

## Book Reviews

### **African public theology**

Agang SB (ed) 2020.

*Carlisle, Cumbria: Langham/ Hippobooks. xxv+422 pages.*

*ISBN 978-78368-766-4. No price quoted.*

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This book is a first for the African continent as it ventures into the field of public theology with a text for the 'ordinary' reader, including theological studentsrela who will probably become its main interlocutors on the ground. Like all good public theology it represents a collaborative endeavour, including the work of many hitherto relatively unknown African scholars. Its theoretical framework is the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa we want.

The book is structured with three sections: Introduction to public theology, public theology and public life, and public theology and the church, and focusses on the three fold task of public theology – self-criticism, critique and construction (p.272-277). Section two is devoted to a number of current issues that Africa faces.

The final section seeks to confirm the sometimes challenged place of Christianity in Africa, analyse how to mobilise the African church and guide the church to becoming instrumental in establishing the Africa God wants. A number of concrete suggestions are made. First, to remove the western imposed dichotomy between the sacred and secular, second, to imitate Jesus' ministry integrating spirituality, witness and actions; third, to promote kingdom values particularly in the ethical domain; fourth, to empower the laity in order that all Christians are to be involved in ministry in the world; and fifth, to engage in self-critical prophetic challenge as a prelude to reviving its mission seeking the transformation of Africa. Each chapter ends with a list of questions to consider with additional reading suggestions. This will certainly promote the approach of public theology

It is strange to note the absence of any reference to the Black Theology of Liberation (BTL) and public theology, and I looked in vain for any reference to the work of one of the continent's leading public theology thinkers in BTL, the late Vuyani Vellem. This may be due to the project's commitment Motlhabi's (2008) concept of 'one theology for one Africa' African Theology which results in the emasculation of BTL as a relevant and radical discourse.

The book virtually ignores one of the most controversial issues in Africa today – human sexuality – which has serious theological implications with regard to the marginalised in society, and which is eschewed even by radical theologians, eg. BTL (cf. lists of contemporary African issues on pp.372, 382, 384-5) because it offends the sensitivities of conservative theologians and church members. This is not a viable reason for avoid-

ance. Echoing Banda's comment regarding poverty this is 'a challenge to theology because it destroys people's self-esteem' (p.116). The only references to human sexuality issues are to be found in the chapters on human rights and gender. Bagu, in the chapter on human rights, adopts a traditional right wing verbal inerrancy approach to scripture (p.214) relating to human sexuality issues, while admitting that the expression of rights was 'often discriminatory and exclusionary' (P.207). He claims: 'The Africa God wants is an Africa where every person is recognized, respected and conferred with all the rights that accompany the fact that they are human' (p. 210). He gives a strong impression that there are human rights regarding gays that are different from human rights for other vulnerable groups: 'We should not revoke all of their human rights any more than we revoke the rights of others in the congregation who sin' (p.215). Here we have the assumption that being (functioning as) gay is a sin. When discussing cognitive justice, Bagu affirms that this 'proposition advocates the remaking of Africa with the aim of forging morally legitimate socio-political constructs derived from the free and informed democratic expression of Africa's numerous indigenous identities and communities' (p.215). This is plainly contradictory. My problem here is that how can theology be 'public' when it begins with conclusions? This is the issue with the human sexuality debate. It never takes off because one of the protagonists begins with condemnation rather than an attempt to understand the inclusive nature of God's creation of the cosmos. Mombo's chapter on gender fares a little better for she recognises the existence of trans-gender persons, but not gays. However, without naming the elephant in the room, she acknowledges: 'rigid enforcement of stereotypes means that those who do not fit in line with the culturally assigned gender roles struggle to find a place in the community' (p.222), and that this is a matter which is 'here to stay'. Sadly, these authors fall prey to the danger: 'sometimes uncritical obedience to and legitimisation of states can hide the operation of an oppressive ideology. Public theologians and Christians in general need to be aware of this danger' (p. 274). The authors also need to be more aware of the desire of Agenda 2063 to promote 'inclusive and sustainable development [as] a concrete manifestation of the pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity' (p.401).

