Theological students' wife theological programme was critically important at ULTC. Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College designed this wife theological programme to close a gap between a theological student to be trained apart from his family. Nsibande (1992) informs:

[*The*] college had changed the student, but his absent wife had not changed. His spiritual life was developed in an artificial setting and was detached from his real life concerns and responsibilities. (p. 12)

Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College's wife theological programme was central in the church ministry and empowering for the women in church and society. This theological programme was a more skilled programme that enabled a wife to create a business and equip and employ other women in a designing cloth industry and others. A critical question is, was ULTC wife theological programme inclusive of husbands who were married to their wives who were studying to become pastors? Husbands were equally important to receive such a training in support of their wives as pastors. In the 21st-century, such a spouse theological programme is lacking at theological institutions programme and at universities. Wives and husbands who are not pastors participate in the church ministry without being equipped about their role in the church. Although, in the current century, most pastors' wives have other careers, however, is critically important for the spouse theological programme to be reinstated at theological institutions and universities to empower wives and husbands to prepare them for the church work. This will increase the enrolment of theological students at universities and theological institutions. University requirement is that any educational programme such as theology should also meet a required enrolment of students' number at a university according to its policy. If any educational programme, which is not meeting student numbers a university can close such a programme. When wives and husbands study at universities, in particular, it will assist in meeting the university-required number of theological students' enrolment.

Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College's theological curriculum was very attractive to equip Lutheran theological students but also ecumenical students to address southern African spiritual, political and socioeconomic concerns. Nsibande (1992:13) critically says 'It is obvious that the training of African pastors must be very thorough in order to give them necessary superiority in these circumstances'. Subjects offered at ULTC for DTheol and BATheol or BD were Biblical Studies, Church History, Ethics and Catechetic, Systematic Theology, Homiletics and Liturgies, English, Greek and Hebrew languages, Dogmatics and Pastoral Theology. Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College employed few lecturers teaching many subjects, which was an overburden with extracurricular duties, research, editorial and publishing of journals such as Credo Lutheran Theological Journal for Southern Africa, administrative work, academic bodies members, such as university selection committee and church responsibilities, missions and ecumenical bodies. Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College requested ELCSA to send their appointed lecturers without success. It is dependent on guest lecturers (Beyerhaus 1964:21-22). Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College was facing a crisis of teaching DTheol and BA or BD programmes effectively because of a lack of adequate lecturers. This was a painful experience for lecturers' wellness. Higher education at ULTC required adequate lecturers to effectively teach theological students with a touch of excellence. A capacity of adequate lecturers would enable lecturers to participate in a shared academic and church responsibilities and demands. Higher education at ULTC was very central especially teaching subjects that were accredited with Unisa.

Teaching and learning were intertwined with devotional life and pastoral care of theological students and workers and their families at ULTC. Rindahl (1967) states:

The question of devotional life and the liturgies to be followed in the service at the College, seems to have caused a great deal of discussion of over the years. Part of the problem, of course, is that Churches connected with the College do not have the same liturgies. (p. 1)

A cooperation of education and worship was critically important for training theological students to be able to conduct liturgy and preach as part of their practical work towards their future as pastors. Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College was struggling to develop an inclusive liturgy that integrates various Evangelical Lutheran churches' liturgies because of their various church traditions.

Furthermore, there was an urgent need to establish Pastoral Clinical Training (PCT) to link it with the hospital, theological institution and the church in response to health issues in South Africa. Holman (1968:96) asserts that from 19 to 27 September 1967, the Missiological Institute (MI) Conference on the Ministry of Healing was held at the ULTC in Natal,

South Africa. This conference was the Fourth MI Conference in a series (Lislerud 1967a:1; Mashabela 2020:95). Lislerud (1967a:1) says the 'Missiological Institute was called together at [the] Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College. Great emphasis was placed upon the African situation as we continue the healing ministry of our churches'. Lislerud (1967b) reports that the MI Conference recommended:

[T]hat the Theological Colleges be encouraged to emphasise the healing ministry of the Church in the training of theological students. That a pastoral clinical training programme should be established at ULTC in co-operation with the local hospitals. Provision should be made as a matter of urgency to enable qualified staff to be recruited, and courses for students and pastors, doctors and nurses, and para-medical and other workers to be begun as soon as possible. That the Church establishes or makes use of existing Christian leadership programmes for the training of the staff at our medical institutions. (p. 172)

