

The logo consists of the letters 'NIMS' in a bold, sans-serif font, centered within a white circle. The background of the slide is a soft-focus photograph of golden-brown grasses or reeds, likely at sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden light illuminating the scene.

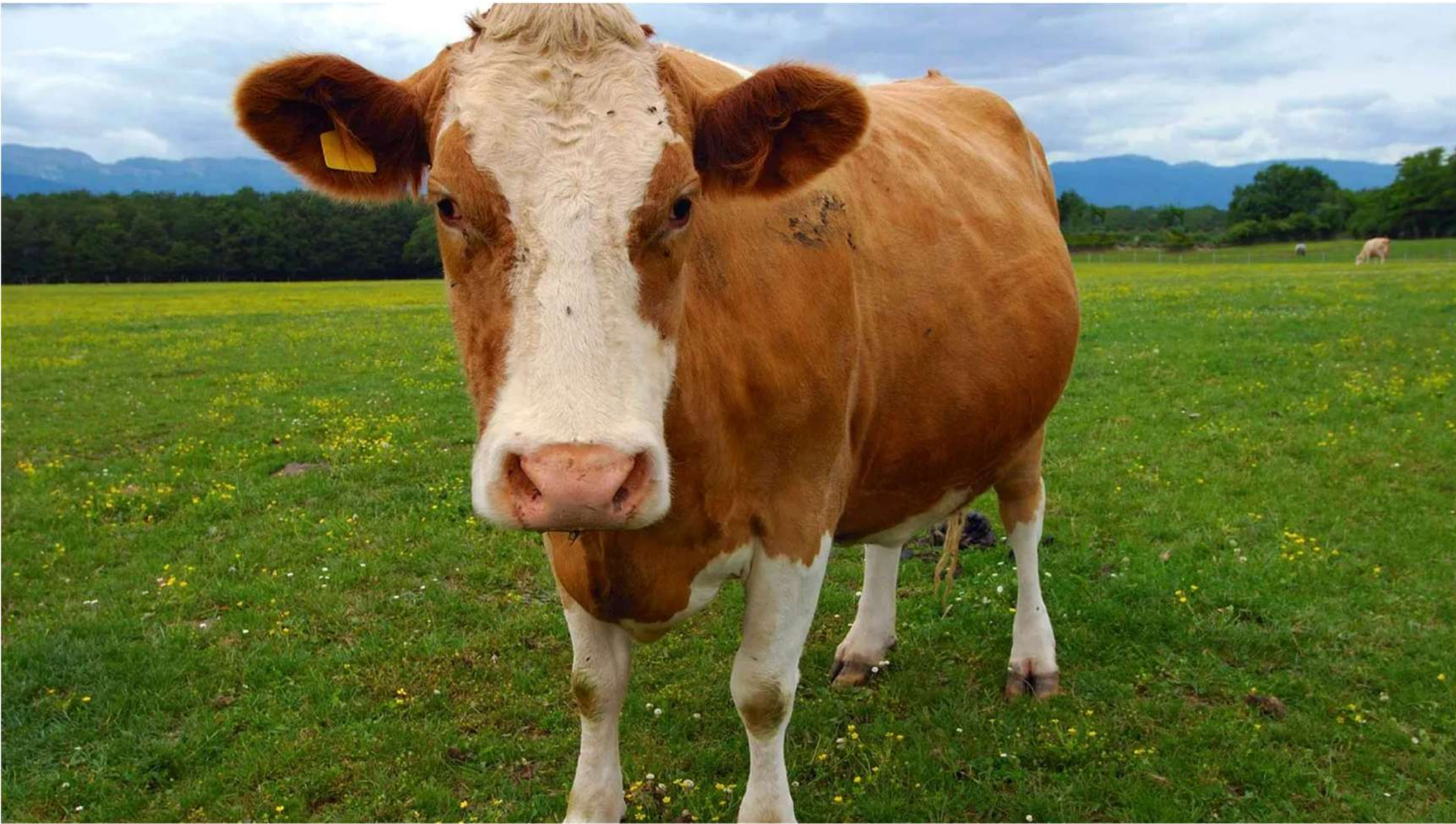
**NIMS**

**Intercultural Bible reading i  
small fellowship groups**



A few concepts  
to understand  
regarding this  
Intercultural  
Bible reading  
project.

