THÉOLOGIE CHRÉTIENNE AFRICAINE
TEOLOGIA CRISTÃ AFRICANA
AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Cape Coast to Kingston
De Cape Coast à Kingston
De Cape Coast a Kingston

Conectando as Vozes Teológicas TransAtlânticas
Connecter les Voix Théologiques TransAtlantiques
Connecting TransAtlantic Theological Voices

Journal of the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa
Revue de l'Association Chrétienne de Théologie et d'Éducation en Afrique
Revista da Associação Cristã de Teologia e Educação em África

Volume 3 | nº 1 | 2026

African Christian Theology

Journal of the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa

VOLUME 3, Nº 1
(March 2026)

ACTEA

NAIROBI | KINSHASA

Théologie Chrétienne Africaine

Revue de l'Association Chrétienne de Théologie et d'Éducation en Africa

VOLUME 3, Nº 1
(Mars 2026)

ACTEA

NAIROBI | KINSHASA

Teologia Christã Africana

Revista da Associação Cristã de Teologia e Educação em África

VOLUME 3, Nº 1
(Março 2025)

ACTEA

NAIROBI | KINSHASA

African Christian Theology
Théologie Chrétienne Africaine
Teologia Cristã Africana

Journal of the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa
Revue de l'Association Chrétienne de Théologie et d'Éducation en Afrique
Revista da Associação Cristã de Teologia e Educação em África

Volume 3 • Nº 1
March / Mars / Março 2026

Published by / Publié par / Publicado por

Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa

Continental Office

6th Floor, AEA Plaza
Valley Road
Nairobi, Kenya

P.O. Box 49332-00100
Nairobi, Kenya

Francophone Office

Leadership Academia University
aux bons soins de Prof. Aji Kawata*
4963, Av. Tombalbaye
Q/ Golf. C / Gombe
Kinshasa, Rép. Dem. du Congo

**Prof Kawata est member du Conseil d'Administration d'ACTEA*

ISSN: 3006-1768
e-ISSN: 3007-1771

Published outside of Africa by / Publié en dehors de l'Afrique par/
Publicado fora de África por

WIPF *and* STOCK *Publishers*
199 West 8th Avenue • Eugene OR 97401
wipfandstock.com

To order hard copies outside of Africa, contact orders@wipfandstock.com

Emmanuel OYEMOMI (Nigeria)	*Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Nigeria*
Rubin POHOR (Côte d'Ivoire)	*Université Alassane Ouattara Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire; CITAF*
Felicia Chinyere PRIEST (Nigeria)	*International Leadership University, Nairobi, Kenya*
Rehama GEZAHEGN (Ethiopia)	*Evangelical Theological College, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*
Alfred SEBAHENE (Tanzania)	*St John's University of Tanzania, Dodoma, Tanzania*
Abeneazer G. URGA (Ethiopia)	*Evangelical Theological College, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*
Gerald O. WEST (South Africa)	*University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa*
Serge-Armand YAO (Côte d'Ivoire)	*l'Université de l'Alliance Chrétienne d'Abidjan, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire*
Youdit TARIKU FEYESSA (Ethiopia)	*Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology (EGST), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

Editorial Policy

The articles in *African Christian Theology (ACT)* reflect the opinions of the authors and reviewers and do not necessarily represent those of the Editors or of ACTEA.

All submissions are subject to double-blind peer review. Unsolicited submissions are welcome, though not guaranteed of publication in the journal. Manuscripts and reviews may be sent to submissions@AfricanChristianTheology.org. Queries and other communications may be addressed to the managing editors at Editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

Politique éditoriale

Les articles de *Théologie Chrétienne Africaine (TCA)* reflètent les opinions des auteurs et des évaluateurs et ne représentent pas nécessairement celles des rédacteurs ou d'ACTEA.

Toutes les soumissions font l'objet d'un examen par les pairs en double aveugle. Les soumissions spontanées sont les bienvenues, mais leur publication dans la revue n'est pas garantie. Les manuscrits et les critiques peuvent être envoyés à submissions@AfricanChristianTheology.org. Les questions et autres communications peuvent être adressés aux Directeurs-Éditeurs à l'adresse suivante :
Editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

Política editorial

Os artigos da *Teologia Cristã Africana (TCA)* reflectem as opiniões dos autores e revisores, porém, não representam necessariamente os pensamentos dos editores ou da ACTEA.

Todas as submissões estão sujeitas a uma revisão por pares em dupla ocultação. As submissões não solicitadas são bem-vindas, embora não seja garantida a sua publicação na revista. Os manuscritos e as recensões podem ser enviados para submissions@AfricanChristianTheology.org. As questões e outras comunicações podem ser dirigidas aos Gestores-Editores para: Editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

African Christian Theology is the academic journal of the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA). The mission of ACTEA is to strengthen theological education through accreditation, scholarship, and support services to serve the church and transform society. The journal is one way in which ACTEA engages theological educators and church leaders in addressing relevant issues facing the church and society in Africa. *African Christian Theology* serves the whole of Africa and provides a venue for conversations between different regions of Africa, as well as an organ through which African voices can address World Christianity at large. Following in the footsteps of Kwame Bediako, Byang Kato, Kä Mana, Lamin Sanneh, Andrew F. Walls, and Isaac Zokoué, the journal promotes World Christianity perspectives through deep engagement with African contextual realities. Articles are published in English, French, and Portuguese; each article has a trilingual abstract in those languages.

ACTEA was founded in 1976 by the Theological and Christian Education Commission of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA). Under its continued sponsorship, ACTEA operates with internal autonomy in the accreditation of programmes of theological education throughout Africa, in order to stimulate the improvement and standardization of such programmes, and in order to secure academic recognition for such programmes wherever possible, especially among the constituencies of these institutions in Africa and among similar institutions and their constituencies overseas. ACTEA is a founding and constituent member of the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE). ACTEA maintains offices in Nairobi and Kinshasa and can be found online at acteaweb.org. For further information on any aspect of ACTEA, please email the Executive Administrator at admin@acteaweb.org and copy the Executive Director at director@acteaweb.org.

The colours of ACTEA's logo are blue, red, and gold. Blue signifies royalty and speaks to ACTEA's efforts in raising a royal priesthood of God's servants throughout Africa. Red is the colour of blood and symbolises the redemptive act of Christ on the cross. Gold represents the preciousness of God's Word and the work which God's people do. Gold also reflects ACTEA's mission of prophetic proclamation of glorious hope in Christ, to African peoples first and then to the world, through theological education.

https://africanchristiantheology.org/

Théologie Chrétienne Africaine est la revue scientifique de l'Association Chrétienne de Théologie et d'Éducation en Afrique (ACTEA). La mission d'ACTEA est de renforcer l'éducation théologique par l'accréditation, la recherche et les services de soutien afin de servir l'église et de transformer la société. La revue est l'un des moyens par lesquels ACTEA stimule et implique les enseignants en théologie et les responsables d'église à aborder les questions pertinentes auxquelles sont confrontées l'église et la société en Afrique. *Théologie Chrétienne Africaine* est au service de l'ensemble de l'Afrique et constitue un lieu de dialogue entre les différentes régions d'Afrique. Elle sert ainsi d'organe par lequel les voix africaines peuvent s'adresser au christianisme mondial (« World Christianity ») dans son ensemble. Suivant les traces de Kwame Bediako, Byang Kato, Kä Mana, Lamin Sanneh, Andrew F. Walls, et Isaac Zokoué, la revue promeut les perspectives du christianisme mondial à travers un engagement profond avec les réalités contextuelles africaines. Les articles sont publiés en anglais, en français, et en portugais ; chaque article est accompagné d'un résumé trilingue dans ces langues.

ACTEA a été fondée en 1976 par la Commission d'Éducation Théologique et Chrétienne de l'Association des Évangéliques en Afrique (AEA). Sous le parrainage continu de l'AEA, ACTEA opère avec une autonomie interne dans l'accréditation des programmes d'éducation théologique à travers l'Afrique, afin de stimuler l'amélioration et la normalisation de ces programmes, et d'assurer la reconnaissance académique de ces programmes partout où cela est possible, notamment parmi les circonscriptions de ces institutions en Afrique et parmi les institutions similaires et leurs circonscriptions à l'étranger. ACTEA est un membre fondateur et constitutif du Conseil International pour l'Éducation Théologique Évangélique (en anglais, International Council for Evangelical Theological Education ou ICETE). ACTEA a des bureaux à Nairobi et à Kinshasa et peut être contactée en ligne à l'adresse suivante : acteaweb.org. Pour plus d'informations sur n'importe quel aspect d'ACTEA, veuillez envoyer un courriel au Directeur Francophone à directeur.francophone@acteaweb.org et une copie au Directeur Exécutif à director@acteaweb.org.

