


HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies is turning over a new page

**Author:**Eugene Baron¹ **Affiliation:**

¹Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, Faculty of Human Sciences, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Eugene Baron,
editorhts@gmail.com

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This editorial is written as a first one for *HTS Theological Studies* (hereafter HTS), amidst quite a few other new developments that the journal has embarked on. The editorial note itself is added as a section of the journal to provide an overview of the myriad research that are published within a particular year and reflecting on the interesting research projects and themes that might interest researchers and how it would impact the Christian theological research domain. It would also communicate the most important administrative and editorial developments of HTS to our academic community. Therefore, speaking about editorial developments, I would like to extend my deep appreciation to the former Editor-in-Chief Prof Andries van Aarde for the 38 years in which he played a crucial role in the development and growth of the journal. He played an immense role in ensuring that the journal is held in high esteem by scholars globally. HTS has become an international research hub for theological research, between what is often referred to as the Global South and North but also collaborative research work between scholars within the Global South region. As a journal, we will continue to build on it in the future!

HTS also welcomes its new esteemed scholars who have decided to join its Editorial Board (see the website for further details), which would through their expertise in the field of Christian theology and add value to the journal. We welcome board members from our own country and continent, as well as from other continents (e.g. Europe, Australia and America) and the active role they would play in the integrity and quality of the journal.

As part of this editorial, I want to make our readership aware that the journal has now crafted a new focus and scope. This is one of the significant changes of the journal, which will strategically make HTS to create an international platform for studies within the *field* of Christian theology. Though the focus and scope is reduced to a more specific theological tradition (Christian), it still encourages critical engagement with its praxis and tradition, through a multi-disciplinary, inter- and trans-disciplinary approach and submissions that will show a dialectical relationship with other traditions and from various hermeneutical, exegetical, historical and contextual perspectives.

HTS invites applications for special collections (as it has done before), within the new focus and scope of the journal, but concentrates on research niche areas that are relevant (related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals) and of high-quality and would embrace and encourage an international exchange between scholars from various continents and Christian traditions. These applications will be expected to be submitted at least a few months before the end of the year in which the publication of the collection is envisaged to provide sufficient time for the editorial processes to run its course and be completed. Each collection should at least secure 10 submissions (maximum 20), to be considered. We also encourage colloquiums by the editors to further enhance the quality and academic rigour of the contributions we receive and submit for peer review. The publisher (AOSIS) will also facilitate the marketing of such calls for papers to the special collections on its website to the wider, international academic community.

The journal has been retaining its indexing from various national and international indexes (15) so far. An important one to mention here is the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science Core Collection, Arts & Humanities Citation Index, AHCI (previously known as ISI). This attests to the high impact and quality of submissions that the journal publishes, and therefore HTS remains a strong competitor among the world's top academic journals in the Arts and Humanities field. We therefore encourage authors to contribute to the quality of contributions in the journal in the field of Christian theological studies, as a choice for their research output. The journal continues to publish through its online system and open access platform and ensure that research is freely accessible to the academic community but also to allow for more impact of scholarly work.

We therefore immensely appreciate the crucial role that our reviewers are playing to ensure submissions are of high quality. Their expertise, rigorous review and constructive feedback has ensured that the quality and integrity of the journal stay in-tact. Therefore, we want to express our sincere gratitude for their immense role. In a context, where academics negotiate time for their own research and still must prioritise and participate in peer-review processes,

their contribution is deeply appreciated. We value each contribution, especially from established scholars that take time to make constructive, detailed comments on manuscripts.

I am looking forward to work with our academic community, and the friends of the journal over the years, to maintain the quality, integrity, efficiency and rigorous research that HTS will produce.