Despite these serious caveats, this is a work to be welcomed, studied and its suggestions implemented in order to provide further data for ongoing discussion. Its pan-African emphasis is welcomed as a sign that cooperation and collaboration is to be much preferred to isolation and alienation in the academy and in the church throughout the African continent. The authors are to be congratulated on their superb effort and, hopefully, many more will take up the challenge it resents and forge a truly relevant and contemporary African public theology.

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## **Mission in secularised contexts of Europe: Contemporary narratives and experiences.**

Behera MN, Biehl M & Jørgensen K (ed.) 2018.

*Oxford: Regnum. vi+222 pages. ISBN 978-1-912343-75-1. No price quoted.*

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Europe, the heartland of Christianity from the early Medieval period, has been in the process of degenerating into a museum piece (:215) for a considerable period beginning with the eighteenth century Enlightenment. It has witnessed concurrently the massive growth of Christianity throughout what is now quaintly referred to as the 'mission field', particularly during the past century and continuing unabated. However, all is not loss for while there is clear evidence of secularisation, there is also evidence of resurgent forms of Christianity, even though this is expressed in different and specific forms. One innovative inclusion is perspectives from a migrant church context and views from Indians and Kenyans.

Following an editorial introduction, the first part of the book offers general perspectives on the diverse contexts, problems and possibilities. Part two focuses on a number of perspectives on the secular formation of European culture from differing geographical and denominational approaches in relation to the missionary task. Part three deals with the domain of youth mission and the final part explores issues within Europe and beyond with an epilogue on the need to think more than one thought at any time, here about the present and the immediate future and then about the ultimate coming of the kingdom of God.

Fortunately, this book is rather light on heavy theory and theology of mission. Rather, it focuses on narratives and experiences from a variety of contexts supported by scriptural insights. As such it provides a sound basis for further reflection and action on religion and church in contemporary Europe. It provides a foundation for discerning the signs of the times in European contexts and an opportunity to rethink its approaches to mission. It also elevates the role of stories as a source for creative and imaginative use of the Gospel narratives.

This book provides a timely reminder that the churches in Europe have to focus on mission within their own contexts and rediscover that God is still present and active. It is to be commended for use, especially among the less theologically minded who are involved in mission, although perhaps its simplicity may infect them too!

*Reviewer: Emeritus Prof GA Duncan, Faculty of Theology & Religion, University of Pretoria, South Africa. [Graham.duncan@up.ac.za](mailto:Graham.duncan@up.ac.za)*

## **Virus as a summons to faith: Biblical reflections in a time of loss, grief and anxiety.**

Brueggemann W 2020.

*Eugene, Or.: Casacade. xii +80 pages. ISBN 978 -1- 7252-7674-1. No price quoted.*

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This is a timely contribution to how we deal with the Corona virus from an intellectual and spiritual point of view. Brueggemann, a globally recognised Hebrew Bible scholar

Brueggemann offers three visionary trajectories for interpreting the onslaught of a plague:

- a transactional quid pro quo that leads to punishment as the result of violations;
- a purposeful mobilisation of negative force in order to effect God's own will; and,
- a raw holiness that refuses and defies our best explanations in order that God's power is an irreducible reality in the world.

He directs us towards a mystery that goes far beyond the limitations of the Enlightenment and even modern science; that goes beyond our ability to explain or manage. The mystery of creation draws us to a virtual apocalyptic narrative that may be revelatory and transformative for us. He further points out that preachers have a special responsibility to 'bear witness to another realm' (p.18) in order that we may 'outflank the fearful logic' (p. 19) of our modernist thinking and all its limitations.