Les couleurs du logo d'ACTEA sont le bleu, le rouge, et l'or. Le bleu signifie la royauté et évoque les efforts d'ACTEA pour élever un sacerdoce royal de serviteurs de Dieu à travers l'Afrique. Le rouge est la couleur du sang et symbolise l'acte rédempteur du Christ sur la croix. L'or représente la valeur de la Parole de Dieu et le travail accompli par le peuple de Dieu. L'or reflète également la mission d'ACTEA, celle de la proclamation prophétique de l'espérance glorieuse en Christ, aux peuples africains d'abord et au monde ensuite, par le biais de l'éducation théologique.

https://africanchristiantheology.org/

Teologia Cristã Africana é a revista académica da Associação Cristã de Teologia e Educação em África (ACTEA). A missão da ACTEA é reforçar a educação teológica através de acreditação, pesquisa e serviços de apoio para servir a igreja e transformar a sociedade. A revista é uma das formas através das quais a ACTEA envolve educadores teológicos e líderes da igreja na abordagem de questões relevantes que a igreja e a sociedade em África enfrentam. A *Teologia Cristã Africana* serve toda a África e proporciona um local para conversas entre diferentes regiões de África, bem como um órgão através do qual as vozes africanas podem participar no diálogo de assuntos do cristianismo mundial ("World Christianity"). Seguindo os passos de Kwame Bediako, Byang Kato, Kä Mana, Lamin Sanneh, Andrew F. Walls, e Isaac Zokoué, a revista promove as perspectivas do cristianismo mundial através de um profundo envolvimento com as realidades contextuais africanas. Os artigos são publicados em inglês, francês e português; cada artigo tem um resumo trilingue nessas línguas.

A ACTEA foi estabelecida em 1976 pela Comissão de Educação Teológica e Cristã da Associação de Evangélicos em África (AEA). Sob o seu patrocínio contínuo, a ACTEA opera com autonomia interna na acreditação de programas de educação teológica em toda a África, a fim de estimular a melhoria e a padronização de tais programas, e a fim de assegurar o reconhecimento académico de tais programas sempre que possível, especialmente entre os stakeholders destas instituições em África e entre instituições semelhantes e os seus stakeholders no estrangeiro. A ACTEA é um membro fundador e constituinte do Conselho Internacional para a Educação Teológica Evangélica (ICETE). A ACTEA tem escritórios em Nairobi e Kinshasa e pode ser encontrada online em acteaweb.org. Para mais informações sobre qualquer aspeto da ACTEA, envie um e-mail para o Administrador Executivo em admin@acteaweb.org com cópia para o Diretor Executivo em director@acteaweb.org.

As cores do logótipo da ACTEA são o azul, o vermelho e o dourado. O azul significa realeza e fala dos esforços da ACTEA para erguer um sacerdócio real dos servos de Deus em toda a África. O vermelho é a cor do sangue e simboliza o ato redentor de Cristo na cruz. O ouro representa a preciosidade da Palavra de Deus e o trabalho que o povo de Deus realiza. O ouro também reflete a missão da ACTEA de proclamação profética da gloriosa esperança em Cristo, primeiro aos povos africanos e depois ao mundo, através da educação teológica.

https://africanchristiantheology.org/

Cover art created by Wexer Creative, Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya and © 2024–2026 by ACTEA. The building silhouettes are of the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, the largest church building in the world, the Kenyatta International Convention Centre in Nairobi, Kenya, and Nigeria's National Theatre in Lagos. The symbols, including the acacia tree and the Ethiopian cross, represent the journal's commitment to all regions of Africa, urban and rural, anglophone, francophone, and lusophone (as well as arabophone), and to all African Christian traditions — Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and AICs. The cross in the center of Africa, designed from a photograph of an Ethiopian cross displayed in the home of one of our managing editors, conveys both the journal's central evangelical commitment and its commitment to Africanity.

(AICs refers to African Indigenous Churches, African Initiated Churches, and/or African Independent Churches.)

La couverture a été créée par Wexer Creative, Nairobi et Mombasa, Kenya et © 2024–2026 par ACTEA. Les silhouettes des bâtiments représentent la Basilique Notre-Dame de la Paix à Yamoussoukro, en Côte d'Ivoire, le plus grand bâtiment d'église du monde, le Kenyatta International Convention Centre à Nairobi, au Kenya, et le Théâtre National du Nigeria à Lagos. Les symboles, dont l'acacia et la croix éthiopienne, représentent l'engagement de la revue envers toutes les régions d'Afrique, urbaines et rurales, anglophones, francophones, et lusophones (ainsi qu'arabophones), et envers toutes les traditions chrétiennes africaines, protestantes, catholiques romaines, orthodoxes, pentecôtistes et EIAs. La croix au centre de l'Afrique, conçue à partir d'une photographie d'une croix éthiopienne exposée chez l'un de nos rédacteurs en chef, traduit à la fois l'engagement évangélique central de la revue et son engagement en faveur de l'africanité.

(EICs est un anacronyme anglais qui désigne Églises indépendantes africaines, églises indigènes africaines, églises initiées africaines, et/ou églises indépendantes africaines.)

Arte da capa criada por Wexer Creative, Nairobi e Mombasa, Quénia e © 2024–2026 pela ACTEA. As silhuetas dos edifícios são da Basílica de Nossa Senhora da Paz em Yamoussoukro, na Côte d'Ivoire, a maior edifício da igreja do mundo, e o Centro Internacional de Convenções Kenyatta em Nairobi, Quénia, e do Teatro Nacional da Nigéria, em Lagos. Os símbolos, incluindo a acácia e a cruz etíope, representam o compromisso da revista para com todas as regiões de África, urbanas e rurais, anglófonas, francófonas e lusófonas (bem como arabófonas), e para com todas as tradições cristãs africanas, protestantes, católicas romanas, ortodoxas, pentecostais e IIAs. A cruz no centro de África, concebida a partir de uma fotografia de uma cruz etíope exposta na casa de um dos nossos redactores-gerais, transmite tanto o compromisso evangélico central da revista como o seu compromisso com a africanidade.

(IIAs é um anacrónimo que se refere a igrejas indígenas africanas, igrejas iniciadas em África e/ou igrejas independentes africanas.)

The specialist review journal, *BookNotes for Africa*, published from 1996–2019, offered short academic reviews of recent Africa-related publications relevant for informed Christian reflection in Africa. Because of its importance, ACTEA was happy to promote *BookNotes for Africa* to its constituent schools. In 2018, the over 1,200 reviews published in issues 1–30 were published by Langham Global Library in a permanent reference collection, *Christian Reflection in Africa: Review and Engagement*, edited by Paul Bowers. A second enlarged edition including reviews from issues 31–40 together with a number of more recent reviews is forthcoming.

Inspired by the legacy of *BookNotes for Africa*, the editors hope that the book review section of *African Christian Theology* will be as robust and as helpful. This section of the journal includes both critical review essays and short book note style reviews. While the majority of books reviewed have been published recently, as is customary, we will sometimes publish retrospective reviews of older texts.

La revue spécialisée, *BookNotes for Africa*, ('Notes de Livres pour l'Afrique'), publiée de 1996 à 2019, proposait courtes critiques académiques de publications récentes liées à l'Afrique et pertinentes pour une réflexion chrétienne éclairée en Afrique. En raison de son importance, ACTEA a été heureux de promouvoir *BookNotes for Africa* auprès de ses écoles constitutives. En 2018, les plus de 1 200 comptes rendus publiés dans les numéros 1 à 30 ont été publiés par Langham Global Library dans une collection de référence permanente, *Christian Reflection in Africa : Review and Engagement*, sous la direction de Paul Bowers. Une deuxième édition révisée comprenant les comptes rendus des numéros 31 à 40 ainsi qu'un certain nombre de comptes rendus plus récents est à venir.

Inspirés par l'héritage de *BookNotes for Africa*, les éditeurs espèrent que la section des critiques de livres de *Théologie Chrétienne Africaine* sera aussi solide et utile. Cette section de la revue comprend à la fois des essais critiques et de courts comptes-rendus sous forme de notes de lecture. Bien que la majorité des livres analysés aient été publiés récemment, nous publierons parfois des analyses rétrospectives de textes plus anciens.