These insights point out the central role of the Fourth MI Conference in resolving to establish the PCT programme at the ULTC in 1967. This means that the ELCSA was the first church in South Africa to establish PCT, which was later referred as Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at ULTC in 1967. However, Victor Vivian Msomi was already practicing PCT as a hospital chaplain and lecturer at ULTC before 1967. Msomi was already teaching PCT just before 1966 at ULTC. LTCGB appointed him to officially establish PCT course at ULTC in 1967 (Pastoral Clinical Training Report 1967:3). The Fourth MI Conference's decision to establish PCT was informed by the PCT work and research of Msomi. Missiological Institute, as a research centre of the ULTC, had an interest in ensuring that churches were seriously and urgently engaging in the healing ministry in the service of society. According to Msomi, pastoral counselling and care could be approached from an African understanding of illness and health (Msomi 1991:68). Solidarity between the ULTC, the church and local hospitals was possible to provide a service of healing to church members and society. This is fulfilled through PCT, which cannot be avoided when there was a unity of theological institution, the church and the hospital. The common good potential of PTC is premised on the African context.

Clinical Pastoral Education was designed to train theological students to be parish pastors and those who are passionate for hospital chaplaincy. Pastoral ministry and CPE were inseparable in building a just healing ministry. Congregational pastors and hospital chaplains served and left a legacy of CPE in service of the people of God. Clinical Pastoral Education provided a vital platform to the theological institution, the church and the hospital to reshape the healing ministry in society.

Lutheran Theological College Governing Board at their 19th meeting granted the director of Theological Education of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) to be part of the Lutheran CPE programme for inclusive ecumenical involvement. South African Council of Churches member churches requested the rector of the ULTC to invite Msomi to

facilitate a CPE institute training for them (Nielsen & Becken 1973:4). It was creatively important for Lutherans to have a plan to ensure that the CPE programme was grounded in the Lutheran space to reach the ecumenical church. If not, the CPE programme would not prosper unless the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa was working in solidarity with other churches. Lutheran Theological College Governing Board did not want CPE to be centred in the Lutheran space. Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College had always positioned itself as an ecumenical institution, teaching theological students from an ecumenical space (Mashabela & Madise 2022:2).

Towards an integration of Lutheran unity and theological training

On 07 March 1969, LTCGB requested the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa (FELCSA) and ELCSA Merger Committee to initiate a process of a closer cooperation of all Lutheran theological institutions in southern Africa and an internship theological programme be established. On 07 October 1969, LTCGB decided that the internship theological studies would commence in January 1970 (Loken & Sandner 1969; Loken & Tarneberg 1969:2). Umphumulo Lutheran Theological College and Marang Lutheran Theological Seminary (MLTS) became a very important possible merger or closer cooperation. 'Theological students received the first 4 years of training at ULTC in English. Marang Lutheran Theological Seminary offered a 2-year internship and practical theological training under the Department of Practical Theology' (Loken & Sander 1969:2; Loken & Tarneberg 1969). The initiative of establishing a closer cooperation of all Lutheran theological institutions in southern Africa was centred around specialisations of ULTC's cooperation of Unisa and MLTS as a theological institution for theological students' practicals, which was regarded as internship theological studies. Initially, MLTS theological students studied only a DTheol and there was no BD offered at MLTS. The theological institution closer cooperation development provided renewal at MLTS where all theological students enrolled only for internship theological studies while all theological students started their theological education at ULTC.

Training of white Lutheran theological students

White Lutheran theological students were struggling to study theology in already existing South African Lutheran theological institutions. German Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa (GLCSA) had not allowed its white theological students to study theology in any Lutheran theological institution with black theological students. For a long time, GLCSA had a challenge of training its ministers and missionaries in South Africa (Mashabela 2020:80; Pakendorf 1965:16). German Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa lack of producing trained theological students became a serious thorn within white Lutheran congregations as they were struggling to get new ministers for their congregational work. Because of this white Lutheran congregational work