The book consists of seven reflections that are informative and challenging. While Brueggemann denies the applicability of scripture, he invites readers to open their imagination that hopes for the best outcomes of serious scientific research. He advocates progression beyond pestilence to the exercise of mercy. Then he recommends the value of 'relentless, uncompromising hope' (p.32) based in truth-telling, honesty and courage. He affirms the positive role of faithful prayer as a response to every form of disaster as each form of pestilence is ultimately accountable to the creator God as integral to the reorientation of life in submission to and reliance on God who is characterised by loyalty, graciousness and compassion.

Each reflection ends with a prayer that is relevant to the preceding thoughts. This is a book that raises significant theological questions that have a deep spiritual impact. The reflections provide us with a serious opportunity to use academic scholarship with the ongoing life of the church.

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## **Hang on and rising up: Renewing, re-envisioning and rebuilding the Cross from the 'marginalised'.**

Chávez PC 2019.

*Eugene, Or.: Pickwick. xix+182 pages. ISBN 978-1-5326-5158-8. No price quoted.*

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The title of this book expresses its content which is about Christology, focussing on the Cross (hanging on) and resurrection (rising up) from the perspectives of Andean Peruvian contexts. Chavez uses the novels of Clorinda Matto de Turner and José Maria Arguedas as a means of investigating social, racial and cultural experiences in problematic circumstances by accompanying those who live on the underside of society.

The context is centuries of suffering and exploitation before the confession of faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah whose mission was liberation and the affirmation of life, where formerly he was used to support the Spanish conquest. The author emphasises that the crucifixion does not eliminate hope but expresses that a revival of hope that people will gain the strength to celebrate life and make resurrection possible.

Chapter 1 focusses on the encounter between Christ the saviour and God the creator present in Peruvian culture. Chapter 2 interrogates Latin American Christology in the wake of the arrival of Protestantism with the bible as a weapon, rather than the arms of the Catholic invaders, and as immigrants who brought their culture with them. Chapter 3 looks at Christology contextually where women theologians 'prophesy' along with the denunciation of their suffering. Chapter 4 refers to primary sources in its quest to develop a mission informed by Peruvian Christology. Chapter 5 considers the Christology of Clorinda Matto de Turner as expressed in her novels. She focusses specifically on commitment to participation in the suffering of the indigenous, denunciation of the oppressors, education as the means to progress, emigration as a source of development, the need for faith to remember human suffering and the reality of women's reality. The final chapter seeks to produce a relational Christology through the empowerment of people in a context where Christology has been divorced from the oppression of peoples.

This book is an exercise in re-imagining Christology affirms the nearness of God in Jesus Christ in the period following the arrival of Christ, who makes hope a possibility as a sign of resurrection which is to be celebrated regularly. The author draws on solid research, Latin American literature and the passion of Christ using Latin American women's lives as sacred texts. She has presented Jesus' presence through the poor as an ongoing living narrative. This book is a stimulating read which introduces us to a novel approach to Christology.

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## **Faith seeking conviviality: Reflections on Ivan Illich, Christian mission and the promise of life together.**

Ewell SE 2020.

*Eugene, Or: Cascade. xxi+305 pages. ISBN 978-. No price quoted.1-5326-1461-3.*

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This book is the product of long term reflection of a Christian mission practitioner who has been deeply influenced by the much undervalued Roman Catholic theologian, Ivan Illich. It is a practical study of faith, Christian mission and Illich under the theme of conviviality which we may define in the terms of George Adam Smith, the nineteenth century Hebrew Bible scholar as 'leal love' or loyal love. It is vitally 'practical' in the sense that the author's theology becomes a "practice" or a way of life' (p.2). The core of the book is about encounter in a society that is badly fractured and vulnerable and requires transformation. Illich is used as a hermeneutic through which the author interprets his own experience. The author also draws on insights from the differing pedagogy's offered by Trevor Hudson' work, A mile in my shoes, and Gustavo Gutiérrez's We drink from our own wells.