A revista especializada, *BookNotes for Africa* ('Notas de Livro para África'), publicada de 1996 a 2019, oferecia pequenas recensões académicas de publicações recentes relacionadas com África, relevantes para uma reflexão cristã informada em África. Devido à sua importância, a ACTEA teve o prazer de promover a BookNotes for Africa junto das escolas que a constituem. Em 2018, as mais de 1.200 recensões publicadas nos números 1–30 foram publicadas pela Langham Global Library numa coleção de referência permanente, *Christian Reflection in Africa: Review and Engagement* ('Reflexão Cristã em África: Recensão e Engajamento'), editada por Paul Bowers. Está a ser preparada uma segunda edição alargada que inclui as recensões dos números 31–40, bem como algumas recensões mais recentes.

Inspirados pelo legado da *BookNotes for Africa*, os editores esperam que a secção de recensões de livros da *Teologia Cristã Africana* seja tão robusta e útil. Esta secção da revista inclui ensaios de recensão crítica e pequenas recensões de livros. Embora a maioria dos livros recenseados tenha sido publicada recentemente, como é habitual, publicaremos por vezes recensões retrospectivas de textos mais antigos.

Table of Contents
Table des Matières
Índice

Editorial / Éditorial:
**A Journey from Cape Coast to Kingston:
Reflections on a Transatlantic Writing Project** 1

**Un Voyage de Cape Coast à Kingston :
Réflexions sur un Projet d'Écriture Transatlantique** 14

**Uma Viagem de Cape Coast a Kingston:
Reflexões sobre um Projeto Literário Transatlântico** 28
Sara J. Fretheim (Guest Editor / Éditrice Invitée / Editora Convidada)

Editorial Essay / Essai Éditorial / Ensaio Editorial:
**Retrieving Honey from the Hive:
Resource Accessibility in Africa and the Caribbean** 42

**Récupérer le Miel dans la Ruche :
Accessibilité des Ressources en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes** 50

**Recolhendo Mel da Colmeia:
Acessibilidade aos Recursos na África e no Caribe** 59
Joshua Robert Barron

***Part 1 / Partie 1 / Parte 1 —
Personal Reflections / Réflexions Personnelles / Reflexões Pessoais:***

Memories of Ghana 68
Michael Clarke

Tell the Story: Raising Our Transatlantic Voices 72
Oral A. W. Thomas

Reflection on the Challenges and Prospects of Theological Education Within the Transatlantic Slave Trade Enclave: The Case of St Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana 74
Joseph Justice Bain-Doodu

Honour the Memory of Our Ancestors 79
Donald Chambers

(Re)connections, Relationships, and Spiritual Expressions: Gleanings from a Transatlantic Writing Project 84
Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel

Pens, Grandmothers, and Friendship: A Jamaican Reflection 89
Susan Felch

A Ghanaian Anglican Reflection on Transatlantic Engagement 91
Frank Entsi Williams

A Dutchwoman in Ghana 93
Tessel Jonquière

Personal Reflection: History, Identity, and National Reform 98
Donald Chambers

"Writing a Careful Study of What Took Place": A Reflection from the Transatlantic Writing Workshop in Jamaica 100
Stephen Usher

Personal Reflection: Weaving in the Thread of Head and Heart 102
Donald Chambers

Part 2 / Partie 2 / Parte 2 — Poetic Reflections / Réflexions Poétiques / Reflexões Poéticas:

Redeeming Memory, Reclaiming Voice: A Theological Reflection on Creative Writing in the Post-Transatlantic-Slave-Trade Context 104
Victor Atta-Baffoe

Departure and Return 107
Emmanuel A. S. Egbunu

An Experience to Remember 109
Jaqueline Porter

When Trees Talk 110
Anna Kasafi Perkins

I Will Not Stop! 111
Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel

Illmetered 112
Taniecia McFarlane

Prayer for a New Day 113
Emmanuel A. S. Egbunu

Part 3 / Partie 3 / Parte 3 —
Liturgical Reflections / Réflexions Liturgiques / Reflexões Litúrgicas:

Tears in a Bottle — Ghana 115
adapted by *Janice A. McLean-Farrell and Anna Kasafi Perkins*

Ecumenical Service of Reconciliation
(Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, Cape Coast, Ghana) 121
compiled by *Daniel Justice Eshun and Sara J. Fretheim*

Tears in a Bottle — Jamaica 129
adapted by *Daniel Justice Eshun, Janice A. McLean-Farrell, and Anna Kasafi Perkins*

Words, Weaving, and Reconciliation: Out of Many, One People 135
Sara J. Fretheim

Transatlantic Writing Project Closing Liturgy 143
Daniel Justice Eshun and Janice A. McLean-Farrell

Part 4 / Partie 4 / Parte 4 —
Bibliography / Bibliographie / Bibliografia:

Transatlantic Writing Project Publications 149
compiled by *Sara J. Fretheim*

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 1–13

EDITORIAL

A Journey from Cape Coast to Kingston

Reflections on a Transatlantic Writing Project

Sara J. FRETHEIM

Guest Editor
ORCID: 0000-0002-8960-8762
Lincoln Bishop University, Lincoln, England
editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

Introduction

It is my joy and distinct privilege to introduce and edit this special issue, a compilation of unexpected outputs from a project entitled, "Religion, Faith, and Development in Ghana and Jamaica: Connecting Transatlantic Theological Voices and Enhancing Leadership through Academic Writing Workshops," or, more succinctly, the *Transatlantic Writing Project* (TWP).

The practice of publishing a special journal issue with material produced from an academic gathering is common. Yet, despite this issue containing outputs from a two-year writing project, it is unlikely to be what readers are expecting. Indeed, the words, ideas, and feelings coming through us as authors and orators caught many of us off guard as well. These are not the carefully polished, reviewed, and revised words of academic prose, but, as you will read, something more raw and rough-edged. Vulnerable. Heartfelt. Certainly, the familiar, peer-reviewed and polished academic outputs — articles, book chapters, monographs, and so forth — were also present and are listed in a bibliography at the end of this issue.

But the pieces shared here are more akin to sea glass: small treasures of different shapes, sizes, hues, and textures that emerged unexpectedly along the way during our journey together. In some cases, the fragments point us to something that once was — small reminders of larger realities. Others have still-sharp edges, not yet softened by time or circumstance. And yet others which, though new to us, proved, on closer inspection, to have been in process for a long time. Prayers, liturgies, poems, personal reflections, calls to action; voices of lament, empowerment, and activism. As sea glass in the sun, all of them sparkle like colourful jewels, each in their own right. Before introducing this

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/e818aj13

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

issue's contents though, a little background into the project's ethos and telos may be helpful.

TWP Overview

The *Transatlantic Writing Project* began as a small group of Christian scholars concerned by the lower number of publications by academics and theologians in the Global South/majority world and the challenges for some with accessing publications; and a shared concern over the current lack of transatlantic (African-Caribbean) theological interaction.[1] As a way to address these concerns, we secured funding from a US faith-based charity, together with the USPG (United Society Partners for the Gospel, UK), for a two-year project (August 2023 – August 2025) bringing together participants from Ghana and Jamaica and a few neighbouring West African and Caribbean countries, for writing/editing skill development webinars, hands-on mentoring, and in-person workshops in Cape Coast and Kingston. Our aim was for all participants to come away with a publication, in addition to enhanced writing skills and new colleagues and networks for future collaborations.[2]

We came together as a community of transatlantic Christian colleagues to hone our writing skills, but also to begin (re)building transatlantic theological bridges, particularly those linking Ghana and Jamaica, given their significant shared histories. We partnered with St Nicholas [Anglican] Seminary (Cape Coast), and the United Theological College of the West Indies and St Michael's [Catholic] College and Seminary (Kingston), where we were hosted for in-person workshops in July and August 2024.

Our partnership with Ghana and Jamaica was intentional, with their strong historical and contemporary links. Indeed, as part of our project rationale, we noted that evidence suggests more Africans were trafficked from Ghana (or Guinea or the Gold Coast, as it was then called) to Jamaica than from other parts of Africa,[3] with vestiges of Ghanaian languages, cuisine, music, and spirituality still evident there today. In turn, a variety of Jamaican influences may be found

[1] For clarification and consistency, I use the hyphenated term 'African-Caribbean' as set out in an earlier co-authored TWP publication, in which we noted that it was intended to designate "a transatlantic African and Caribbean constituency (distinct from the unhyphenated term 'African Caribbean,' used in acknowledgement of African roots in Caribbean identities)." See Fretheim et al., "Drinking from the Same Well? African and Caribbean Theological Oversights and a Call for a Mutual (Re)connection and a Theology of Repair/Remaking," 308, footnote 2.

[2] A current listing of project publications may be found in the bibliography section of this issue. For more in-depth discussion about the project and its background, see Fretheim et al., "'Drinking from the Same Well?'"

