Good theology can change the world
First anniversary of GlobeTheoLib

GlobeTheoLib - the Global Digital Library on Theology and Ecumenism - was launched in September 2011 as a joint project of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and Globethics.net, together with more than 20 international ecumenical organizations and theological associations. Now, a year after the launch, this first GlobeTheoLib newsletter sets out the achievements of the first 15 months, key developments, important meetings and future GlobeTheoLib work and events.

The GlobeTheoLib team thanks you for your support and participation.

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Editorial by Dr Dietrich Werner

“Good theology can change the world”

This was the provocative motto of the final communiqué of an international consultation in April 2012 in Hamburg that brought together about 40 organizations, including mission agencies, Christian world communions, and regional ecumenical organizations to discuss the relevance of theological scholarship programmes for the future of World Christianity, organized by the Programme for Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) of WCC, the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and the Academy of Mission at the University of Hamburg (see here for the consultation paper). The same conviction lies behind the more than 60 years of work of the ETE Programme, devoted to providing quality resources, faculty and curriculum development for theological education, ministerial formation and interreligious dialogue for the churches in the global South. It was thus with deep conviction and passion that ETE supported and initiated the project of GlobeTheoLib in cooperation with Globethics.net. As Christian churches play a vital role in civil societies in many countries, leadership formation for social development and holistic mission cannot flourish without realizing that there is a strategic link between religion and development, and thus the fundamental role of theological formation. Every day we see the pressing need to overcome fanaticism, misinformation, religious fundamentalism, distorted perceptions of both Christian and other religious traditions. Sharing quality resources of Christian theology to promote the critical study of biblical traditions, dialogue between different denominational traditions as well as with all people of good will, and issues of justice and equality is in itself a vital contribution to world peace. The overwhelming positive response for this new project we received from almost 70 regional associations of theological schools all around the world is a sign that this is a journey worth continuing. GlobeTheoLib is only the first step of a revolution towards more equal and participatory sharing of theological resources between East and West, North and South. At the same time, GlobeTheoLib is increasing the visibility of the distinct voices of contextual theological reflections from the Southern hemisphere. We therefore say to all our users: “Participate in this new project, contribute actively from your region both in terms of theological resources and ongoing support, and share the news so that the circles of those who participate will be widened.”

This is because, “Good theology can change the world.”

Dietrich Werner, member of GlobeTheoLib project leadership group, director of Ecumenical Theological Education/World Council of Churches

Register for GlobeTheoLib

If you are not already registered for GlobeTheoLib then go to the GlobeTheoLib homepage and follow the link under “Register now for free”. 
More than 600'000 documents in GlobeTheoLib

Over the last fifteen months, the GlobeTheoLib library has grown rapidly and now holds more than 640'000 documents related to theology, ecumenism and religious studies. Documents come from various sources: commercial journals with which there are subscription agreements, Open Access journals, and articles and documents from partner institutions. Altogether, 96 journals on theology and religious studies are available in GlobeTheoLib. Since the launch of GlobeTheoLib, more than 3'500 documents have been uploaded by registered users.

A guide on using the library is available here.

Check out the Reference Books available through GlobeTheoLib

GlobeTheoLib users can access more than 25 Oxford Handbooks on religious studies which together offer almost 1000 articles. These include the Oxford Handbooks of Biblical Studies, Global Religions, Feminist Theology and Systematic Theology. GlobeTheoLib also offers access to a huge range of encyclopaedias, dictionaries, biographies and handbooks from various publishers, provided by Credo Reference, including the Macmillan Dictionary of the Bible.

Check out the reference books available through GlobeTheoLib.

Special collections on theology and ecumenism in GlobeTheoLib

GlobeTheoLib offers access to special collections on theology and ecumenism. These include documents from the World Council of Churches, publications from the Lutheran World Federation, a collection on Ecumenical Theological Education and other collections.

GlobeTheoLib portal now available in Chinese

Chinese-language users now have access to the full GlobeTheoLib portal in Chinese, alongside English, French, German and Spanish. Other languages are planned, including a version in Indonesian. Documents in the library are available in many languages and may be submitted in any language.