Ewell's developed approach to mission implies a deep epistemological rupture where theologians begin to think as missionaries and missionaries begin to think as theologians in a renewed intercultural context where the power of the Word is held in tension with the wounds of the world. For the author, this journey is centred on integrating his personal experience and theological research into a form of witness.

Illich's approach was, to say the least, quite radical; based in the recognition of the locus of mission and the ability to renounce 'do-gooderism' in favour of a more subversive presence. So, for the author his ethnographic research was less concerned with the mastery of a set of techniques and more of a research process embracing embodied knowing, the integration of human experience leading to critical reflection. Such a process can lead to adopting a preferential option for freedom in interdependence which is fundamental for mission, no longer to be viewed as a specialist activity but the work of the entire people of God as *leitourgia* in a spirit of conviviality or, as Bonhoeffer would have it, life together.

Digging deeper into Illich's thinking regarding mission, we discover how he distinguished between what humans need and the limits of necessity or the depth of our desires. So humanity is defined by its neediness. This led Illich to a severe critique of the development agenda based on the Western assumption that Western needs are the ahistorical constants of a universal humanity. The author accurately summarises: 'The paradox is that by assuming that we can overcome scarcity by consuming our way out of it, we end up escalating the conditions that gave rise to the problem, a social imbalance between means and ends, a widening gap between

our needs and desires and our capacity to satisfy them' (p.258). This leads to a humanity based on limitless dependence, the very opposite of what can be assume to be the missionary agenda. This is the result of the colonial and postcolonial programme with its diseased social agenda. The panacea for this approach can be the 'development' of a philosophy of hospitality alongside a rebirth (conversion/transformation) of social imagination which can signal a return to conviviality involving persons, tools and a new collectivity distinguished by a balance between means and ends that nurtures a common sense of satisfaction and abundance. Traditional missionary 'good intentions' become replaced by acts of gratuity which are performed because they are beautiful, good and appropriate to the time and place. This denies the gospel of sameness because in developing the bond of friendship both partners are willing to be transformed into new ways of thinking and acting.

It is important to note that the concept of faith seeking conviviality is not a new idea. Aelred of Rievaulx wrote on Spiritual Friendship in the twelfth century. Then the author's mission praxis is not new either. I am aware of the existence of such Neighbour Nights groups in the 1900s in Scotland and, not least the base ecclesial communities of Latin America. However, neither of these examples accounts for their absence from most on the intervening period. The revival of the concept and its practice is much to be welcomed after due reflection and this book provides much to think and meditate upon.

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## **Devoted to Christ: Missiological reflections in honor of Sherwood G Lingenfelter.**

Flanders CL 2019.

*Eugene, Or: Pickwick.*

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This is a collection of reflections written as a festschrift for a respected colleague in the USA, Sherwood G Lingenfelter, whose main missiological focus is on anthropology and leadership. The chapters have a broad focus but offer some of the most recent thinking on missiological topics.

The topics discussed range from the relationship between anthropology, missiology and witchcraft, an interdisciplinary approach to cross-cultural dynamics in global mission organisations, an investigation into the state of minority languages in the 21st century, navigating power employing different leadership styles, activating

God's people for leadership in church and mission, with a focus on the patron-client system in Thailand, leadership arising out a situation of weakness

Chapter 4 offers a critically important focus on the manner in which the Great Commission can assist mission in the contemporary world, with a particular focus on partnership, a much abused practice in 20th century mission and makes constructive suggestions for the pursuit of authentic partnership.

Chapter 6 deals with potential misunderstandings that can and do arise when different cultural norms are applied in differing cultural contexts.

Chapter 10 considers the practical and missiological implications for the transformation of machismo. However, the author failed to define what he meant by machismo, making this chapter somewhat redundant.

The final chapter offers a challenge to what the author considers to be the anachronism of 'honour' and 'honour cultures' in an assessment of missiological theory and practice.

All in all, this is a worthy testimony to the scholar it seeks to honour and a helpful addition to the current issues in mission.

