

ACTEA eNEWS

APRIL 2007

The mission of ACTEA is to promote quality evangelical theological education in Africa by providing supporting services, facilitating academic recognition, and fostering continental and inter-continental cooperation.

In this edition of ACTEA eNews:

1. [Change of contact information for ACTEA accreditation](#)
2. [ACTEA eNews changing server](#)
3. [Theological Higher Education conference announced](#)
4. [The Evangelical Training Database](#)
5. [Theological Education Matters by Linda Cannell](#)
6. [Theological librarian seeks position](#)
7. [Seminary seeks senior academics for positions](#)
8. [Two sources for library books](#)
9. [Keeping up with Africa--Reviews of Recent Books](#)

1. Change of contact information for ACTEA accreditation

Please note the postal address for ACTEA accreditation matters has changed.

For future reference, please record the new address:

ACTEA
P.O. Box 1009
Pietermaritzburg 3200
South Africa

The following addresses are **no longer valid**:

C/o Nigeria courier	<u>nor</u>	PMB 2009
P.O. Box 7900		Jos, Plateau State
Charlotte, NC		Nigeria
28241		
USA		

For future email correspondence for ACTEA accreditation matters, please use:

Actea.africa@gmail.com

2. ACTEA eNews changing server

This will be the last ACTEA eNews sent out by our previous server. ACTEA is migrating the distribution lists of its e-mail newsletters to Google Groups. This will allow new members to subscribe automatically, without contacting the group manager, and will also allow readers with Google accounts to access all archived copies of the e-mail newsletters over the internet through group website.

The following ACTEA e-mail newsletter titles are available. To subscribe to any of the following, simply send a blank e-mail message to the corresponding email address.

All current ACTEA eNews members should soon receive an e-mail invitation from Google to join the ACTEA eNews group. Members will continue to receive e-mail issues of ACTEA eNews by following the instructions in the e-mail invitation (simply clicking on the URL address in the invitation). If you don't receive the invitation from Google within the next few days (or, if you do not have web access), then you may renew your subscription by using the email address above.

3. Theological Higher Education conference announced

The Theological Higher Education conference sponsored by the South African Theological Seminary will take place on 17-18 August 2007 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Every year this conference highlights issues of interest to Christian educators, leaders and theology students. Early-bird registration fee is R350.00 (about US\$48) After 16 July registration fee is R380 (or, for a group of 5 or more people: R325 per person).

The theme of the conference this year is "The Rest to the West - Mission Responsibility to Africa." What is the role of Africa to reach the West? Floyd and Sally McClung together with Michael Cassidy are the main speakers of the conference. The conference is for Christians who have a desire to educate, train and develop leaders in Africa with a view to world mission outreach.

For further information contact Jenny Mason at jenny@sats.edu.za

4. The Evangelical Training Database

The Evangelical Training Database project seeks to list missionary, pastoral, and theological training courses in all countries, so that Christians everywhere can more easily find the training they need to serve our Lord Jesus Christ. Initially this is available in English and Spanish, but the project is working to translate the interface into all major languages.

You may register your institution's training courses by following these directions.

Go to www.TrainForChrist.org, click "Training Provider Registration", and follow the instructions. You will receive your password by e-mail and you can log in at Training Provider log-in to then post details of your courses. In the process of registration, please indicate the evangelical associations of which you are member (especially ACTEA) - so that searches specifying those bodies will bring up your courses.

Dr Christopher Wright, former principal of All Nations Christian College, and now leading the Langham Partnership, supports this project, and Geoff Tunnicliffe, head of the World Evangelical Alliance, has said that he hopes to integrate it into the WEA website.

5. Theological Education Matters by Linda Cannell

Dr. Linda Cannell, formerly of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, now at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, recently published a landmark book on church leadership education entitled *Theological Education Matters* (Newburg, IN: EDCOT Press, 2006), 371 pages, \$29 (hard) \$19 (paper) \$9 (e-book), available from www.lulu.com/candospirit.

It is a must-read for all who are concerned about equipping church leaders (lay or clergy). Cannell explains why so many stakeholders today appear dissatisfied with the "products" of conventional seminaries and explores new models for equipping leadership for the Church. In the process she delves deeply into the history and proposed purposes of theological education from the early monastic period to the present. She concludes with predictions concerning the future of global theological education and some suggestions for making it better.

Book notice by Dr Rich Starcher

6. Theological librarian seeks position

"My name is David Matsveru. I have been working for 15 years as librarian at Harare Theological College in Zimbabwe and resigned to give way for my studies in 2004 at the University of Botswana.

I have now concluded my studies, and I strongly feel that as someone who has also done three years of theological training I can serve the Lord best in a theological college context. If you know of any college that is looking for a Christian librarian with theological training and also a bachelors degree in library and information studies please let me know.

