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12 NOTABLE BOOKS FOR CHRISTIAN REFLECTION IN AFRICA: A REVIEW ARTICLE

Paul Bowers

What books should one be reading these days if one wants to understand modern Africa from a Christian perspective? What should we be noticing if we would like to keep familiar with leading personalities and perspectives of contemporary African Christianity? Here I suggest a list of 12 important books that would likely suit such intentions.

These are by no means the only books that could serve such a reading project. Many more could be selected. But these do represent an excellent sampling of the sort of reading that would support informed Christian reflection in and about Africa. While many of these books may not be so well known outside Africa, all of them deserve to be familiar within Africa.

It will be evident at once that I have tried to come up with a list that illustrates a wide range of interests and issues, and also one that represents a wide variety of personalities and intellectual trends. I have also restricted the selection to books published since 1990, to keep the contributions relatively recent. In making up such a short-list one is immediately afflicted with a sense of consequential omissions, but such additional titles can always be included

Dr. Paul Bowers has taught in theological education in Africa since 1968, in Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and most recently in Cape Town, South Africa. He has also been involved with the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA) since its inception in 1976, with the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE) since it was launched in 1980, with the *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology (AJET)* since it began publication in 1982, and with the journal *BookNotes for Africa* since it began publication in 1996. He presently serves as ICETE's international administrator. Bowers holds a PhD in biblical studies from the University of Cambridge in England.

in some subsequent presentation. This set of selections is presented not in some order of priority, but merely alphabetically by author.¹

Each of these titles has been reviewed in the specialist journal *BookNotes for Africa*, and the evaluative annotations offered below are derived, with permission, directly from its pages, although edited to fit the intentions of this presentation. The result is that whereas much of the wording of those reviews is retained, the evaluative opinions are my own, for better or worse. Many other books of similar significance relating to Africa are routinely reviewed in the pages of *BookNotes for Africa*, a journal dedicated to bringing to notice just these sorts of publications, and offering expert Christian assessment of their contributions. Those who find these annotated selections particularly interesting and useful might therefore want to take up reading a journal like *BookNotes for Africa* on a regular basis.²

1 **Azumah, John A.**

The Legacy of Arab-Islam in Africa: A Quest for Inter-religious Dialogue

Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2001 (264 pages, paperback, c. \$26)

No reflection on Christian presence in Africa today is sufficient without consideration of African Christian understanding of and engagement with Islam. And here we have a guide with ample experience and learning for this so complex project. Azumah holds a PhD from the University of Birmingham, is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in Ghana, and until recently was a lecturer at the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad, India. With publication of this important work he must now be considered one of Africa's leading Christian scholars on Islam. The book presents a lively and realistic review of how Islam spread through sub-Saharan Africa. Azumah's approach to dialogue possibilities is not neutral. He clearly wishes to correct attempts by both Muslim and western scholars to understate the problematics of Islamic presence in Africa. For example, he notes that Islam in its expansion in Africa has often assimilated features of traditional religion rather than displaced them, which at times has then become the justification of efforts to correct this rampant "pluralism" by military jihad. The author also treats at length the otherwise often neglected topic of slavery in African Islam, and the Arab slave trade. He concludes by calling for fresh dialogue between Muslims and Christians in Africa, in order to remove misunderstandings and enhance good relations. This book represents an important current example of African

Christian reflection on the legacy of Islam in Africa and on the prospects of inter-faith dialogue.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Westerlund, David, and Eva Evers Rosander, editors. *African Islam and Islam in Africa*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1997 (357 pages, paperback, c. \$27)

Backeberg, Werner. *Fundamentalism—Muslims Differ Widely from Evangelicals*. Pretoria, South Africa: IMER, 2002 (160 pages, paperback, c. \$30)

2 **Bediako, Kwame**

Theology and Identity: The Impact of Culture upon Christian Thought in the Second Century and Modern Africa.

Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1992 (525 pages, paperback, c. £20)

This now classic text in African theology has an epochal quality about it, generous in its size and scope, impressive in its learning, articulate in its presentation, penetrating in its assessments, and even instructive in its limitations. Bediako holds a PhD from the University of Aberdeen, and currently heads a research study centre in his home country of Ghana. The impact of his book lies not least in its distinctive interpretive approach. Bediako first offers successive chapters on the variety of ways that second-century Christianity evolved its sense of identity in relation to Greco-Roman culture (Tatian, Tertullian, Justin, and Clement of Alexandria). He then uses this as an interpretive framework for addressing the recent quest for Christian identity in Africa in relation to Africa's traditional religious culture (Idowu, Mbiti, Mulago, and Kato). And the limitations? Bediako designates Christianity's correlation with the religious culture of traditional Africa as African Christian theology's defining question. Some will feel that this way of delimiting the task needlessly obscures the wide range of additional theological issues that thoughtful Christians encounter in modern Africa. Others may wonder whether Bediako sufficiently addresses the other half of this identity question, whether one must rightly ask not only how African Christianity may best relate to its African heritage, but also and insistently how African Christianity can best relate to and represent its Christian heritage? How is African Christianity to be both authentically African *and* authentically Christian? Still others may find curious Bediako's noticeably less generous handling of the evangelical leader Byang Kato. Nevertheless this

sophisticated and multi-faceted study will reward sustained engagement for everyone who takes seriously the theological task of African Christianity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Bediako, Kwame. *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis: 1995 (276 pages, paperback, c. \$30)

Bediako, Kwame. *Jesus in Africa: The Christian Gospel in African History and Experience*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2000 (144 pages, paperback, c. £7)

3 **de Gruchy, John W.**

Reconciliation: Restoring Justice

London: SCM/Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002 (263 pages, paperback, c. \$24)

This is easily among the best available discussions of Christian responsibility in post-apartheid South Africa. De Gruchy, doyen of South African theologians, has devoted much of his academic life to addressing the relationship between politics and theology. A vocal critic of the apartheid government, de Gruchy was intimately involved in the reconciliation process in South Africa in the 1990s. In 2002 he gave the Hulsean Lectures in the UK, which allowed him the opportunity for further reflection on the process of reconciliation, the fruits of which are gathered in this book. De Gruchy is concerned with situating reconciliation within a particular context—in his case, post-apartheid South Africa—because there is no such thing as reconciliation in the abstract. De Gruchy is also concerned specifically with reconciliation within the Christian tradition. His discussion engages, amongst other, Anselm, Abelard and Barth, and draws especially on Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology. As the title of the book indicates, de Gruchy argues that reconciliation is ultimately about restoring justice, a theme not always prominent in such discussion. The reader may feel that the relationship between justice and reconciliation is complicated, and would have benefited from more space than de Gruchy is able to devote to it. The book provides a fine example of theological engagement and could be profitably read for that reason alone. Christians living within contexts of conflict, or needing to reflect on such circumstances, whether in Africa or overseas, will want to attend with care to what the author has to say about both reconciliation and justice.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

de Gruchy, John W. *Christianity and Democracy. A Theology for a Just World Order*. Cambridge: CUP, 1995 (308 pages, paperback, c. £18)

Graybill, Lyn S. *Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Miracle or Model*. Lynne Rienner, 2002 (231 pages, paperback, c. \$20)

Ferdinando, Keith

The Triumph of Christ in African Perspective: A Study of Demonology and Redemption in the African Context. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1999 (450 pages, paperback, c. £30)

This remarkable contribution seeks to address pastorally the theological and cultural challenges of African Christianity. It does so in a manner that displays the best of evangelical biblical scholarship for Africa. Ferdinando lived and worked for some years in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), for part of that time as head of the distinguished Institut Superier Theologique de Bunia, and more recently has been a lecturer at the London School of Theology. Written from the perspective of Africa, the book's unifying theme is the all-encompassing "triumph of Christ" as a manifestation of the universal sovereignty of God. It seeks to transform the essentially pessimistic perspective of traditional religions by focusing on the significance of Christ's sacrificial work of redemption on the Cross. In light of the Lord's overwhelming victory over the forces of wickedness, both biblical demonology and African occult are revealed for what they are, and relegated to their temporary, subordinate and subdued place in this world, as they await their ultimate destiny in God's final judgement. Ferdinando supports this fundamentally optimistic message through a detailed study of the relevant materials of Scripture for the proper biblical response to an ever-threatening dominion of darkness. No controversial issues are ignored. Ferdinando shows that syncretism or accommodation to ancestral beliefs, practices, values, and perspectives are not the answer. Only an ever-deeper, personally applied understanding of what God has already done and will do for us in and through Jesus the Christ will do. This text is an absolute "must read" for anyone committed to practical theological reflection in the African context. Ferdinando's biblically-based optimism is as spiritually educative as it is personally contagious.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