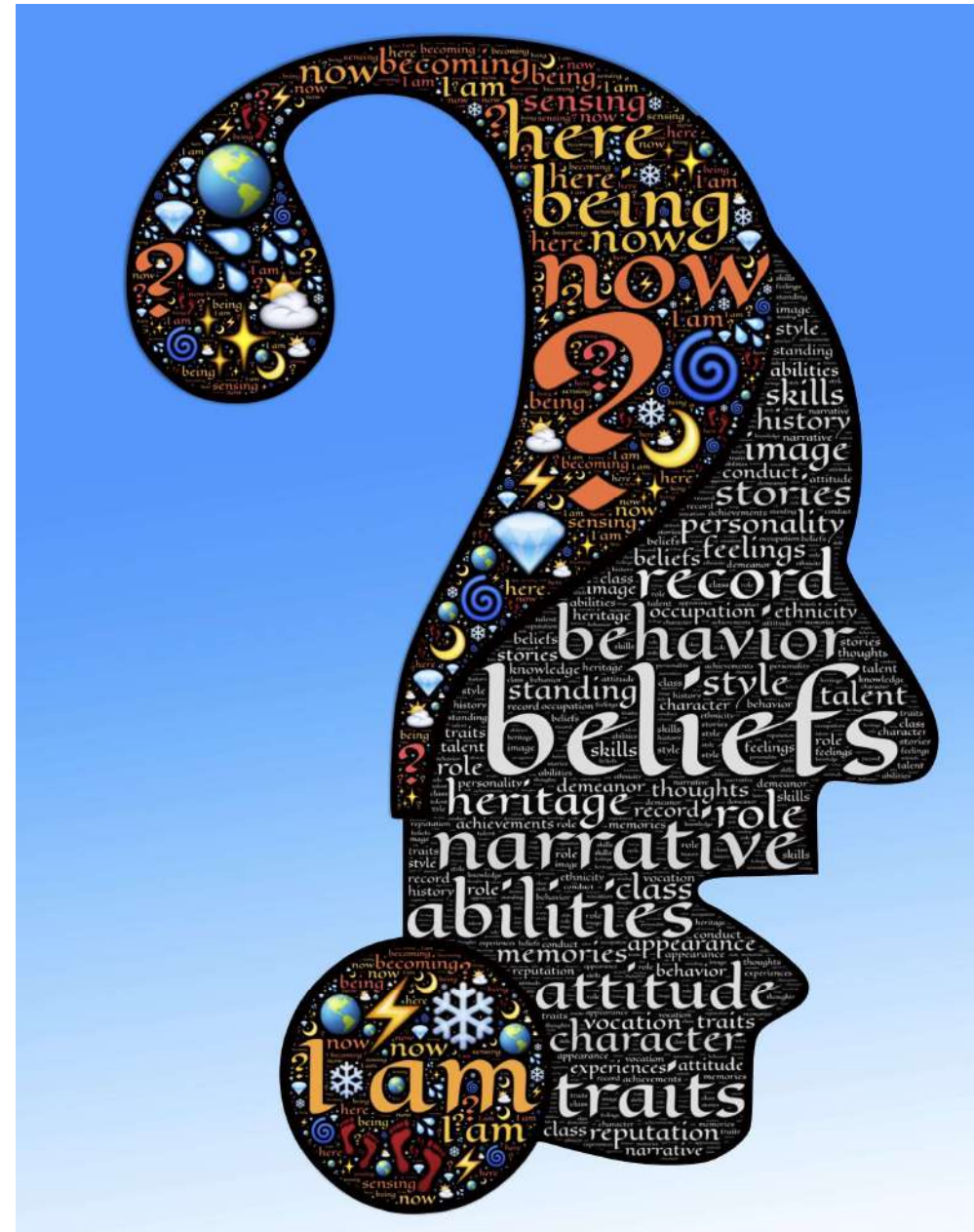






# Contextual theology

- A rather new discipline of theology, brought forth by Globalisation
- **Before:** From the west to the rest, Europa had a monopoly on theology.
- **Now:** From us to ourselves, a post-colonial theology.
- The goal of Contextual theology is to find one selves in the texts and acts of the Bible – Give the readers the power to read the bible on their own.



λόγος

# The Ordinary Reader

- 99% of all Bible Readers
- People with no theological education
- Non-Critical reading
- **Theological educated readers:** What did the author try to tell in his/her own time, and how can we analyse the material to a correct conclusion
- **The Ordinary Reader:** What does the text tell me in my own situation.





How to study  
“the ordinary  
reader” and  
Intercultural  
bible reading?

# Format:

- Contextual bible reading and “The Ordinary Reader”
- How we interprets the bible is a dynamical process affected by how we live our lives. – How can we describe such a complex system of interpretation?
- Hans De Witt – Intercultural Bible reading in small fellowship groups.
- Introducing language, distance and time as hermeneutical factors.