[3] See, for example, Trevor Burnard, "The Atlantic Slave Trade," 93.

in contemporary Ghana, including the critical legacy of the West Indian Moravian missionaries, who succeeded in establishing Christianity when their European missional counterparts had failed,[4] and RastafarI.[5]

Despite these important links, we found little current Ghanaian-Jamaican (and by extension, African-Caribbean) theological engagement, which we viewed as important both within current reparatory discourses, as well as for the health and growth of World Christianity. Further, we believed that drawing together colleagues from these countries and regions, which continue to bear traumatic marks of the transatlantic trade, was, and remains, an important missional avenue for supporting healing, reconciliation, reparatory justice, and the recovery of shared history and identity.

Trauma and Repair: Safety, Ritual, and Community

While engaging transatlantic trauma was not our primary focus, the pain of these historical and contemporary traumas was never far from the surface, whether in theological institutions, visiting local sites, or exploring personal stories and contemplating painful and complex historical, ecclesial, organizational, political, and in some cases familial, links to these transatlantic legacies. Likewise, the realities of working collaboratively as a highly diverse group of leaders and participants — with differences in gender, ethnicity, nationality, church tradition/denomination, socio-economic status, age, and so on — meant that some of our areas of hope and hurt were misaligned or unseen, causing ruptures needing repair.

Knowing that we were stepping into a fraught and fragile space, we addressed this in a few ways, some of which we planned in advance and some of which we incorporated as we went, having the flexibility to creatively adapt to circumstances and group needs. During our in-person workshops, we had times of prayer, reflection, and conversation in which we spoke of the need to *name* in order to *tame* and *reclaim* — to name wounds, harm, sin, history, responsibility — as a way to move toward repair and healing, building on concepts from a variety of theologians, trauma scholars, and psychologists.

[4] For further discussion on Moravian missionaries in Ghana, see Sara Fretheim, *Kwame Bediako and African Christian Scholarship: Emerging Religious Discourse in Twentieth-Century Ghana*, 148–156.

[5] As TWP leader and Jamaican theologian Anna Kasafi Perkins explains: "The so-called Rastafarians reject isms and schisms and thus scholarly references to Rastafarianism, though useful, are not in keeping with how they see and speak of themselves. They are *Rasta* or *RastafarI*. The capitalisation of the final *-I-* indicates the centrality of the I-n-I — the presence of divinity in the Rasta — and immediately references the Emperor Haile I, where the *I* is pronounced as 'eye' (rather than as 'one' or 'the First'). Words and sounds are powerful in the Rasta *livity*." Personal correspondence, 13 January 2026.

Richard Rohr, for example, argues that pain that is not transformed is transmitted. He uses strong language to emphasize this point, which bears serious consideration in the context of a reparatory initiative such as ours: "*If we do not transform our pain, we will most assuredly transmit it* — usually to those closest to us: our family, our neighbours, our work partners . . . "[6] Similarly, addressing racial and inherited community trauma, Wendell Moss refers to the risks and realities of "traumatic reenactment," defining it as "our past continuing to be with us and us reliving it over and over and over," until we address it.[7]

With the aim of cultivating safety, trust, and community, we planned our workshops to include longer meal and break times for conversation and rest; times of sight-seeing and fun; and in some cases, staying together in shared housing, with opportunities to enjoy breakfast together in small groups. This was an intentional effort at fostering community and connection. We also prioritized times of worship and response, creating liturgies and rituals to create a sense of containment, to prepare for and process our experiences in a meaningful framework. As one participant shared in anonymous feedback, "Starting the sessions after breakfast in the chapel was divine. This was enriching."

Some very interesting things happened as we began to grow together, coming with diverse agendas, and in some cases, identifying shared experiences of trauma over racial or gender harms; experiences of abuse and powerlessness in different spaces; the trauma of living in contexts of longstanding economic instability;[8] of experiencing marginalisation, scarcity, and competition in ecclesial, academic, and community contexts. In responding to one another formally in workshop contexts, and in times of worship and informal fellowship, people began sharing personal stories and reflections, taking opportunities to name and transform harm, and in turn to communally bear witness to these stories. Surprisingly, first one brave participant, and then several, asked to share poems they had composed in response to a presentation or wider transatlantic encounter.

---

[6] Richard Rohr, *A Spring Within Us: A Year of Daily Meditations*, 123; emphases original. Taken from Week 15: Transformative Suffering, Day 1.

[7] Adam Young, host, *The Place We Find Ourselves*, podcast, season 6, episode 107, "Racial Trauma: What's Going On? Part 2," featuring Wendell Moss.

[8] Trauma theologian Shelly Rambo discusses the challenge of categorizing poverty and economic lack as 'trauma' in that they defy the parameters of being an event, yet, as she notes, nevertheless clearly bear the marks and impact of trauma. See Rambo, "Living in the 'New Normal': Refiguring Resurrection in the Aftermath of Trauma," Part 2: "Interpreting Holy Saturday through Case Studies."

Such reactions reflected an emotional response to, on the one hand, the weightiness of engaging issues of transatlantic trauma, and on the other, to unmasking and naming the vulnerabilities around writing and publishing, and the rejection and anxiety that comes to all of us who risk putting our words and ideas out for public scrutiny. It was also indicative of the growing sense of safety and connection we experienced. Taking time and creating space for sharing and bearing witness to one another's individual and collective stories is a key component in any type of healing and reparatory work. As another participant shared in anonymous feedback, "[The in-person workshop was] much deeper than I expected — more than I anticipated. We have engaged body, mind, and soul. I didn't expect that, but I'm so grateful. Extremely grateful to everyone who dared to share your story, it's been very significant to me."

Pastoral theologian David A. Hogue addresses the concepts of memory, imagination, ritual, and worship, and highlights how ritual and worship can facilitate the process of individually and corporately both revisiting and "re-membering" collective memories for healing and redemptive purposes.[9] As one participant remarked,

> The unity, fellowship, this melting pot of individuals — it's beautifully woven, and I don't think we had intentions at the outset, but the Holy Spirit has beautifully brought us together. The many resources that we have received — the printed literature; and the experiences that we can't even begin to pay for . . . the lived experiences of the rituals, tree planting, and things that we have done . . . [It] has been so personally rewarding.

Likewise, psychologist and trauma expert Dan Allender has done considerable work both in writing and curricular development on the role of story as a key part of healing processes.[10] Hearing and sharing our stories is important, Allender contends, because

> our stories give rise to our callings, and our callings set the trajectory for more to discover their stories. If we learn to read our stories well, we will see at least a hint, if not the full colorful rainbow, of themes that shape us and make up the multihued palette of who we truly are and what we are meant to *do* for the sake of the kingdom.[11]

There is much more to be said about the significant role of ritual, story, and interpersonal engagement for meaning-making and healing within and between transatlantic communities. However, this brief snapshot reveals something of

---

[9] See David A. Hogue, *Remembering the Future, Imagining the Past: Story, Ritual, and the Human Brain*.

[10] See, for example, "The Role of Story" podcast and discussion, https://theallendercenter.org/2024/05/the-role-of-story/.

[11] Allender and Loerzel, *Redeeming Heartache*, 173.

the ethos in which we were working, and of the wider telos of the project, giving readers a helpful framework for approaching the diverse voices and stories in this issue. I will give the last words here to another participant, who anonymously shared the following feedback on an in-person workshop:

> I like that the workshop was our 'own workshop.' Whilst every effort was made to keep to time, nothing was rushed. The workshop took a life of its own and we flourished because of it . . . It was a 'writing workshop' but it quickly became much more. Friendships, healing, [and] connections happened unconsciously, and writing turned into a spiritual exercise.

Issue Overview

Moving into the issue at hand, we have divided materials into sections that we hope invite curiosity and contemplation through pieces on similar themes and in similar formats. We have tried to arrange the contributions in ways that allow readers to glimpse something of the diversity of dialogue and perspectives at play, including pieces that are 'in conversation' with one another, as we read from authors engaging the same place and event from different perspectives.

To begin, we have a second editorial by **Joshua Robert Barron**, co-editor of this journal and a mentor on the TWP. Using the example of the value of honey in a comb, he offers insights into the rich writing and publishing resources to be found in Africa and the Caribbean, as well as reflecting upon the resource-provision aspects of the TWP. Just as with this editorial introducing the issue, Barron's essay is offered in English, French, and in Portuguese.