GlobeTheoLib strengthening its regional links

There have been various initiatives in 2012 to strengthen regional content for GlobeTheoLib. Two partnership agreements were signed with the Senate of Serampore College in February 2012. The Senate unites more than 50 leading theological colleges from India and beyond. It has agreed to integrate many of its publications in GlobeTheoLib, and a special section of GlobeTheoLib will be developed for online content from the Senate of Serampore.
A major part of the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians quadrennial conference in April 2012 in the Philippines, was devoted to a presentation and discussion on GlobeTheoLib. Heads of theological libraries from ten Asian countries discussed the integration of online content from Asia, such as Master and Doctoral Theses, and to allocate strategically part of the acquisition budget of each library to online content as an increasingly important source for each library.

A Memorandum of Understanding is being finalized between GlobeTheoLib (represented by Globethics.net) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa to make available theological and ethics journals of the university to GlobeTheoLib. More than 400 electronic theses and dissertations in theology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal have already been incorporated into GlobeTheoLib. Furthermore, a collection on African theologies as a specialized collection is being explored.

**GlobeTheoLib Consortium meets in Geneva**

The GlobeTheoLib Consortium held its annual meeting in Geneva in September 2012. More than 20 regional and international organizations such as the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) belong to the Consortium. More details of the meeting are available here. The annual meeting welcomed two new members of the Consortium: the Senate of Serampore College (University), and the European Theological Libraries Association, known by its French acronym BETH. A full list of Consortium members is available here.

**GlobeTheoLib highlighted as an “excellent” project**

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) – responsible for reviewing and supervising the WCC programmes – held its annual meeting in Crete, Greece in August 2012. A report for this meeting from the core group of the WCC Programme Committee highlighted GlobeTheoLib as one of the “excellent pieces of work” being undertaken by the WCC. The group described GlobeTheoLib “as an example of a project which the WCC was particularly well placed to undertake and where benefits far outweighed cost”.
GlobeTheoLib partners with WCC Library

GlobeTheoLib is working with the WCC Library to increase open access content as part of plans to develop the electronic resources available through the WCC Library following the consolidation of its collection focused on the history of the ecumenical movement, Christian denominations, biblical hermeneutics, social ethics, missiology, contextual theologies and interfaith dialogue. The WCC Librarian, Andreas Waldvogel, is also a member of the GlobeTheoLib project leadership group. More information here.

Introducing the GlobeTheoLib team

Dr. Stephen Brown joined Globethics.net as programme executive for GlobeTheoLib in April 2011. Originally from Britain, he studied international development at the University of East Anglia and theology in Cambridge and Berlin. Before joining GlobeTheoLib he was managing editor of the Ecumenical News International news agency in Geneva. He has also worked in London and Brussels. He received a PhD from the University of Reading in 2008 for a thesis on the Conciliar Process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation as a precursor of the peaceful revolution in the German Democratic Republic.

We are pleased to extend a warm welcome to the new Library Assistant Mélisande Lorke, who started working for GlobeTheoLib in October 2012. She will be with Globethics.net until November 2013 working 50% for GlobeTheoLib and 50% with the Ecumenical Theological Education programme of the World Council of Churches. Mélisande studied Protestant Theology at the University of Greifswald, Germany, and Geneva, Switzerland, and holds a Master of Theology. She is half German, half Thai and was raised by a Christian father and a Buddhist mother. As a result she is interested in interreligious ethics and ecumenism.

News related to Globethics.net

Library

New Religious Ethics Collections in the Globethics.net libraries

Through special collections on religious ethics within its libraries, Globethics.net seeks to increase access to reliable and authoritative material about different faith traditions.

In 2012, Globethics.net launched a new collection on Islamic ethics. The new collection on Islamic ethics shall give an overview on a world religion's perspective on ethics. The collection contains more than 550 full text documents on Islamic ethics in English and Indonesian as well as in Arabic, and aims to provide essential documents about Islam and Islamic ethics in particular.

In addition to the Islamic ethics collection and the already existing Catholic ethics collection, a collection on Confucian ethics is being finalized and will be launched at the beginning of 2013. Other collections are being planned for 2013, such as a collection on Buddhist ethics.
Other types of collections in the Globethics.net libraries include:

The **thematic ethics collections** have been created in order to give an overview of the major actors, themes and resources in a given ethical issue or field.