O'Donovan, Wilbur. *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective*. 2nd ed. Bukuru, Nigeria: ACTS, 1995 (374 pages, paperback, c. \$6)

Turaki, Yusufu. *Tribal Gods of Africa: Ethnicity, Racism, Tribalism and the Gospel of Christ*. Bukuru: ACTS, 1997 (176 pages, paperback, c. \$5)

5 **Molyneux, K. Gordon**

African Christian Theology: The Quest for Selfhood

Lewiston NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993 (422 pages, paperback, c. £60)

This is one of the most fascinating books available on African theology. As Adrian Hastings himself says in a foreword, "No other work I know of has attempted to understand African theology in this way." Molyneux grew up in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and served there for many years in theological education. His PhD is from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. The originality of his project is his attempt to understand African theology as a contemporary living process, which he does by a detailed description and evaluation of three different models of "doing" theology in the African context. The first is the ongoing scholarly publications enterprise at the prestigious Faculté de Théologie Catholique in Kinshasa (where at a seminar in 1960 the very term "African theology" first came into public usage). The second example is the vibrant hymnology of the independent Kimbanguist Church, through which it consciously expresses (and evolves) its theological perspectives. The third example is a notable series of "Gospel and Culture" seminars by which the evangelical church community CECA in north-eastern Congo set itself to nourish contextually-sensitive theological reflection on the felt needs of its membership. As a framework for his three samples Molyneux also provides a masterful introductory chapter that traces the quest for African Christian theology during the past century (well worth reading on its own). The book is weighty with substantive insights, and is elegantly readable throughout. It is regrettable that the publisher has now priced this valuable contribution beyond ordinary reach.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Parratt, John. *Reinventing Christianity: African Theology Today*.

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995 (217 pages, paperback, c. \$15)

Ngewa, Samuel, Mark Shaw and Tite Tiénou, editors. *Issues in African Christian Theology*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1998 (343 pages, paperback, c. \$9)

6 **Mugambi, Jesse N. K.**

From Liberation to Reconstruction

Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1995 (258 pages, paperback, c. \$10)

Recent years have witnessed the call for a 'theology of reconstruction' to become the new paradigm for African Christian theology. Especially prominent within ecumenical circles, this fresh direction in African theological discourse is suggesting that Africa needs to go beyond a theology of liberation to sustained reflection on the contribution that the church and theology in Africa can make in addressing the many crises of the continent. Among the first publications to signal the emergence of this trend was this book by Mugambi, the prolific professor in religious studies at the University of Nairobi. Mugambi acknowledges the challenges posed for African Christianity by Africa's colonial and missionary inheritance, which form the focus of liberation theology. But he wishes to move on to consider the role that the church must now play in creating a new society suitable to modern Africa. In biblical phrasing the controlling metaphor thus shifts from the Exodus to Nehemiah. This change of accent has caught the imagination of many, and has also generated much debate. Mugambi himself has continued to write on the theme, not least proposing that liberation and reconstruction should be seen not as competing but as complementary themes, in the sense that liberation should naturally be followed by reconstruction. The new emphasis does not always avoid the core risk of its predecessor, namely the reduction of the gospel to a social agenda. This book is a useful place to begin familiarisation both with this much-published African theologian, and at the same time with this new trend in African theology.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Mugambi, J. N. K. *Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction*. Nairobi: Acton, 2003 (235 pages, paperback, \$13)

Dedji, Valentin. *Reconstruction and Renewal in African Christian Theology*. Nairobi: Acton, 2003 (284 pages, paperback, c. \$5)

- 7 **Oduyoye, Mercy A.**
Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004 (114 pages, paperback, c. \$18)

