

## Curriculum vitae for Notto R. Thelle

As the attached data and bibliographical notes suggest, my life and work have been divided between the East and the West: born in Hong Kong and spending my first five years there under the Japanese; growing up and receiving education in Norway; sixteen years in Japan, involved in research and interfaith dialogue as part of the Christian community there; and in recent years teaching theology at the University of Oslo. I regard it as one of the great privileges of my life that I have had to live “on the boundary,” in a continual inner dialogue between my basic Christian commitment and the challenges and inspirations from the East.

The years in Japan were a fascinating combination of research, dialogue and pastoral work, at times a shaking experience of being in the border land where faith meets faith and one does not always know where one is heading. One of the major themes for the rest of my life has been to search for a larger space for faith and a new language of faith through which I can commit myself wholeheartedly. I have done a lot of traditional academic work, contributed some pioneer research concerning Buddhist-Christian relations, and published several Norwegian textbooks on and translations of Buddhist and Eastern traditions. But I realize that my deepest commitment is the existential search for meaning, which has primarily been expressed in preaching and teaching, various types of dialogues, and particularly in writing.

### Personal data

Born March 19, 1941 in Hong Kong.

1946 moved to Kristiansand, Norway

1951 moved to Oslo, Norway

1960 graduated high school at Oslo Cathedral School

1960-1966 studies at Oslo University

1965 candidate of theology, Oslo University

1966 practical theological seminary, Oslo University

1965- married Mona Irene Ramstad, with whom I have five children

1967 military chaplain in Harstad, northern Norway

1968-1969 Japanese studies at Sheffield University, United Kingdom

1969-1985 missionary in Japan, Areopagos (present name of organization)

1969-1970 Japanese studies in Kobe, Japan

1972-1973 Buddhist studies at Otani University, Kyoto

1974-1985 Associate Director of the NCC (National Christian Council) Center for the Study of Japanese Religions, Kyoto, editor of *Japanese Religions* (biannual journal)

1979-1981 scholarship from The Norwegian Research Council, for three years of doctoral studies in Japan

1983 doctoral disputation at Oslo University, for the degree of Doctor Theologiae (Doctor of Theology)

1985-1986 education in pastoral counseling at Modum Bad Psychiatric Hospital

1986-2006 Professor of theology at Oslo University, Norway, with special responsibility for ecumenics, missiology, and science of religion.

1999-2000 Visiting scholar at the NCC Center for the Study of Japanese Religions, Kyoto.

2006- Senior Professor, Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo

2007 awarded the Bridge Builder Prize from the Norwegian Church Academies for pioneering interfaith dialogue

2009 awarded the Emmaus Prize from Norwegian Publishers' Association (of Christian publishers) for *Gåten Jesus* (The Riddle of Jesus) as Book of the Year for Adults.

## Books

- 1987: *Buddhism and Christianity in Japan: From Conflict to Dialogue 1854-1899*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press (xi, 355 pp.).
- 1991: *Hvem kan stoppe vinden? Vandringer i grenseland mellom Øst og Vest* (Who Can Stop the Wind? Travels in the Borderland between East and West), Oslo University Press (109 pp.), also published in Swedish and Danish, will be published in the US in 2010.
- 1992 *Mennesket og mysteriet: Religion felles allmenne fag* (Humanity and the Mystery – Textbook on Religion for High Schools, part I: Religion), Det Norske Samlaget (pp. 7-147).
- 1992: Teachers' Handbook for *Mennesket og mysteriet*
- 1993: *Ditt ansikt søker jeg* (I Seek Your Face), Oriens Publishing Company 1993 (129 pp.), also published in Swedish, Danish, Finnish, and English.
- 1997: *Hvor høyt må et menneske spørre?* (How Intensely Must a Person Inquire?), Oriens Publishing Company (141 pp), also published in Swedish.
- 1997: *Mennesket og mysteriet: Religion og etikk VK 2* (Humankind and the Mystery: Religion and Ethics for High School, part 1: Religion, revised and rewritten version), Det Norske Samlaget (pp. 10-150).
- 1997: Teachers' Handbook for the same book.
- 1999: *Hinduismen og buddhismen* (Hinduism and Buddhism), the part on Buddhism for a textbook on religion for teachers' seminaries and religious studies, co-authored with Knut A. Jacobsen, HøyskoleForlaget (pp. 173-332).
- 2000: *Det skjedde ikke i Betlehem* (It Did Not Happen in Betlehem). Oriens Publishing Company 2000.
- 2001: *Zen - lyden av én hånd* (Zen: The Sound of One Hand, Zen texts from Chinese and Japanese), Oslo: Gyldendal 2001.
- 2001: *Tao te ching og andre taoistiske skrifter* (Tao Te Ching and Other Taoist Scriptures, (co-editing with Rune Svarverud), Oslo: Den Norske Bokklubben 2001.
- 2005: *Kjære Siddhartha! Brev og samtaler i grenseland mellom Øst og Vest* (Dear Siddhartha! Letters and Dialogues in the Borderland between East and West), Oriens Publishing Company 2005, also published in Danish.
- 2008: *Seeking God's Face: Faith in an Age of Perplexity*, New York: Paulist Press, May 2008.
- 2009: *Gåten Jesus: Én fortelling – mange stemmer* (The Riddle of Jesus: One Story – Many Voices), Oriens Publishing Company, 2009, to be published in Danish in 2010
- 2010: To be published by Liturgical Press: *Who Can Stop the Wind? Travels in the Borderland Between East and West*.
- In addition numerous articles in international and national journals, such as *Japanese Religions*, *Japan Christian Quarterly*, *Cross Currents*, *Temenos*, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, *Ching Feng*, *Norsk Tidsskrift for Misjon*, *Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift*, *Kirke og Kultur*, *Religion og livssyn* and other books, journals, and newspapers.