A major collection on Chinese Ethics is being launched in December 2012, with more than 1'800 documents on ethics, written in or translated into Chinese, collected by experts, including through the Globethics.net China regional programme at the Centre for International Business Ethics in Beijing. Topics covered include bioethics, community ethics, cultural ethics, economic ethics, and environmental ethics, among other subjects.

**Educational collections** aim to help educational staff at any level to find relevant resources for teaching ethics.

The **Institutional collections** are intended to make the documents of the Globethics.net library partners more visible to the Globethics.net participants. This is also a way for Globethics.net to suggest some "niche" content to its participants. Indeed one mission of Globethics.net is to be representative of the diversity of perspectives on ethics and this is a way to make not (yet) mainstream resources more prominent.

The full list of collections can be found [here](#).

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**Globethics.net libraries survey 2012**

Globethics.net launched a libraries survey for a two-month period from 24 August to 24 October 2012 and received a total of 2'053 responses. The aim of the survey was to analyse what impact the Globethics.net digital libraries have on their users. The twelve-question survey was available on the Globethics.net website in four different languages: English, French, Chinese and Indonesian.

The 2'053 respondents to the libraries survey came from 151 different countries with the largest number coming from India (344), Indonesia (207), the United States of America (99), Pakistan (96) and Philippines (90). The largest group in terms of age was that in the 22-34 age group (38%). Asked about which different areas of the Globethics.net website are being used (multiple choices were possible), it appears that the libraries are the most used function of Globethics.net with 59% of the respondents using it and the workgroups with 12% the less used one. Mostly, respondents used the Globethics.net libraries for research for school or university (69%). A total of 437 comments and suggestions were received by the respondents to help improve the libraries. 182 of those comments were positive and encouraging, such as the following comment, written by a respondent from Kenya: “The Globethics.net libraries are very useful to the developing world, where information materials are scanty.”

The Globethics.net team thanks all respondents for participating in the online libraries survey and for providing interesting insights and inspirational suggestions. The survey results were most encouraging and help to improve the service and to better understand what users of the libraries want.

To see the full libraries survey 2012 report, please click [here](#).
Network
Display of Globethics.net and GlobeTheoLib participants

Since the launch of GlobeTheoLib in 2011, the network has been constantly growing, while the Globethics.net platform as a whole has more than 70,000 registered participants. Of these, roughly one-seventh have indicated at least one subject of interest in theology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecumenism</td>
<td>6’744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural and contextual theology</td>
<td>8’784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian denominations</td>
<td>7’326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative religion and interreligious dialogue</td>
<td>7’059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Christianity and Global Church History</td>
<td>5’891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biblical theology</td>
<td>7’211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogmatics</td>
<td>6’531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical theology and theological education</td>
<td>7’139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General theology/ other</td>
<td>5’897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The users come from all different religious backgrounds and all different world regions. The Globethics.net network includes participants from 219 countries and territories in total. The Globethics network functions enable registered participants to find other users with similar interests, or in specific countries or regions. To search the Globethics network, click here.

Interact with both the Globethics.net and GlobeTheoLib community

Globethics.net and GlobeTheoLib offer a variety of ways to interact with the community, to share one’s thoughts and findings, and to build up a network.

Registering as participant gives access to a personal blog (shown on the personal profile page as “My blog”). The personal blog is a space to share ideas, personal reactions to current affairs and issues or personal
reflection about an ethical or theological topic. The Network homepage shows an overview of the latest blog entries posted by participants.

The Globethics.net Forum, found under the menu “Network”, offers another possibility for participants to express themselves on a subject of their choice. There, one can create new threads or react to posts already published. One of the latest threads on the General Forum is on “Gandhian Marxism with Ethics and Values of Sustainability”.

Research/ Projects
Workgroups on theological issues

A workgroup is an online “community of practice” where registered Globethics.net participants engage in common work on subjects of interest to the Globethics.net network. Various objectives can be pursued: to conduct research with peers and co-researchers, to review literature, to discuss issues and share views, to prepare a conference or publication, to hold online seminars and so on.

Workgroups can be open for everybody or restricted to a defined group of persons on invitation by the moderator. See a testimonial as to how a workgroup was used to coordinate WCC activities on climate justice.