Following that, the first section, *Personal Reflections,* begins with three short essays by theological institutional leaders and workshop hosts for our in-person workshops in Cape Coast, Ghana (July 2024) and Kingston, Jamaica (August 2024). **Michael Clarke**, the (now-retired) Principal of Codrington College (Barbados) and a guest speaker for our workshop in Ghana, shares several 'snapshot reflections' of his visit. These include meeting a traditional priest; travelling to Assin Manso to visit the historic site of the "last bath" for trafficked Africans on the way to the coast; and thoughts on identity and ancestry. He also writes on the importance of partnerships between transatlantic theological institutions for repaying what he calls the "psychological debt" of the Transatlantic Trade through intentional efforts at mending historical ruptures. Next, **Oral Thomas**, former Principal of the United Theological College of the West Indies and one of our institutional hosts in Kingston, shares insights about 'story': its power to create or destroy, and the transformative role it can play in raising transatlantic voices. "Starting the story from a different perspective can be transformative," he states. "Who we are (*identity*), where we live (*social space*), how we survive from day to day (*experience)* . . . must influence the story we tell." Finally, **Joseph Justice Bain-Doodu**, Dean of St Nicholas Theological

Seminary and our institutional host in Cape Coast, writes passionately on the financial precarity facing many theological institutions globally, including his own, while arguing for the ongoing importance of theological education and particularly in-person ministerial formation in his Anglican institutional context.

The next contributions engage experiences in Jamaica, including Jamaican, American, and Nigerian perspectives on the TWP visit to Seville Great House. **Donald Chambers**, in "Honour the Memory of Our Ancestors," shares an editorial which he published in the *Jamaica Gleaner*. In it, he reflects upon his experience as a Jamaican visiting the site with African colleagues and calls for greater attention to the upkeep of the African quarters at Seville Great House Heritage Park (St Ann's Jamaica); followed by the *Gleaner's* editorial response. Next, **Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel** shares the shocking and deeply moving experience of discovering, as a Nigerian and member of the Ibibio community, that her history includes the reality of Ibibios having been trafficked to Jamaica; history which she discovered is recorded at Seville Great House. Finally, **Susan Felch**, TWP senior project advisor and guest speaker in Jamaica, reflects upon being a white American visiting Seville Great House. She captures the visit masterfully when she says that "the dizzying juxtaposition of tropical beauty . . . and historical holocaust . . . induces spiritual vertigo." She points to the role of prayer and worship in such spaces; of the deep need for attentiveness and friendship — and listening to the 'grandmothers'— as opposed to impotent white guilt, in working meaningfully to pursue repair.

The next two essays bring us back to Ghana. **Frank Entsi Williams,** an Anglican priest, project participant, and student aide for our workshop at St Nicholas Theological Seminary, writes about the impact of the project on shaping his MPhil research, in which he sets out to explore the complex role of West Africans in the Transatlantic Trade, with particular attention to Anglican responses and legacies. From another perspective, in "A Dutchwoman in Ghana," **Tessel Jonquière**, a Senior Acquisitions Editor with Brill and a guest speaker in Ghana, shares her experiences visiting Elmina and Cape Coast Castles. She writes on the complex, unsettling work of becoming more fully aware of the intersections of Christianity, competing national interests, and commerce within these historical colonial and human trafficking enterprises, and raises questions about contemporary guilt, shame, responsibility, and repair — as well as noting the juxtaposition of stumbling upon a Dutch café in the Castle precincts.

The final three essays in this section focus, in different ways, on the role of writing for personal and national identity formation, and for the preservation of memory and history. In his first "Personal Reflection," **Donald Chambers** reflects upon the need to continue uncovering historical elements of Jamaica's

past through place-names. Next, we turn to **Stephen Usher**, a student aide for the TWP workshop in Jamaica, who shares his understanding of writing as an academic and spiritual discipline, and of his commitment to recording his community's voices and history. Concluding this section, **Donald Chambers** offers a second personal reflection, in which he explores the refreshing freedom he encountered in "the marriage of head and heart in academic research and writing" within the TWP.

Our next section, *Poetic Reflections*, begins with a short essay, "Redeeming Memory, Reclaiming Voice: A Theological Reflection on Creative/Writing in the Post-Atlantic Slave Trade Context," by **Victor Atta-Baffoe,** Bishop of Cape Coast. He cogently argues for the importance of making space for creative writing in the midst of academic theological discourse. Following that, we have a selection of six poems. Some reflect the painful experiences of visiting sites of historic horror and reflecting on transatlantic intergenerational trauma and healing, including the first two poems: **Emmanuel Egbunu**, "Departure and Return" and **Jacqueline Porter**, "An Experience to Remember." Next, **Anna Kasafi Perkins** captures the tensions around Catholic and Protestant separations in poetically reflecting on the commemorative trees which we planted in Cape Coast and Kingston as part of the TWP — and in the latter, one each at both the United Theological College of the West Indies and at St Michael's College and Seminary, neighbouring theological institutions and our joint hosts in Kingston, but firmly separated by fences – physical and theological. Then, experiences around the challenges and vulnerabilities of writing are poetically captured by **Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel** ("I Will Not Stop!") and **Taniecia McFarlane** ("Illmetered"). Finally, another poem by **Emmanuel Egbunu,** "Prayer for a New Day," helpfully brings this section to a close while pointing us to our remaining section.

In the third and final section, *Liturgical Reflections*, we have a selection of prayers, essays, and liturgies that were written or adapted specifically for times of worship during our in-person workshops. In taking time to visit some historical sites and to reflect upon transatlantic harms and lasting traumas, we found it important to ground and surround these experiences with prayer and ritual.

In Ghana, we held a short time of prayer and liturgical reflection prior to visiting Cape Coast Castle. "Tears in a Bottle Liturgy – Ghana" was adapted for this event by **Janice McLean-Farrell** and **Anna Kasafi Perkins** from an unpublished liturgy originally written by the Reverend Nicole Ashwood. Following that visit, we held an "Ecumenical Service of Reflection and Reconciliation" at the Anglican Cathedral in Cape Coast. Materials for the service were compiled jointly by a number of leaders, participants, and local clergy, with the "Prayers of Intercession" written for the occasion by **Daniel**

Justice Eshun and **Sara Fretheim**. Next, **Janice**, **Anna**, and **Daniel** again adapted Nicole Ashwood's material in compiling "Tears in a Bottle Liturgy – Jamaica," for a time of prayer and response held at the Tomb of the African Ancestors at Seville Great House, St Ann's, Jamaica. While these liturgies are almost identical, readers will appreciate the few distinct elements for the Ghana and Jamaica gatherings. Next, an essay by **Sara Fretheim** on "words, weaving, and reconciliation" was shared in morning worship at St Michael's Seminary, Kingston, and offers thoughts on the complexities of these transatlantic entanglements and of our human condition, with equal propensity for good and harm. Finally, we conclude this issue with "Closing Liturgy," written by **Daniel Justice Eshun** and **Janice Mclean-Farrell** for the closing of this round of the TWP.

Embodied Responses

Beyond all of these words, however, there were yet other responses which defy words; what trauma theologian Shelly Rambo refers to as that which is "unlanguageable."[12] Various scholars of trauma highlight the physiological impacts of trauma on brain and body, which frequently impacts, or perhaps more accurately, fragments, our language; pointing to the importance of somatically-focused approaches to healing and repair.[13] What cannot be adequately communicated within these pages are such embodied responses: impromptu invitations to movement at the end of a heavy session; ecstatic dance in the course of worship; loud gasps, silent cries — these "wordless groans" of the spirit (Rom 8:26 NIV); the tears; the laughter; hands digging into the soil to plant commemorative trees; the walking and swimming; a gentle hand on an overwhelmed neighbour's back, leading them to a quiet seat; simply sitting beside a colleague as their tears flowed, being-with and bearing witness — bodies responding to, and working out, feelings of vulnerability, risk-taking, heavy-heartedness, and in some instances, personal and collective pain.

Writer and activist Darnell L. Moore asserts that while a theology of embodiment may sound "pleasant, beneficial, and curative," we also need to consider the possibilities that listening to our bodies' narrations — and he writes specifically of Black bodies with histories of trauma — may also come with

[12] Shelly L. Rambo, "Beyond Redemption? Reading Cormac McCarthy's The Road After the End of the World," 109.

[13] See, for example, Bessel van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* or Peter Levine, *In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness*.

"horrid screams, petrifying rhymes, and piercing cries."[14] We certainly witnessed and/or experienced something of this range, and found having the time, space, and flexibility to incorporate and honour these embodied responses was very important. It would be remiss not to note, however, that joy was equally palpable: there was also lots of laughter around meals, at the games table, and in formal and informal conversations.

The Fruits of a Trauma-Informed, Grassroots Framework

Within these times of sharing, ritual, site-seeing, learning, playing, and reflecting, we were surprised by the emotions and responses that emerged. And as these responses flowed in, we pondered what to do with them. In bringing them together and sharing them here, it is our aim to make them accessible in order to invite further reflection and wider conversation. We share them not in a posture of triumph, but with tentativeness; much here touches on tender places and we trust that our voices will be received with care.