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## **Rebaptism calmly reconsidered: Christian initiation and resistance in the early AME Church of Jamaica.**

Grant SJ 2019.

*Eugene, Or.: Pickwick. xv + 146 pages. ISBN 978-1-5326-5299-8. No price quoted.*

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This book considers the rather sensitive topic of rebaptism, though in a specific context, that of the African Methodist church in Jamaica. This is not a purely theological issue in this context, with a straightforward either/or solution, because it has a particular history which occurred within a particular sociocultural context which emanated from the slave trade where Africans were forcibly transported to the colonies bringing their traditional cultures with them. The title 'calmly considered' emphasises the author's intention, derived from John Wesley, to discuss the issue in a manner less bound by emotionalism and polemic.

The socio-cultural context described here laid the foundation for Jamaican congregants to include two water rituals in Christian initiation – a christening or sprinkling of water on infants and, immersion when the child reached its majority. This appeared to be a contradiction of Methodist teaching. This book offers John Wesley's doctrine and

practice of baptism alongside a discussion of the historical events, social events and cultural context in the nineteenth century. The use of two ceremonies became normative for many who wished to become members of the AME Church in Jamaica. This was an area in which there was considerable cross-cultural fertilisation and consequently, where the dynamism of the relational dialectical process produced a new synthesis.

This study proceeds from an attempt to identify an historical Wesleyan connection to this history. Then, the rite of baptism by immersion is examined related to the conversion of life of those baptised. This involved the retention of African culture through communal memory. Finally, the act of immersion and its symbolic link to liberation is explored in context. This is a story of the relations which developed and existed between Wesleyan missionaries, the colonial planter class and African slaves.

Clearly in this narrative, there was no understanding of the replacement of immersion by the ritual of sprinkling infants. Whatever the outcome, the use of water was mandatory 'as the realm of the spirits and the birthplace of creation, therefore its symbolisation is thoroughly embedded in religion, spirituality, legends and rituals' (p.123). What emerges is a tension between our understandings of baptism as a birth rite and an act of initiation. What is interesting for us is the ease with which a two rite understanding of baptism was integrated. This approach might provide thought for those of us who have a static view of the sacrament of baptism as the sole means of entry into the fellowship of Christ's church.

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## **Rethinking and unthinking development: Perspectives on inequality in South Africa & Zimbabwe.**

Mpofu S & Ndlovu-Gatsheni SJ 2019.

*New York: Berghahn. x + 278 pages. 978-1789201765. No price quoted.*

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The authors begin this book by pointing to the state of development in Africa to reveal the problematic nature of development by identifying Mubangizi's ten paradoxes and contradictions along with two discourses – 'Africa rising' and 'The Third Scramble for Africa' (p.1). This demonstrates that this is a complex matter. Their concern. From the outset, they distinguish the poor as helpless souls lacking dignity who are objects of pity of the so-called 'experts' who are often unaware of the moral dimension of development and oblivious to the role of power.

Chapter 1 introduces decolonial epistemic perspectives in order to uncover the coloniality located in development discourses. Chapters 2 and 3 have a particular

focus on poverty. Chapter 4 deals with urban poverty in Zimbabwe while chapter 5 proposes a decolonial intervention on urban poverty in South Africa. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 consider issues relating to empowerment, regionalism, identity and development challenges. And the last three chapters focus on challenges experienced by African families in the areas of marital unions, life threatening disease and the abuse of the elderly when receiving old-age pensions. This last issue is a matter of shame in the South African community when even family members participate in the oppression of the elderly and demonstrated the clamant need for action on behalf of the weakest and most vulnerable members of society. What has happened to the concept of *hlonipa*, respect for the seniors in society?

The authors have privileged the ambiguous role of development in southern African society by focussing on specific topics. They demonstrate a clear need for a challenge to existing paradigms which seem to benefit donors more than recipients of 'aid' and militate against the humanisation of African peoples.