Widely regarded as Africa's leading woman theologian, Oduyoye here offers a collection of eleven papers selected from her previous work. An introductory autobiography notes various influences on the author's thinking: a Christian family of several generations, a father in pastoral ministry, and her upbringing in a matrilineal society in Ghana. Her background further includes living in Europe, and participating widely in global ecumenical activities. In one paper the author also relates her personal experience when life in a patrilineal African culture outside Ghana deprived her of any decision-making role on the sole basis of her gender. Another essay looks at rituals for the various stages of a woman's life in Africa: birth, puberty, marriage, birthing, death, and mourning, within the framework of traditional beliefs and practices. In developing an African feminist theology Oduyoye has drawn what she wants from African culture and religion, and also what she wants from the Bible. "Any interpretation of the Bible is unacceptable if it does harm to women, the vulnerable and the voiceless." A frequent target is the hierarchical and patriarchal structures of most African cultures and of the African church. Oduyoye is not anti-male as some western feminists are, but men should respect the full humanity of women and not treat them as possessions, as "goats that have been taught to talk". This brilliantly evocative collection is an excellent place to begin acquaintance with this remarkable thinker, and with this important theme for Africa.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

- Mbugua, Judy, editor. *Our Time Has Come: African Christian Women Address the Issues of Today.* Carlisle UK: Paternoster, 1994 (151 pages, paperback, c. £8)
- Oduyoye, Mercy A. *Introducing African Women's Theology.* Sheffield: Continuum, 2001 (132 pages, paperback, c. £15)

- 8 **Sanneh, Lamin**
Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West
 Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003 (138 pages, paperback, c. \$12)

Sanneh is among the most seminal African Christian scholars writing today. Anyone expecting to keep current with contemporary African Christian

thinking will want to ensure acquaintance with his ever expanding corpus—and here is as good a place as any to start. Originally from the Gambia, and a convert from Islam, Sanneh previously taught at Harvard and is now Professor of Missions at Yale Divinity School. In this slender volume he examines the explosive growth of the gospel in the non-western world, accompanied by the rapid decline of Christianity in the West. The result, Sanneh contends, is “post-western Christianity,” involving the migration of the faith to a new context. Such a development is generating profound transformations in how the Christian faith becomes expressed, changes comparable to the Hellenisation of the gospel in the early church. The bulk of the book explores the relationship of these new embodiments of the faith to western expressions of Christianity, and to contemporary social, economic, and political developments. Sanneh’s observations regarding non-western Christianity relate in principal part to Africa, with immediate implications for assessing the significance, role and future of African Christianity. The breadth of Sanneh’s research, the fact that he is one of those rare individuals at home in multiple cultural and religious settings, and the evident operation of a penetrating mind, make this a book that will richly repay the careful reader.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Sanneh, Lamin. *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989 (255 pages, paperback, c. \$25)

Sanneh, Lamin. *Encountering the West: Christianity and the Global Cultural Process: The African Dimension*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993 (286 pages, hardcover, c. \$28)

9 **Shorter, Aylward and Joseph N. Njiru**

New Religious Movements in Africa

Nairobi: Paulines, 2001 (112 pages, paperback, c. \$5)

Shorter is a widely-published sociologist/theologian at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. Njiru is a graduate of that institution, and has been on the staff of a community centre in Nairobi. Here using Nairobi as their case study, the authors provide a pioneering introduction to a consequential emerging trend in African Christianity, namely the “new religious movements” (NRMs). NRMs are defined as essentially urban movements, such as open-air rallies, crusades, revival meetings, miracle centres, healing ministries and similar phenomena. According to Shorter and Njiru, the NRMs are taking the place of African Instituted Churches (AICs). Whereas AICs helped their

constituencies negotiate a transition from traditional life to that of the modern world, NRMs in contrast are firmly located within modern urban Africa, and assist their adherents by presenting “a problem-solving religion, even a problem-solving God” for coping with the realities of that setting, thus offering a way beyond the frustrations and desperations of modern life towards affluency. NRMs thus appeal to the trends towards secularism and individualism occurring in Africa today. Deriving in part from Pentecostalism, and influenced by neo-pentecostalism and the health-and-wealth gospel, NRMs may be seen as “a religious short-cut to power, instant success and economic growth,” and represent “a step towards the secularization of Christianity”. Also treated are the influence of the NRMs on the Catholic church, what the Catholic church can learn from NRMs, and how NRMs may impact the future of Christianity in Africa. Thoughtful Christians of every theological tradition in Africa will want to ponder the findings and implications of this pace-setting study.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Shorter, Aylward. *The Church in the African City*. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1991 (152 pages, paperback, c. \$20)