frustration, GLCSA received more pressure from its congregations to create a consolidation of its own theological education. It failed to secure a solid cooperation with Unisa to train its theological students at Unisa. In 1961, the Board of Trustees for Lutheran Extension Work in southern Africa decided that white Evangelical Lutheran churches would train their theological students at the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria (UP), which was a dominated white university. Thus, GLCSA accepted the Board of Trustee decision. The question of establishing a Lutheran theological institution or Faculty of Theology, UP for white theological students was a racial problem (Hellberg 1979:55-57). In 1962, LWF delegation rejected to fund an establishment of a Lutheran faculty at UP for the training of white Lutheran ministers. This rejection of cooperation between GLCSA and UP was motivated by the fact that UP had a Calvinist influence and apartheid policy. Thus, the Evangelical Lutheran Church was not in favour of associating itself with conceptualisation of apartheid policies. Lutheran World Federation instructed GLCSA to train its white theological students at inclusive theological institutions such as the OLTC and Marang Theological Seminary (MLTS) established on 30 November 1958 in Rustenburg (Kistner 1993:42; Mashabela 2020:75; Voges 2000:83). Initially, GLCSA had been training its white theological students in Germany only. Its new project of establishing a white Lutheran theological institution in South Africa was because of minimising the financial constraints. A decision of GLCSA to integrate itself with UP was a serious betrayal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church unity, witness and circle in southern Africa as far as defeating apartheid was concerned. Oscarsberg Lutheran Theological College and MLTS were regarded as non-racial and existential Lutheran theological institutions where black and coloured theological students were already trained and white theological students were to be accepted unconditionally into these twofold theological institutions.

Furthermore, the task of the Board of Trustees for Lutheran Extension Work was not just only on theological education matters, but its primary role was also to coordinate an establishment of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (UELCSA). The establishment of this church was only for building a united church for white Lutheran churches with an exclusion of black churches (CCLF 1965:31). German Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa, through the help of Board of Trustees, established UELCSA towards the end of 1964, and UELCSA had its first General Assembly on 07–09 March 1965 (Pakendorf 1965:16). This type of separation of church and theology had always been an agenda of the white Evangelical Lutheran churches in southern Africa.

This rejected idea of establishing a Lutheran theological institution only for white Lutheran theological students was replaced by a new theological education committee formed by all black and white Evangelical Lutheran churches in southern Africa represented by their delegates. This inclusive and non-racial Lutheran Theological Education Committee held its first meeting on 06 November 1964. The Lutheran

Theological Education Committee discussed two reports, the first one was on establishing a Lutheran theological education programme at the University of Natal, now the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg and ULTC, which was rejected as not a feasible theological institution. The second report was on establishing a Lutheran Theological College on the Rand, Johannesburg, which would be linked with Unisa. A university BD was a preferred qualification to be obtained by Lutheran theological students to be employed by the ELCSA (Berglund 1964:8). A theological turning point in the history of ELCSA was the radical decision that all black and white Lutheran theological students could equally be trained at the university and receive a BD degree and be employed by any Evangelical Lutheran Church in southern Africa. A trained black Lutheran theological student could be employed as a minister of a white Lutheran congregation, and white theological student could work at a black Lutheran congregation.

The church, theological institutions and universities in the 21st century

In the 21st century, ELCSA, which was originally formed on 16 December 1975 instead of 18 December 1975 (Mutshekwane 1976:5), UELCSA formed originally in 1964 instead of 1965, Moravian Churches and LWF restructured their theological training style to intertwine their Lutheran theological seminary and a university in 2000. Nürnberger (2000) states:

The University to which, the Seminary is to be linked. Here the choice is between the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, the University of Pretoria and Unisa. The universities in Johannesburg do not qualify. The University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, has excellent qualities and a strong tradition of Lutheran involvement. The Committee recommends that the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg be adopted. If Marang or Umphumulo were chosen, the link could be either to Unisa or the University of Natal. (p. 33)

These Evangelical Lutheran churches have historically established the theological education at the University of Natal in early the 1970s. Denis and Duncan (2011) claim Gunter Wittenberg and Wolfram were appointed and sent by the United Lutheran Church to the Department of Divinity, University of Natal in 1973 to start a theological programme for Lutheran ministers in the Department of Divinity.