## Through the Eyes of Another

Intercultural Reading of the Bible



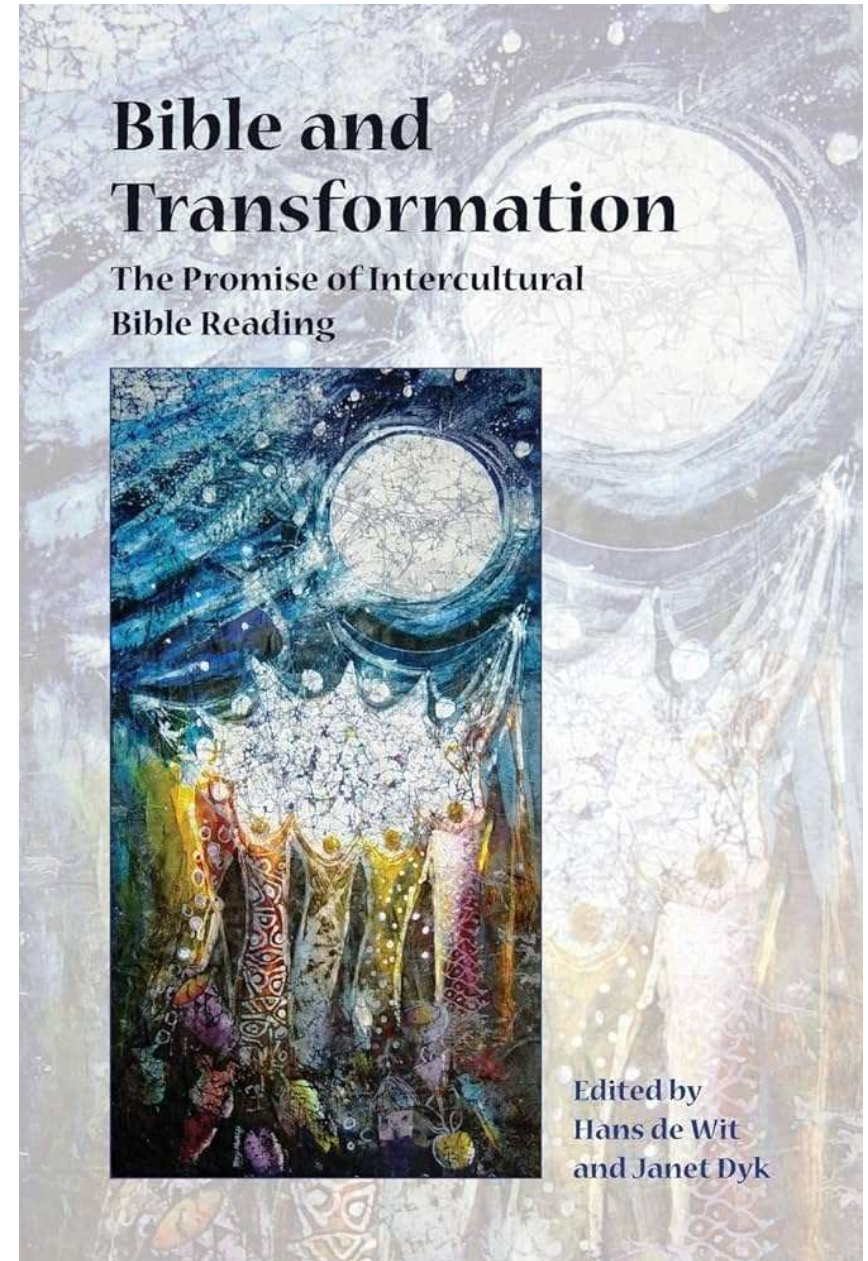
Edited by  
Hans de Wit, Louis Jonker, Marleen Kool, Daniel Schipani

## The concept

- Project start: 2001, Netherlands ,Hans de Wit.
- The goal of the project was to research what happens when “Ordinary Readers” with radically different context and culture reads the same Bible passage and starts a dialogue about its interpretation.

# The product

- A bunch of researchers joined the project, and in 2015 the result was presented through this anthology.
- Exploring how “the ordinary” reader interact with each other, exploring groups connected to, (e.g.):
  - Liberating readings from South-America.
  - Minjung readings from South-Korea.
  - Post-colonial readings of the old testament from Africa.
  - Post-modern readings amongst European youth.
  - Mestizaje culture and identity in the Philippines.





How did we use  
Intercultural  
bible reading?



# BIPP – Knut Holter

- *“A Bible study model that works Interculturally and has a Popular profile that aims at Personal transformation.”*
- Developed by Knut Holter and translated by my wife, Berly Kristina.
- A tool that creates a framework for dialogue and transformation
- The model requires two groups to have three group meetings, where after each meeting, a report is to be written and exchanged with the partnering group. By participating, groups commit to a “partnership” where learning to know one another is essential for the project's success. This, as the relationship created between the two groups, serves as a foundation for understanding and development.