Shorter, Aylward and Edwin Onyancha. *Secularism in Africa: A Case Study—Nairobi City*. Nairobi: Paulines, 1997 (144 pages, paperback, c. \$5)

10 **Sundkler, Bengt and Christopher Steed**

A History of the Church in Africa

Cambridge: CUP, 2000 (1251 pages, hardback, c. £95)

The distinguished Swedish missionary statesman Bengt Sundkler earlier served in South Africa and Tanzania, and afterward was professor of church history at the University of Uppsala. This vast magisterial account of the history of African Christianity, unfinished at the time of his death in 1995, was completed by his former research assistant, Christopher Steed. At the heart of their presentation is the thesis that the well-documented missionary enterprise in Africa, essential as it was, constitutes only a small part of the full story of the Church in Africa. The role of the missionaries is not denigrated; their considerable accomplishments are fully noted. But to understand African Christianity requires taking even more fully into account the vital, creative role that Africans themselves played in the dynamic process of the continent’s Christianisation. This particular focus, “not on Western partners but on African actors”, is what makes this an exceptionally worthwhile and indispensable contribution. The treatment is very complete and balanced.

more so than one might have thought possible for a project of such immense historical and geographical scope. This is not a tedious, fact-saturated historical report; rather the reader is readily engaged by the generally clear, interesting, and informative manner of writing. Sundkler and Steed's massive volume seems set now to become the established reference text on African church history. But alas, the pricing is likely to impose severe limitations on its availability, at least on the African continent. Most readers may be reduced to hoping that the budget of their nearest academic library has been sufficiently ample.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Hastings, Adrian. *The Church in Africa 1450-1950*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994 (720 pages, paperback, c. £50)

Shaw, Mark. *The Kingdom of God in Africa. A Short History of African Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996 (328 pages, paperback, c. \$20)

11 **Tutu, Desmond**

No Future without Forgiveness

New York : Doubleday, 1999 (287 pages, hardback, c. \$15)

Upon his retirement as Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, Tutu was appointed chairperson of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which was set up to examine human rights abuses committed during the apartheid era and to effect a process of reconciliation. In this moving book we have Tutu's reflections on what he witnessed during the work of the Commission. The mandate given to the TRC was, in Tutu's words, to "balance the requirements of justice, accountability, stability, peace and reconciliation" in the new South Africa. Some said it would be an impossible task, and whilst debate continues about the Commission's effectiveness, what can never have been in doubt is the integrity and commitment of its chairperson. Tutu's book is profoundly disturbing, and yet he manages to convey a clear message of hope. It is disturbing in that it brings to light the terrible works of darkness perpetrated during the years of apartheid rule, exposing them for what they really were—evil. This in turn raises further questions, not least how someone who had committed gruesome atrocities can be granted free pardon simply by confessing what had been done? While refusing to offer trite answers, Tutu's conclusion is as the title of this book suggests. He gets there by telling stories: harrowing stories, hopeful stories, stories that will bring tears to your eyes, and stories that will make you smile,

but always stories told against the backdrop of the greatest story ever told. Here would be a good place to begin acquaintance with this ever gracious and courageous African, while also sensing something of South Africa's struggle with apartheid.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Tutu, Desmond. *The Rainbow People of God: South Africa's Victory over Apartheid*. London: Doubleday, 1994 (303 pages, paperback, c. £5)

Battle, Michael. *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 1997 (287 pages, paperback, c. \$20)

- 12 **West, Gerald O., and Musa W. Dube, editors**
The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories, and Trends
 Leiden: Brill, 2000 (846 pages, hardback, c. £66)

This publication marks a major forward step in African Christian scholarship, highlighting as it does the role of the Bible in Africa by means of a massive, diverse, and informative collection of essays. The editors are two academics, Gerald West of the University of Natal, and Musa Dube of the University of Botswana. The stated aim of this interdisciplinary project is "to present...as wide a sense of the presence of the Bible in Africa as possible." This objective is admirably achieved. The 38 essays give attention to the history of biblical interpretation in Africa, hermeneutical perspectives, engagements with particular biblical texts, translation projects and issues, and cultural implications. The volume concludes with an extraordinary contribution in its own right, Grant LeMarquand's definitive "A Bibliography of the Bible in Africa", exceeding 160 pages! Generally speaking the essays are well written; some are rather more complex and technical than others, but most should be accessible to advanced-level readership. In combination they serve as an excellent entry point for surveying the expanse of biblically-related studies in Africa. Readers should certainly not expect to agree with every contribution, whether in terms of content, method, interpretation or conclusion, but they will surely find much that will illuminate and challenge to fresh thinking. Regrettably, the high price may put the volume beyond the means of most individuals, and even of many institutions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Schaaf, Ype. *On Their Way Rejoicing: The History and Role of the Bible in Africa*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1994 (265 pages, paperback, c. £10)