Our hope in sharing these pieces is four-fold. First, it is an effort at practicing and encouraging greater scholarly vulnerability and transparency. As a group of scholars and clergy-scholars, we are more accustomed to publishing our formal research findings and analyses or perhaps presenting polished sermons. Yet, as part of our writing skill development, we spoke often about the inherent vulnerability of writing as an act of risk and creativity. These pieces here are, in many cases, more personal, and perhaps unexpected in an academic journal; but they stand as a testimony to the riches that emerge when we give space for reflection, conversation, and liturgical engagement. And, in this transatlantic context of healing and repair, having that space is critical. We hope it will be an encouragement to others to similarly make space and confidently share their voices — scholarly, poetic, activist, pastoral, or otherwise!

Secondly, this collection is intended to serve as an accessible starting point for those beginning to explore African-Caribbean histories, theologies, and/or current discourses around reparatory justice connected to the Transatlantic trafficking and enslavement of Africans. These are heavy and complex issues, and it can be daunting to know where to start — whether as scholars, funders, institutions, churches, or simply concerned individuals. We hope that a range of readers will find in these honest, frontline thoughts an accessible starting point for deeper conversation.

[14] Darnell L. Moore, "Theorizing the 'Black Body' as a Site of Trauma: Implications for Theologies of Embodiment," 187.

Thirdly, we hope that these pieces may rightly be understood as the fruits of intentionally working within a trauma-informed model. This included endeavouring to create spaces of safety and trust; incorporating liturgy and ritual; and developing personal and interpersonal connection and integration. As regularly noted, writing is always a vulnerable act; but especially in these complex contexts of historic and contemporary trauma, more typical approaches for academic gatherings — which are often based on explicit or implicit power structures and hierarchies — are likely less helpful and may, in fact, perpetuate further harms. It is our hope that in reading and engaging with these rich outputs (including those listed in the bibliography TWP project bibliography included in this issue), others might be encouraged to prioritise trauma-informed approaches in their academic endeavours.

Finally, we share these pieces in the hope of encouraging ongoing African-Caribbean conversations. We note that ACT is intended as a way to engage

> theological educators and church leaders in addressing relevant issues facing the church and society in Africa. *African Christian Theology* serves the whole of Africa and provides a venue for conversations between different regions of Africa, as well as an organ through which African voices can address World Christianity at large.[15]

As we have discussed elsewhere,[16] such reflection is not limited to the continent, but includes a far-reaching diaspora, including the Caribbean. Indeed, in his work *Caribbean Contextual Theology: An Introduction*, Bahamian contextual theologian Carlton Turner (another guest speaker in Ghana) uses the term *African Caribbean* throughout (unhyphenated), as both a geographic and identity marker, reminding us of this shared history and identity and the need for ongoing interrogation and integration. It is our desire that this issue will find some readers in the Caribbean, and in turn that African-Caribbean Christian scholars will find ACT a helpful venue for their future publishing. We look forward to these transatlantic theological conversations continuing to grow and flourish!

As an editorial note, due to the nature of these pieces, they have not undergone a traditional peer review process but have all been reviewed and accepted for publication by all four of the managing editors of ACT as well as by select members of ACT's editorial board. They have undergone only a light edit (apart from the poems, which are published as they were received), in an effort

[15] This text is printed in the front matter of each issue of the journal. It is also listed on "About" page of the journal's website, https://africanchristiantheology.org/index.php/act/about

[16] See Fretheim et al., "Drinking from the Same Well?"

to retain authorial voices as fully as possible, while promoting a degree of uniformity and conforming to the journal's publishing guidelines.

We extend deep gratitude to our funders, co-leaders, mentors, institutional hosts, and participants, who made the TWP not just possible but so richly productive; and to the contributors here, who have generously shared something of themselves. We also extend sincere appreciation to Joshua Robert Barron and the editorial team and colleagues at ACT for their warm support and extensive assistance in bringing this special issue into being. Like the participant who found that a writing workshop unexpectedly became something "much more," it is our hope that readers coming for academic fare will likewise encounter something "much more" in these pages.

Bibliography

BURNARD, Trevor. "The Atlantic Slave Trade." Chapter 5 in *The Routledge History of Slavery*, edited by Gad Heuman and Trevor Burnard, 80–98. Routledgte Histories. London: Routledge, 2011.

FRETHEIM, Sara J. *Kwame Bediako and African Christian Scholarship: Emerging Religious Discourse in Twentieth-Century Ghana*. Eugene, Oregon, USA: Pickwick Publications, 2018.

FRETHEIM, Sara, Daniel Justice ESHUN, Janice MCLEAN-FARRELL, Anna Kasafi PERKINS, and Jo SADGROVE. "Drinking from the Same Well? African and Caribbean Theological Oversights and a Call for a Mutual (Re)connection and a Theology of Repair/Remaking." *Exchange* 53 (2024): 306–335. https://doi.org/10.1163/1572543x-bja10082

HOGUE, David A. *Remembering the Future, Imagining the Past: Story, Ritual, and the Human Brain*. Cleveland, Ohio, USA: The Pilgrim Press, 2003.

LEVINE, Peter. *In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness*. Berkley, California, USA: North Atlantic Books, 2010.

MOORE, Darnell L. "Theorizing the 'Black Body' as a Site of Trauma: Implications for Theologies of Embodiment." *Theology & Sexuality* 15, no. 2 (2015): 175–188. https://doi.org/10.1558/tse.v15i2.175

RAMBO, Shelly L. "Beyond Redemption? Reading Cormac McCarthy's *The Road After the End of the World*." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 41, no. 2 (2008): 99–120.

———. "Living in the 'New Normal': Refiguring Resurrection in the Aftermath of Trauma," Part 2: "Interpreting Holy Saturday through Case Studies." 7 March 2014, Boston College Clough School of Theology and Ministry.

https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/stm/sites/encore/main/ 2014/normal-resurrection-trauma.html

ROHR, Richard. *A Spring Within Us: A Year of Daily Meditations*. Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA: Center for Action and Contemplation, 2016.

"The Role of Story." Allender Center at Seattle School. Podcast and discussion, 31 May 2024. https://theallendercenter.org/ 2024/05/the-role-of-story/

TURNER, Carlton. *Caribbean Contextual Theology: An Introduction*. London: SCM Press, 2024.

VAN DER KOLK, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. New York: Viking Press, 2014.

YOUNG, Adam, host. *The Place We Find Ourselves*, podcast, season 6, episode 107, "Racial Trauma: What's Going On? Part 2," featuring Wendell MOSS, 28 February 2022, https://adamyoungcounseling.com/racial-trauma-whats-going-on-part-2/

THÉOLOGIE CHRÉTIENNE AFRICAINE
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 14–27

ÉDITORIAL

Un Voyage de Cape Coast à Kingston

Réflexions sur un Projet d'Écriture Transatlantique

Sara J. FRETHEIM

Éditrice Invitée
ORCID: 0000-0002-8960-8762
Lincoln Bishop University, Lincoln, Angleterre
editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

Introduction

C'est avec joie et un privilège tout particulier que je présente et édite ce numéro spécial, une compilation des résultats inattendus d'un projet intitulé « *Religion, Faith, and Development in Ghana and Jamaica : Connecting Transatlantic Theological Voices and Enhancing Leadership through Academic Writing Workshops Religion* (en français, 'Religion, Foi, et Développement au Ghana et en Jamaïque : Relier les Voix Théologiques Transatlantiques et Renforcer le Leadership grâce à des Ateliers d'Écriture Universitaire') », ou, plus succinctement, le Projet d'Écriture Transatlantique ('*Transatlantic Writing Project*' en anglais ou TWP).

La pratique consistant à publier un numéro spécial d'une revue contenant des articles issus d'un rassemblement universitaire est courante. Cependant, bien que ce numéro contienne les résultats d'un projet d'écriture de deux ans, il est peu probable qu'il corresponde à ce que les lecteurs attendent. En effet, les mots, les idées et les sentiments qui nous traversent en tant qu'auteurs et orateurs ont également pris beaucoup d'entre nous au dépourvu. Il ne s'agit pas ici de textes académiques soigneusement peaufinés, relus et révisés, mais, comme vous le constaterez, de textes plus bruts et plus directs. Vulnérables. Sincères. Bien sûr, les publications académiques habituelles, relues par des pairs et peaufinées (articles, chapitres de livres, monographies, etc.) sont également présentes et répertoriées dans la bibliographie à la fin de ce numéro.