Currently, eleven workgroups on theological subjects are active, including “Religion and Decent Work”, “Gender Justice and Power” or “The Future of Theology in Europe”.

Globethics.net research on interreligious ethics

Globethics.net promotes research projects with a special focus on business ethics, interreligious ethics, responsible leadership, health ethics, ethics of science and technology, and environmental ethics.

Globethics.net promotes several special areas of research. One of these is “interreligious ethics”. An overview of the research in the fields of interreligious ethics can now be found on the Globethics.net website. In a world of globalisation, where interreligious and intercultural dialogue is a priority, religions have a key role to play in global ethics. Globethics.net seeks to advance dialogue on ethics, across boundaries of culture, faith and tradition. The research on interreligious ethics includes scholars from the main world religions and develops tools for interreligious education.

News related to “Ecumenical Theological Education”

Global Ecumenical Theological Institute in Busan 2013

The Ecumenical Theological Education Programme of the World Council of Churches is organizing a major event for about 150 younger advanced theology students from all different regions of the world and all Christian denominational traditions. This Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI) will take place in
Seoul and Busan/Korea from the 25 October to 9 November 2013, alongside the Assembly of the World Council of Churches. The project aims to bring young theologians to the Assembly for an intensive theological course program for a period of 2 weeks. Its curriculum focuses on “the future of ecumenism and the transformation of World Christianity in the 21st century” and will be geared to the theme of the WCC Assembly “God of life, lead us to justice and peace”.

The GETI project is cooperating with GlobeTheoLib by using the GlobeTheoLib platform in various ways. A special GETI web page has been set up. A workgroup has been created for communication, exchange and discussion between all participants of the GETI institute. The GETI project will publish a reader on an “Essential Guide to Courses on Ecumenism in the 21st century”. It is a collection of core texts from major ecumenical programmes, provided to contribute to the formation of a new generation of ecumenical leaders. At a later stage, this reader will be integrated into GlobeTheoLib. Furthermore, a special collection on “Ecumenism in the 21st century” – related to the GETI project – will be created at the beginning of 2013.

Global Survey on Theological Education

The first global study on theological education since 1910 was launched in October 2011 by the World Council of Churches in partnership with the Institute for Cross-Cultural Theological Education in Chicago and the Centre for the Study of Global Christianity in Boston. The survey is available for a period of 18 months until April 2013.

The project aims to provide empirical data on current developments, challenges and major trends in theological education in World Christianity by sending out questionnaires to relevant partners, both individual theological educators as well as institutions for theological education.

The survey is available in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian and Russian. To participate in this survey or to get further information, please click here.

New books on theological education produced with GlobeTheoLib

ETE has produced new books in making use of the research workgroups available through the GlobeTheoLib system. Two publications - “Theological Education in World Christianity – Ecumenical Perspectives and Future Priorities” (285 pages) and “Training to be ministers in Asia – Contextualizing Theological Education in Multi-Faith contexts. Survey articles on Selected Asian Countries” (300 pages) - have been produced with the Programme for Theology and Cultures in Asia (PTCA). Early in 2013 two additional major volumes will appear which also have been worked out in close cooperation with GlobeTheoLib: The “Handbook on Theological Education in Africa” (1200 pages) and the “Handbook on Theological Education for Ecumenism in Asia” (900 pages), both to be presented in the 10th Assembly of WCC in Busan, South Korea.

GlobeTheoLib served as a platform for an international dialogue on the future of theology in public universities

About 45 leading representatives of theological faculties, schools of theology and associations of theological schools from Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia met for a three-day consultation in June in Granavollen, Norway, on the role and relevance of Christian theology for higher education institutions, public and private
universities as well as in church related theological seminaries in Europe and beyond. A GlobeTheoLib workgroup served as a platform for high level expert contributions on strengthening the role of Christian theology in public universities and higher education institutions in Europe and beyond. The conference concluded that claiming a public space for Christian theology, and relating theological education and research to higher education institutions is not just a European issue, but – despite contextual differences - a major issue also for African, Asian and Latin American churches and universities, and thus of strategic significance for the future of World Christianity. The consultation was convened by the World Council of Churches and its Programme on Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE), the Conference of European Churches and its Commission on Dialogue (CID) as well as the MF Norwegian School of Theology in Oslo.

For more information on the conference, click here.