



**UNIVERSITETET  
I OSLO**

**DET TEOLOGISKE FAKULTET**

*Institutt for Systematisk Teologi*

Postboks 1023, Blindern

0315 Oslo

Berkeley May 1, 2013

*Besøksadresse*

Domus Theologica

Blindernveien 9

To Whom it May Concern

Telefon: 22 85 03 00

Telefaks: 22 85 03 01

### **Endorsement of Sarojini Nadar's Research Portfolio and her international standing as a researcher**

It is my pleasure to endorse the research portfolio of Sarojini Nadar for her application to Full Professor. In 2007, myself and another colleague, Prof. Sidsel Roaldkvam worked closely with Profs. Isabel Phiri and Sarojini Nadar, two leading feminist theologians in Africa, to develop a joint proposal for funding for a project called 'Broken Women – Healing Traditions? Indigenous resources for gender critique and social transformation in the context of HIV&AIDS'. We were successful in our funding application and the project was jointly sponsored by The Norwegian Research Council and the National Research Foundation of South Africa.

Thus began a very productive 3 year bi-lateral research project in KwaZulu-Natal between our home university, the University of Oslo, Norway and the University of KwaZulu-Natal. There were 3 sub-projects of this larger research project and Sarojini Nadar was one of the key researchers for Subproject 1 entitled 'Indigenous Resources for Critiquing Patriarchy in the Context of HIV&AIDS'. She also served as the Research Manager for this sub-project. Her vast research and publications in the area of religion, culture, sacred text and African feminist theologies made her an ideal researcher for this project.

However, not only is she an excellent researcher, but her special gift is the way in which she is able to "translate" her research for oral communication. One of Prof. Nadar's first tasks in this project was to be a keynote speaker at "The Oslo Celebrations" which commemorated a decade of scientific cooperation between universities in SA and Oslo. The other key-note speakers included, Ms. Naledi Pandor (Minister of Education in SA) and Prof. Jerry Coovadia. The title of her paper was "What do South African Women Really Want – Why Democracy is not Enough," and she focused on the Jacob Zuma rape trial as a case study. The audience was deeply appreciative of her paper, commenting on her ability to "bring research to life." While in Oslo, we also invited her to teach a class on African Feminist Biblical Hermeneutics, and my colleague and I witnessed how her research came alive in the classroom too.

In 2010 as we brought the project to a close, we were again honoured to invite Prof. Nadar, and her colleagues and PhD students to Oslo, for the closing conference of the project as well as to participate in various activities at the Faculty of Theology in Oslo. Here the students presented their research and also participated in a workshop on theoretical frameworks for gender research. Sarojini Nadar and Isabel Phiri gave three extraordinary presentations: "HIV, Gender and the Bible" - A contextual bible study workshop; "What's in a name? – Forging a Theoretical Framework for African Women's Theologies" and the opening address at the main conference: "Talking back to Religion and HIV&AIDS using an African Feminist Missiological Framework: Sketching the Contours of the Conversation." The feedback from all who participated was extremely positive.

Researching and presenting papers is important, but converting those papers for publication is a skill. Not only did Prof. Nadar publish at least 4 papers out of her research, she was also able to mentor her students for publication in a special issue of the *Journal of Constructive Theology: Gender, Religion and Theology in Africa* (2010, 16:2), which was based on the theme of the 2010 conference in Oslo.

**Faculty of Theology**  
*University of Oslo*

Prof. Nadar has an impressive international standing for someone so young. My colleagues and I at the University of Oslo deeply appreciate her scholarship and her publication. We will continue to seek new ways of co-operating together in research, and I have no hesitation in recommending her promotion to Full Professor.

Sincerely  
Jone Salomonsen

Jone Salomonsen, Prof. dr.theol.  
Chair Interdisciplinary & Theological Gender Studies Faculty of Theology University of Oslo  
Cell: + 47 92 25 30 84 /work: + 47 22 85 03 73  
Email: [jone.salomonsen@teologi.uio.no](mailto:jone.salomonsen@teologi.uio.no)  
<http://www.tf.uio.no/forskning/forskergrupper/kjonn-religion/>  
<http://www.tf.uio.no/bw/>  
Faculty of Theology  
PBox 1023 Blindern  
0315 Oslo  
Norway