Mais les œuvres présentées ici s'apparentent davantage à du verre de mer : de petits trésors de formes, de tailles, de teintes et de textures différentes qui ont émergé de manière inattendue au cours de notre voyage ensemble. Dans certains cas, les fragments nous renvoient à quelque chose qui a existé autrefois — petits rappels de réalités plus vastes. D'autres ont encore des bords tranchants, qui n'ont pas encore été adoucis par le temps ou les circonstances.

Publié avec licence par ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/e818aj13

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

D'autres encore, bien que nouveaux pour nous, se sont révélés, après un examen plus approfondi, être en gestation depuis longtemps. Prières, liturgies, poèmes, réflexions personnelles, appels à l'action ; voix de lamentation, d'autonomisation et d'activisme. Comme du verre de mer au soleil, tous scintillent comme des joyaux colorés, chacun à sa manière. Avant de présenter le contenu de ce numéro, il peut être utile de donner quelques informations sur l'*éthos* (la philosophie et le caractère), et le *télos* (la finalité et l'objectif) du projet.

Aperçu du Projet TWP

Le *Projet d'Écriture Transatlantique* (TWP en anglais) a vu le jour sous la forme d'un petit groupe de chercheurs chrétiens préoccupés par le faible nombre de publications émanant d'universitaires et de théologiens du Sud/du monde majoritaire et par les difficultés rencontrées par certains pour accéder à ces publications ; ils partageaient également une préoccupation commune concernant l'absence actuelle d'interaction théologique transatlantique (Afrique-Caraïbes).[1] Afin de répondre à ces préoccupations, nous avons obtenu un financement d'une organisation caritative confessionnelle américaine, en collaboration avec l'USPG (United Society Partners for the Gospel, Royaume-Uni), pour un projet de deux ans (août 2023 – août 2025) réunissant des participants du Ghana et de la Jamaïque ainsi que de quelques pays voisins d'Afrique de l'Ouest et des Caraïbes, pour des webinaires de développement des compétences en rédaction/édition, du mentorat pratique et des ateliers en présentiel à Cape Coast (Ghana) et Kingston (Jamaïque). Notre objectif était que tous les participants repartent avec une publication, en plus de compétences rédactionnelles améliorées et de nouveaux collègues et réseaux pour de futures collaborations.[2]

Nous nous sommes réunis en tant que communauté de collègues chrétiens transatlantiques afin d'affiner nos compétences rédactionnelles, mais aussi pour commencer à (re)construire des ponts théologiques transatlantiques, en particulier ceux qui relient le Ghana et la Jamaïque, compte tenu de leur histoire commune importante. Nous avons établi un partenariat avec le Séminaire

[1] Pour plus de clarté et de cohérence, j'utilise le terme *africain-caribéen* avec trait d'union, comme indiqué dans une publication TWP co-rédigée précédemment, dans laquelle nous avons précisé qu'il était destiné à désigner « une communauté transatlantique africaine et caribéenne (distincte du terme *africain caribéen* sans trait d'union, utilisé pour reconnaître les racines africaines dans les identités caribéennes) ». Voir FRETHEIM et al., « 'Drinking from the Same Well ?' African and Caribbean Theological Oversights and a Call for a Mutual (Re)connection and a Theology of Repair/Remaking », p. 308, note de bas de page 2.

[2] Une liste actualisée des publications relatives au projet figure dans la section bibliographique du présent numéro. Pour une analyse plus approfondie du projet et de son contexte, voir FRETHEIM et al., « 'Drinking from the Same Well ?' ».

[anglican] St Nicholas (Cape Coast), le United Theological College of the West Indies et le Collège et Séminaire [catholique romaine] de St Michael (Kingston), où nous avons été accueillis pour des ateliers en présentiel en juillet et août 2024.

Notre partenariat avec le Ghana et la Jamaïque était intentionnel, compte tenu de leurs liens historiques et contemporains étroits. En effet, dans le cadre de la justification de notre projet, nous avons noté que les données disponibles suggèrent que davantage d'Africains ont été victimes de traite depuis le Ghana (ou la Guinée ou la Côte-de-l'Or, comme on l'appelait alors) vers la Jamaïque que depuis d'autres régions d'Afrique,[3] et que des vestiges des langues, de la cuisine, de la musique et de la spiritualité ghanéennes y sont encore visibles aujourd'hui. À l'inverse, on retrouve diverses influences jamaïcaines dans le Ghana contemporain, notamment l'héritage crucial des missionnaires moraves des Antilles, qui ont réussi à établir le christianisme là où leurs homologues missionnaires européens avaient échoué,[4] et le *RastafarI*.[5]

Malgré ces liens importants, nous avons constaté qu'il y avait peu d'engagement théologique ghanéen-jamaïcain (et par extension, d'engagement théologique entre l'Afrique et les Caraïbes), ce que nous considérons comme important tant dans le cadre des discours actuels sur la réparation que pour la santé et la croissance du Christianisme Mondial (c'est-à-dire en anglais, *World Christianity*). En outre, nous avons estimé que le fait de réunir des collègues de ces pays et régions, qui continuent de porter les marques traumatisantes du commerce transatlantique, était et reste une voie missionnaire importante pour soutenir la guérison, la réconciliation, la justice réparatrice et la récupération d'une histoire et d'une identité communes.

Traumatisme et Guérison : Sécurité, Rituel, et Communauté

Bien que le traumatisme transatlantique n'ait pas été notre principal sujet d'intérêt, la douleur liée à ces traumatismes historiques et contemporains était

[3] Voir, par exemple, Trevor BURNARD, "The Atlantic Slave Trade," p. 93.

[4] Pour plus d'informations sur les missionnaires moraves au Ghana, consultez Sara FRETHEIM, *Kwame Bediako and African Christian Scholarship : Emerging Religious Discourse in Twentieth-Century Ghana*, pp. 148–156.

[5] Comme l'explique Anna Kasafi PERKINS, l'une des leaders du TWP et théologienne jamaïcaine : « Les soi-disant *rastafariens* rejettent les ismes et les schismes, et les références savantes au *rastafarisme*, bien qu'utiles, ne correspondent pas à la façon dont ils se perçoivent et parlent d'eux-mêmes. Ils sont *Rasta* ou *RastafarI*. La majuscule du -I- final indique la centralité du *I-n-I* (ou *je-en-je* en français) — la présence de la divinité dans le Rasta — et fait immédiatement référence à l'empereur Haile I, où le *I* se prononce comme *ail* — et donc comme le mot anglais *eye* (œil) plutôt que comme les mots anglais *one* (un) ou *the First* (le Premier). Les mots et les sons sont puissants dans la vie rasta ». Correspondance personnelle, 13 janvier 2026 ; traduction éditoriale.

toujours présente, que ce soit dans les institutions théologiques, lors de visites de sites locaux, ou lors de l'exploration d'histoires personnelles et de la réflexion sur les liens historiques, ecclésiastiques, organisationnels, politiques et, dans certains cas, familiaux, douloureux et complexes avec cet héritage transatlantique. De même, la réalité du travail collaboratif au sein d'un groupe très diversifié de dirigeants et de participants — avec des différences de genre, d'ethnicité, de nationalité, de tradition/confession religieuse, de statut socio-économique, d'âge, etc. — a fait que certains de nos espoirs et de nos souffrances étaient mal alignés ou invisibles, provoquant des ruptures qu'il fallait réparer.

Conscients que nous entrions dans un espace tendu et fragile, nous avons abordé cette question de plusieurs manières, certaines planifiées à l'avance, d'autres intégrées au fur et à mesure, en faisant preuve de souplesse pour nous adapter de manière créative aux circonstances et aux besoins du groupe. Au cours de nos ateliers en présentiel, nous avons eu des moments de prière, de réflexion et de conversation au cours desquels nous avons parlé de la nécessité de *nommer* pour *apprivoiser* et se *réapproprier*[6]— nommer les blessures, les dommages, le péché, l'histoire, la responsabilité — afin de progresser vers la réparation et la guérison, en nous appuyant sur les concepts de divers théologiens, spécialistes des traumatismes et psychologues. Richard Rohr, par exemple, soutient que la douleur qui n'est pas transformée est transmise. Il utilise un langage fort pour souligner ce point, qui mérite d'être pris au sérieux dans le contexte d'une initiative de réparation telle que la nôtre : « *Si nous ne transformons pas notre douleur, nous la transmettrons très certainement* — généralement à ceux qui nous sont les plus proches : notre famille, nos voisins, nos collègues de travail […] ».[7] De même, abordant les traumatismes raciaux et communautaires hérités, Wendell Moss fait référence aux risques et aux réalités de la « reconstitution traumatique », qu'il définit comme « notre passé qui continue à nous accompagner et que nous revivons encore et encore », jusqu'à ce que nous y remédions.[8]

Dans le but de cultiver la sécurité, la confiance, et l'esprit communautaire, nous avons planifié nos ateliers de manière à inclure des pauses repas et des temps de repos plus longs pour favoriser les conversations et le repos, des moments de visite touristique et de divertissement, et dans certains cas, des séjours en colocation, avec la possibilité de prendre le petit-déjeuner ensemble en petits groupes. Il s'agissait d'un effort délibéré pour favoriser l'esprit

[6] Note du traducteur : Notez bien qu'en anglais, il s'agit d'un jeu de mots, car *name* (nommer), *tame* (apprivoiser) et *reclaim* (réapproprier) riment.