The biggest weakness in this book is the absence of any religious or theological perspective. It is inconceivable in this day and age to think that faith organisations have nothing positive to contribute where the vast majority of people in these countries follow one faith or another. Even politicians have recognised that. In addition, there is an emerging body of academic courses in Theology and Development (eg. at the University of kwaZulu-Natal) which demonstrate and promote the link between faith and development. Perhaps the authors have little or no opinion of the role of the churches due to their historical link with colonialism. However, if that is true they could have profitably exposed and challenged the connection.

Nonie the less this is a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate which needs to continue to challenge 'modern' views of development in the movement towards the eradication of inequality and poverty in southern Africa.

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## **Hated without a reason: The remarkable story of Christian persecution over the centuries.**

Sookdheo P 2019.

*McLean, VA: Isaac Publishing. 260 pagers. ISBN 978-1-732952-4-0. No price quoted.*

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This is a new book about an age old topic; the persecution of Christianity. However, it does present some differences from its predecessors. First, it begins with a discussion of the persecution of Jesus of Nazareth. Then this is followed by a section on the perse-

cution of Jesus' immediate followers before getting to the historic persecutions as we know them. Finally, it deals with ongoing persecution down through the centuries to the present day. An appendix is included which contains the substantial text of *The Silk Letter* penned by Korean Christian, Hwang Sayeong, in 1801 on a piece of silk which described the persecution of Christians in Korea and led to their severe persecution.

The author emphasises the situation which arose at the close of Christian persecution with the passing of the Edict of Milan in 313CE by the emperor Constantine. Sadly, this led to the beginning of persecution by Christians up to and following the Reformation! Persecutions by no means only referred to the attack on Christians by pagans. The rise of Islam heralded a new wave of persecution from another faith perspective. This led to the demise or virtual demise of Christianity in some areas. One issue the book does not draw out clearly regards the persecution of Christians by Christians in the process of Roman Christianity wiping out the faithful Celtic Christianity which had produced the bright light of learning and mission to Europe during the Dark Ages. This was the fateful result of the Synod of Whitby in 664CE. Wherever Christianity was birthed persecution followed throughout Europe, Scandinavia, the Far East (China, Japan and Korea) and South East Asia. An interesting theme to remember is the persecution that occurred within families and communities when people, especially women or young people turned from their traditional faith to Christianity.

The longest chapter in this book is devoted to 'The long twentieth century' which is described as 'a century of global persecution of Christians' (p. 139) which has yet to come to an end. This was for the author evidenced in the positive correlation between persecution and totalitarian ideologies such as Communism, Nazism, Fascism and Maoism. He also adds Islamism as an ideology, but why not Christianity and Judaism, since all three have aggressive fundamentalistic tendencies which have led to the persecution of Christians and others with whom they disagree. The final chapter of the book is devoted to Christian responses to persecution and includes a discussion of religious liberty and concludes that 'the Bible teaches that freedom of religion must be for all in society' (p.198).

The text is extremely lucid and coherent and is enhanced by the inclusion of sidebars throughout as well as helpful illustrations and maps. This book will be of enormous use by students of the history of Christianity, relating to an issue many had thought had passed centuries ago but which is still an enduring problem. It reflects a global historical and contemporary phenomenon which has virtually become a mark of the Church '... we must share his sufferings if we are also to share his glory' (Romans 8:17).

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**Context, plurality and truth: Theology in world Christianities.**

Vähäkangas M 2020.

*Eugene, Or: Pickwick. x+205 pages ISBN 978-1-5326-8264-3. No price quoted.*

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This is a book which examines issues relating to pluralism in global Christianity. It challenges many of the assumptions of Western theology as a monolithic system in a world where change is not only ubiquitous but also rapid and is distinguished by its increasing diversity and evidenced, for example, in Riane Eisler's cultural transformation theory. Cultural imperialism and colonialism have been discredited as ethical failures. Responses range from continuing to follow the canons of western ideologies to distancing from this hegemonic nationalistic cultures and linked established churches. Modernity and Enlightenment provide the background of the intellectual, political and economic histories of the West.