I can be contacted at davidmatsveru@yahoo.com"

7. Seminary seeks senior academics for positions

The South African Theological Seminary, a dynamic Bible-based, Christ-centred, Spirit-led distance learning institution, is looking for two senior academics to supplement its faculty:

- **Head of the Postgraduate School** We are looking for a committed Christian with a DTh or a PhD qualification, who has a proven track record in supervising postgraduate candidates, has published articles in well-known journals and has excellent managerial skills. This person will be responsible for managing and developing a large postgraduate school, for supervising postgraduate candidates and for training postgraduate supervisors. He/she will report to the Academic Head.
- **Senior Academic** The person to fill this post will be a committed Christian with a DTh or PhD qualification, and will have experience in the area of postgraduate supervision. This person will need to have published academic articles in peer-reviewed journals and will have outstanding course writing skills. He/she will report to the Academic Head and will be responsible for supervising postgraduate candidates, for course writing, editing and curriculum development.

Both posts require that the person resides in Johannesburg in South Africa. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Please contact the Principal, Dr Reuben van Rensburg at reuben@sats.edu.za or telephone 011 234 4440 for more information.

8. Two sources for library books

- The Africa Library Services Office (ALSO) [a partner with Africa's Hope], acquires both English and French books at discount prices from major religious and secular publishers.

ALSO then sells those books to pastors, missionaries, and Bible schools throughout Africa, at discounted prices. ALSO has developed extensive bibliographies or "Core Libraries" at various levels for Bible schools and seminaries to serve the curricular needs of the Bible schools in Africa.

Visit their website at:

<http://also.network211.com/tools/WebSite.cfm?cid=287&Language=English&catid=2980&UID=0>

- The mission of the Theological Book Network is to provide quality academic books and journals to the libraries of seminaries, colleges and universities in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East that provide theological training toward the development of leaders, teachers and clergy in the Christian Church.

The Theological Book Network collects academic books and journals from Western theological libraries, publishers and scholars. All donations are brought to our warehouse where they are sorted and packed for shipment. TBN works with regional networks of institutions for efficiency and breadth of distribution. Recipient institutions share some financial, logistical and administrative responsibilities for the shipment.

Visit their website at: www.TheologicalBookNetwork.org

9. Keeping up with Africa--Reviews of Recent Books

Azumah, John Alembillah. *The Legacy of Arab-Islam in Africa: A Quest for Inter-religious Dialogue*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2001. 264 pp, pb, \$26

John Azumah is now one of Africa¹'s leading Christian scholars of Islam. Ordained in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, he was until recently lecturing at the Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad, India. Azumah has written several articles, and now has produced his first book, which is a revised form of his PhD thesis at the University of Birmingham (one of the world's foremost centres for the study of Christian-Muslim relations).

The book presents a detailed review and analysis of some of the darker features of historical Islam as it developed in Africa. "Our aim is not to demonstrate how horrible and nasty the Islamic past in Africa has been, but rather to say that it was, as other systems of the time, not glorious." Azumah has two further goals in the process: to correct the somewhat romantic views of Islam in Africa among certain western scholars, and to invite African Muslims into honest dialogue with African Christians concerning these issues.

After discussing these goals, Azumah looks first at the manner in which Islam developed in Africa, noting especially how the African religious context fostered a "creative and resilient pluralism" in which African Islam incorporated many traditional religious features. Next, he deals with the response to this situation by certain Muslim leaders in the form of military jihad. While these often brutal campaigns achieved limited "success" in expanding Islamic identity and influence, they did not eradicate the indigenous African worldview and its resultant practices. The longest chapter reviews the horrible effects of slavery among Africans by Arab and African Muslims, which was justified by a strong anti-pagan sentiment as well as racial prejudice. Azumah rightly criticizes attempts by both Muslim and western scholars to minimize the harsh realities of Muslim slavery, claiming that it was just as cruel as its western counterpart.

Azumah ends his book by calling for a fresh Muslim-Christian dialogue which reassesses these historical issues with a view towards more positive relations between Africa¹'s Muslim and Christian communities. While this is certainly a worthy ambition which calls for patient and persistent effort, this book would require Muslims to take the far bigger step of critical self-analysis. Unfortunately, current events, along with an increasingly intransigent Muslim stance towards the Christian west, mitigate against this goal. Nevertheless, Azumah¹'s book will prove valuable for anyone wishing to enter the discussion, and in any case is an essential text for better understanding the particularities of Islam in Africa.

"BookNotes for Africa is an important source of information about African publications; we rely on it to inform our decisions about what to purchase."

Dr Paul Stuehrenberg, Librarian, Yale Divinity School (USA)