Denis and Duncan (2011) inform that:

This programme had not materialised and Kister had left Natal University three years later. Wittenberg, however, had preserved, obtaining from the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) at the end of 1980 the promise of funding the establishment of an ecumenical and multiracial BTh programme at the University of Natal. (p. 157)

The church name, the United Lutheran Church, is not correct; the correct name is the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, which is referred to as UELCSA. According to Nielsen and Becken (1971a:7), in 1971, FELCSA

appointed its theological education committee, which included Dr. Hans Jürgen Becken, ULTC rector, to lead and facilitate negotiations to establish a theological education funded by LWF for Bachelor of Divinity at the University of Natal (UN) for UELCSA and a close cooperation and coordination with ULTC on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran churches in southern Africa. The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa's theological education committee had a successful negotiation with the University of Natal to establish this theological programme and tasked UELCSA theological committee to sign an academic memorandum of agreement with UN on 24 August 1972. This agreement was based on training UELCSA white theological students and for ULTC theological students for furthering their studies at UN. Furthermore, Rev. Dr. Wolfram Kistner and Rev. Gunther Wittenberg were appointed by FELCSA theological education committee to teach and establish the Pietermaritzburg Lutheran Theological Education. They were also appointed to teach at ULTC and Lutheran theological students would learn some of the courses taught by other lecturers at ULTC. On 1 January 1973, 6 Lutheran theological students enrolled at a newly established Lutheran theological education programme at UN (Nielsen 1972:5; Nielsen & Becken 1971b:7; Nielsen & Becken 1973:4). Kistner (1993) points out:

When I left Pietermaritzburg at the end of 1975, I had the impression that neither the situation at the university nor in South African Lutheran Churches justified the hope that this initiative could be widened into an ecumenical venture. I do not regret the decision I took at that time. (p. 30)

This ecumenical venture Kister joined was the South African Council of Churches (SACC).

In 1982, ELCSA and UELCSA bought the land funded by the Lutheran World Federation at 27 Golf Road, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg to establish the Lutheran House of Studies as a residential area for Lutheran theological students, who were studying at the UN (Mashabela & Madise 2022:13–14). This type of theological training meant to train all black and white theological students at one Lutheran theological seminary and one university. Within this training context, Evangelical Lutheran churches agreed that proper and adequate remuneration will attract or retain church workers with better theological training.

According to Nürnberger (2012):

Its vision for the future training of Lutheran Church workers: Common training for all Lutheran candidates at university level, in an atmosphere of ecumenical enrichment and cooperation, without losing our Lutheran identity, enabling the Lutheran churches to respond creatively to the cries in South African society in a partnership which would span the African continent and overseas donors. (p. 110)

The ELCSA wanted to (1) produce pastors as church workers who are critical to the church; and (2) be productive in response to southern African realities and concerns. This was earmarked

to equip Evangelical Lutheran church members within the priesthood of all believers to participate not only in their spiritual life but also in the socio-economic and political arenas that were still a challenge in the southern African context. According to Mashabela (2020:122), this common Lutheran training led to the closing and merger of ULTC and Lutheran House of Studies to establish the Lutheran Theological Institute on 01 January 2003 at same premises of the Lutheran House of Studies. This new theological training phenomenon was formed for all Evangelical churches in southern Africa to train their theological students at the Univeristy of KwaZulu-Natal.

Furthermore, the church, theological institutions and universities have a collective task to analysis and, Africanise and decolonise what Moyo (1994) critically engages:

Missionaries of been accused by African nationalists for importing divisions into Africa by way of Christian denominations. Instead of seeing themselves as Africans the Christians began to think of themselves as Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Lutherans and other such as religions groups. (p. 1)

For the Evangelical Lutheran Church to be relevant to African people in southern Africa and Africa, it should address the African spirituality and culture of African Lutherans by Africanising and decolonising Lutheran Theology and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Africa. The Africanisation and decolonisation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Africa is advocated by Kibira (1983) who critically says:

We refuse to accept that things may be imposed up us from outside. We are Lutherans. When we adhere to the same worldview tenets of Scripture as they are interpreted in the three creeds, namely, Apostolic, the Nicene and the Athanasian-while we zealously base our theological understanding and research on the unaltered Confession Augustana. This is the method we use even when we do theology in and confess Christ in an African context. (p. 15)

This is what it means for Africanisation and decolonisation of Lutheran Theology and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Africa. The point here is that Lutheran theological institutions and universities should train theological students with a theological curriculum that is rooted in African spirituality, culture, socioeconomic and political understanding of botho or ubuntu realities of life. This is not only for African Lutherans' social justice but also an inclusion of ecumenical churches and their institutions.

Conclusion

This article highlighted the significance of the University of South Africa, OLTC, and ULTC contributions to South African higher education. The article also discussed the positives and negatives of the entanglement between theological training, UELCSA and ELCSA. The cooperation of a college and university training has strengthened the quality of theological training in UELCSA and ELCSA. The significance of training pastor's wives on church ministry was important for them to understand the church and their role within the church.

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