The aim of the book is to examine the trajectory for theology in our pluralistic and globalised era by acknowledging the problematic claims of western Christianity to spiritual, cultural and intellectual leadership in the light of issues relating to truth and plurality in an ecumenical approach. The book is an inclusive study in systematic theology related to missiology, global Christianity and intercultural theology. This is done in such a way as to preserve Christian identity while being open to pluralistic challenges.

Chapter 2 indicates the dimensions of globalisation and pluralism which affect religion and theology in the contemporary context. Chapter 3 then considers the forms of renewal that can be relevant and effective in the changed global context. Chapter 4 discusses the meaning of contextuality while chapter 5 offers a renewed perspective on the contextual hermeneutic process. Chapter 6 introduces the perspective of syncretism as a norm in the nature of all religion for Christian theology. The use of syncretism appears to make the focus as an historical development. Otherwise, it is difficult to understand why the term 'inculturation' has not been employed. Chapter 7 concludes the discussion with a suggestion that religious pluralism be accepted as and syncretism is an appropriate starting point.

What I find helpful in this book is the manner in which it engages fundamentalistic thinking as part of its aim and methodology. It raises theological questions in a way that might be difficult for some to assimilate. However, it raises serious and important issues that need to be interrogated. Plurality and syncretism are not features of a postmodern climate for they have been evident in the Christian community from its very beginnings. Yet, Christian identity and tradition can still be affirmed.

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## **Mission after Pentecost: The witness of the Spirit from Genesis to Revelation.**

Yong A 2019.

*Grand Rapids: Baker. xx+300 pages. ISBN 978-1-5409-6236-2. No price quoted.*

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While almost all scholars are agreed on the contemporary *missio Dei* perspective focussing on the Trinity, Yong has given us a particularly strong *missio spiritus* or pneumatological perspective arising out of his Pentecostal orientation. Yong provides three main foci for this study; contemporary mission challenges, recent developments indicating the revitalisation of the theology of mission, along with the growth of a 'pneumatological interpretation of scripture' (p.1). He writes out of an awareness that we are living in a post-mission, postcolonial, post-Western and post-Enlightenment era with all of its opportunities.

In eight chapters, Wong takes us through in intense study of the missionary activity of the Holy Spirit 'from Genesis to Revelation'. He uses solid theological interpretation in which he blends with pneumatology with missiology. The basic linguistic approach is canonical and he uses the terms ruahological (from Hebrew ruah, spirit) in the Hebrew bible section and pneumatological (from Greek pneuma, spirit) in the New Testament. In terms of hermeneutics, each chapter considers both the ruahological/pneumatological and missiological concerns. Theologically, we note the biblical context which is post-Pentecost alongside the historical context which is post-Nicene and this is considered through the dimensions of scripture, spirit and mission.

This is a detailed journey of the *missio spiritus* as the *missio Dei* through triune participation – as triune witness in a post-mission world where post-Pentecost mission is no respecter of persons; the *missio Dei* is differentiated, yet harmonious; the Father both embraces and sends the Son and the spirit; the socioeconomic and political dimensions are interlinked; and participation in God's mission is transnational in spirit's work to bring shalom where peace and justice are normative.

This requires a new mission praxis expressed in, neighbourly, collaborative-dialogical, forgiving and sojourning witness in a dynamically fluid situation. Throughout, this book invites us to participate in the praxis of the *missio spiritus* reflecting on and developing new relationships and identities in and through the redemptive *missio Dei*. In his personal theological reflection, Yong has been bold to step outside the traditional Pentecostal tradition and incorporate insights from, inter alia, historical critical studies. This boldness reflects the bold humility associated with the work of David Bosch. This is a book worth careful study in preparation for active mission.

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