Wendland, Ernst R., and Jean-Claude Loba-Mkole, editors. *Biblical Texts and African Audiences*. Nairobi: Acton, 2004 (211 pages, paperback, c. \$13)

In Conclusion

What should one do after reading through an evaluative survey like this? How do we make such an experience useful? Reading all of these books would doubtless do any of us some good. But in reality very few of us will have either the time or the resources to do so. As an alternative, might I suggest that most of us could benefit from deciding to read at least *one* of these books during the coming year. For anyone wanting to keep engaged with Christian thinking in and about Africa, this could be an altogether undemanding and enriching step. One of the titles above may already have caught your interest, and you may already be planning how to beg, buy, or borrow a copy to read. But if not, if with so many options you aren't sure where to start, then let me suggest that either the book by Sanneh, or (if you can find it in a good library) the one by Molyneux, might prove a worthwhile place to begin.³

Meanwhile, pause a moment to reflect on what you have already achieved just by reading this review article. Let us suppose that you would like to keep somewhat current on what is being published in and about Africa, that you wouldn't mind keeping familiar with leading writers and viewpoints, and that in the process you would welcome some thoughtful evaluation from a Christian perspective. But let us also suppose that under no circumstances could you afford to do all the reading that this might imply. That is where basic surveys like this one can become quite handy. They have a way of familiarising us with the landscape, broadening our awareness of what is available, and running out our horizons a bit, all within a manageable compass. Indeed, if you have read thus far, you have already accomplished something worthwhile of this sort. And if you would like to continue this kind of experience, whether or not you have time to read a lot of books, then arrange to take advantage of journals such as *BookNotes for Africa* on a regular basis. Such ongoing surveys of current literature exist for just this purpose. There is very much being written and published about Africa and

about African Christianity these days that well deserves our thoughtful awareness.

¹ All pricing is approximate (the \$ mark indicates pricing in US\$). Most of the books mentioned can be ordered on the web from places like Amazon, sometimes at lower prices for used copies. A few of the books may be too costly or no longer easily available for purchase, so may need to be found in a good library. Contact information for most publishers can be quickly discovered on the internet, by e.g. Google search. Here is contact information for some of the less familiar publishers referenced in this article: **Acton Publishers**, PO Box 74419, Nairobi, Kenya (www.acton.co.ke/); **ACTS**, PMB 2020, Bukuru, Plateau State, Nigeria (www.africachristiantextbooks.com/); **East African Educational Publishers**, PO Box 45314, Nairobi, Kenya; **IMER** (Institute for Missiological Research, Faculty of Theology), University of Pretoria, Pretoria 0002, South Africa; **Paulines Publications**, PO Box 49026, Nairobi, Kenya (www.paulinesafrica.org/).

² The journal *BookNotes for Africa* offers scholarly reviews of recent Africa-related publications relevant for informed Christian reflection in and about Africa. In doing so it is providing a service unique among available publications relating to Africa. Titles are selected especially for potential interest to thoughtful readers, theological educators, theological libraries, and academic researchers in Africa and overseas. The journal is in its eleventh year of publication, with issues released on an occasional basis, usually twice yearly. Each issue contains about 40 reviews, with more than 700 titles reviewed to date. An index of all titles reviewed in *BookNotes* since its inception is available on the web, at: www.theoleafrica.org/BookNotes/Index/ A simple mode of production is maintained to enable modest subscription rates. The rate for four issues (airmail posting included) is: US\$8 to addresses within Africa, and US\$12 to addresses overseas. Inquiries and orders should be addressed to: *BookNotes for Africa*, PO Box 250100, Ndola, Zambia.

³ If Molyneux proves inaccessible, perhaps try Ferdinando.