# 1. Meeting

- Biographic presentation of the groups.
- The groups read the text (Luke 15 "The prodigal Son) from their own perspective before writing a reading report which is shared with the partner group.
- Here the groups own thoughts and interpretation of the text is in focus. Creating the fundamental topics of the project.

## 2. Meeting

- The groups read the text and the partner groups first report, containing their initial thought on the text. A second report is then written, allowing participants to address similarities and differences between their perspectives and the partner groups reported understanding.
- The goal of the 2. meeting is for “the other” to create and understanding of “us”.



# 3. Meeting

- The text is read for the third and last time, but this time considering the partner groups second report, which addresses “their” understanding of “our” reading of the text. A third and concluding report was then written, allowing for a reaction or an act of self-acknowledgment.
- The goal of the 3. meeting is to develop a reflection on how others perceive our own way of reading the Bible. Thus, creating a safe space for self-reflection, self-understanding, and transformation of the reader.

# Two Projects

Luke 15:11-32, Read with Focus on Family Values and Parental Roles: A Qualitative Research on Intercultural Bible Reading Between a Norwegian and a Philippino Group, Based on Contrasts in Context and Culture.

Cultural and Religious Identity Negotiation in the Context of Intercultural Bible Reading: A Dialogue on Luke 15:11-32, Between a Norwegian and a Japanese Bible Study Group.

## What did we find?

# What did we find?

## Norwegian – Philippino

- Both groups have surprisingly similar family values. This can be attributed to their common Christian heritage, even though there are some slight differences in how they interpret this worldview.
- The Bible creates the basic and common standard, both ethically and normative, for the two groups to build their family values.
- Even though the two groups have similar family values, they interpret parental roles in the text quite differently.
- **Some important development:**
  - Missing motherly character, why is the father take the responsibility of a mother.
  - The father has a strong allusion to God, Norwegian group not able to criticise his actions.
  - Difference in view regarding the responsibility of the elder brother.



# What did we find?

## Norwegian – Japanese

*“In their initial read of Luke 15:11-32, the Norwegian group found the text somewhat challenging, as they perceived the father figure to be unfair towards his two sons and, therefore, a bad depiction of the Christian God. This was reflected in their distant reading of the text. Their initial interpretation of the text is then challenged by their partner group, who sees the father's justice as “more than human justice,” putting forth an alternative understanding of justice for the Norwegian group to reflect on. After gaining insight and understanding of their own culture, as well as the culture of their partner group and their view on justice, the Norwegian group modifies their understanding of the text, and its characters, stating that they now see the text “through the eyes of the Japanese group.” The Japanese group has given them new thoughts and insights, allowing them to see the older brother from a new perspective, which again unlocks a new and different perspective to view the father figure from. While the group alters their initial interpretation, now seeing the father as a just and loving father figure, the “adopted” view supports the group's initial image of the Christian God. As such, the change, which seems most radical, is also affirmative towards the group's religious self-image and identity. The text itself has changed its status from a challenge to an affirmation.”*



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# What did we find?

## Norwegian – Japanese

- Through the process of identity negotiation, the two parties have gained a growing awareness of the Self and the Other. The participants express an openness in drawing in “otherness” rather than holding “the other” reader at arm’s length.
- It is in the intersection between the two, the sum of both parts, that something new is created; a “Mestizaje identity”, showcasing how something new and equally true is created through the dialogue between the two parties.
- **Some important development:**
  - The Japanese group goes from being a “passive receiver of the Word” through clerical preaching to a “active reader”.
  - The Norwegian group acknowledges their “locked reading” – We grew up with the text, it's been preached many times in our church, and we know what it is trying to tell us.
  - The Japanese group takes ownership of their identity as “adult converts” and it develops from a negative to a positive designation.



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# How can Intercultural Bible reading be a tool towards mission?

- **Theology Creating** - It creates new way of thinking theology, and it produces new and contextualised theology and faith-practice.
- **Liberating** - as contextual theology creates the foundation of Liberation theology.
  - No Minister hovering over you while you are reading.
  - How I read the bible matters.
- **Correctional reading:**
  - Reading the bible with a sensitivity towards culture.
  - "Ok? Maybe our version of the store is not the one and only truth!"
  - Challenges and hinders dangerous interpretations.
- **Identity creating** – IBR gives knowledge and language to understand and describe our own faith-identity.



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# AN INTIMATE REVELATION



INTERCULTURAL BIBLE READING  
WITH ADOLESCENTS

TAGGERT E. WOLVERTON

## **A manual in Intercultural Bible reading in small fellowship groups**

- Taggert E. Wolverson has created a manual for Intercultural Bible reading in small fellowship groups.
- Describes the theological and hermeneutical implications in simple non-professional terms.
- Presents his work with youth as examples of how to do IBR.
- All you need to start your own IBR-project, or simply a good read in under 250 pages.