[7] Richard ROHR, *A Spring Within Us: A Year of Daily Meditations*, p. 123 ; traduction editorial ; italiques dans l'original. Extrait de la Semaine 15 : Transformative Suffering, Jour 1.

[8] Adam YOUNG, animateur, *The Place We Find Ourselves*, podcast, saison 6, épisode 107, "Racial Trauma: What's Going On ? Part 2," avec Wendell MOSS.

communautaire et les liens entre les participants. Nous avons également donné la priorité aux moments de culte et de réponse, en créant des liturgies et des rituels afin de créer un sentiment de sécurité, de préparer et d'assimiler nos expériences dans un cadre significatif. Comme l'a partagé un participant dans un commentaire anonyme, « Commencer les sessions après le petit-déjeuner dans la chapelle était divin. C'était enrichissant » (notre traduction).

Des choses très intéressantes se sont produites lorsque nous avons commencé à grandir ensemble, avec des agendas divers et, dans certains cas, en identifiant des expériences traumatisantes communes liées à des préjudices raciaux ou sexists ; des expériences d'abus et d'impuissance dans différents espaces ; le traumatisme de vivre dans des contextes d'instabilité économique de longue date[9] ; d'être victime de marginalisation, de pénurie et de concurrence dans des contextes ecclésiaux, universitaires et communautaires. En réagissant les uns aux autres de manière formelle dans le cadre d'ateliers, de moments de culte et de fraternité informelle, les participants ont commencé à partager leurs histoires et leurs réflexions personnelles, saisissant l'occasion de nommer et de transformer les préjudices, puis de témoigner collectivement de ces histoires. Étonnamment, un premier participant courageux, puis plusieurs autres, ont demandé à partager des poèmes qu'ils avaient composés en réponse à une présentation ou à une rencontre transatlantique plus large.

Ces réactions reflétaient une réponse émotionnelle, d'une part, à la gravité des questions liées au traumatisme transatlantique et, d'autre part, au fait de dévoiler et de nommer les vulnérabilités liées à l'écriture et à la publication, ainsi que le rejet et l'anxiété qui touchent tous ceux d'entre nous qui prennent le risque de soumettre leurs mots et leurs idées à l'examen du public. Elles témoignaient également du sentiment croissant de sécurité et de connexion que nous avons ressenti. Prendre le temps et créer un espace pour partager et témoigner des histoires individuelles et collectives de chacun est un élément clé de tout travail de guérison et de réparation. Comme l'a confié un autre participant dans un commentaire anonyme, « [l'atelier en présentiel était] beaucoup plus profond que je ne l'avais imaginé, bien au-delà de mes attentes. Nous avons mobilisé notre corps, notre esprit et notre âme. Je ne m'y attendais pas, mais j'en suis très reconnaissant. Je suis profondément reconnaissant envers tous ceux qui ont osé partager leur histoire, cela a été très important pour moi ».

[9] La théologienne spécialiste des traumatismes Shelly RAMBO parle de la difficulté de classer la pauvreté et le manque économique dans la catégorie des « traumatismes », dans la mesure où ils ne répondent pas aux critères d'un événement, mais où ils portent néanmoins clairement, comme elle le souligne, les marques et les conséquences d'un traumatisme. Voir RAMBO, « Living in the "New Normal" : Refiguring Resurrection in the Aftermath of Trauma », Part 2 : « Interpreting Holy Saturday through Case Studies ».

Le théologien pastoral David A. Hogue aborde les concepts de mémoire, d'imagination, de rituel et de culte, et souligne comment le rituel et le culte peuvent faciliter le processus de revisitation et de « *re-membering* » des souvenirs collectifs, tant au niveau individuel que collectif, à des fins de guérison et de rédemption.[10] Comme l'a fait remarquer un participant,

> L'unité, la fraternité, ce melting-pot d'individus — tout cela est magnifiquement tissé, et je ne pense pas que nous en avions l'intention au départ, mais le Saint-Esprit nous a merveilleusement réunis. Les nombreuses ressources que nous avons reçues — la documentation imprimée ; et les expériences que nous ne pouvons même pas commencer à rembourser […] les expériences vécues des rituels, la plantation d'arbres et les choses que nous avons faites [… Cela] a été tellement enrichissant sur le plan personnel.

De même, le psychologue et expert en traumatismes Dan Allender a réalisé un travail considérable, tant dans ses écrits que dans l'élaboration de programmes d'études, sur le rôle des récits comme élément clé des processus de guérison.[11] Selon Allender, il est important d'écouter et de partager nos récits, car

> nos histoires donnent naissance à nos vocations, et nos vocations tracent la voie pour que d'autres découvrent leurs histoires. Si nous apprenons à bien lire nos histoires, nous verrons au moins un aperçu, sinon tout l'arc-en-ciel coloré, des thèmes qui nous façonnent et composent la palette multicolore de ce que nous sommes vraiment et de ce que nous sommes censés faire pour le royaume.[12]

Il y aurait encore beaucoup à dire sur le rôle important des rituels, des récits et des relations interpersonnelles dans la construction du sens et la guérison au sein des communautés transatlantiques et entre elles. Cependant, ce bref aperçu révèle quelque chose de l'éthique dans laquelle nous avons travaillé et de la finalité plus large du projet, offrant aux lecteurs un cadre utile pour aborder les diverses voix et histoires présentées dans ce numéro. Je laisserai le mot de la fin dans cette section à un autre participant, qui a partagé anonymement les commentaires suivants lors d'un atelier en présentiel :

> J'ai apprécié le fait que cet atelier était « notre propre atelier ». Même

[10] Voir David A. HOGUE, *Remembering the Future, Imagining the Past: Story, Ritual, and the Human Brain*. En anglais, le verbe *remember* signifie « se souvenir » ou peut-être « remémorer / se remémorer ». Mais le verbe anglais *to member* signifie « faire devenir member ». Ainsi, « re-member » est un jeu de mots qui suggère à la fois le fait de se souvenir et l'idée du processus de réintégration dans un groupe ou une communauté. Ce processus implique à la fois la mémoire et la reconnaissance du fait que la personne qui est *re-membered* est réintégrée dans la communauté humaine avec toute sa dignité.

[11] Voir, par exemple, le podcast et la discussion « The Role of Story », https://theallendercenter.org/ 2024/05/the-role-of-story/.

[12] ALLENDER et LOERZEL, *Redeeming Heartache*, p. 173.

> si tout était mis en œuvre pour respecter les horaires, rien n'était précipité. L'atelier a pris vie et nous nous sommes épanouis grâce à cela […] Il s'agissait d'un « atelier d'écriture », mais il est rapidement devenu bien plus que cela. Des amitiés, des guérisons [et] des liens se sont créés inconsciemment, et l'écriture s'est transformée en un exercice spirituel. (notre traduction)

Aperçu du Numéro

Dans le numéro actuel de la revue, nous avons divisé les articles en sections qui, nous l'espérons, susciteront la curiosité et la réflexion grâce à des textes traitant de thèmes similaires et présentés sous des formats similaires. Nous avons essayé d'organiser les contributions de manière à permettre aux lecteurs d'avoir un aperçu de la diversité des dialogues et des perspectives en jeu, en incluant des articles qui « dialoguent » entre eux, puisque nous lisons des auteurs qui abordent le même lieu et le même événement sous des angles différents.

Pour commencer, nous avons un deuxième éditorial de **Joshua Robert Barron**, coéditeur de cette revue et mentor au sein du TWP. En prenant l'exemple de la valeur du miel dans un rayon, il offre un aperçu des riches ressources en matière d'écriture et d'édition que l'on trouve en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes, tout en réfléchissant aux aspects liés à la fourniture de ressources du TWP. Tout comme cet éditorial présentant le numéro, l'essai de Barron est proposé en anglais, en français, et en portugais.

Ensuite, la première section, *Réflexions Personnelles*, commence par trois courts essais rédigés par des responsables d'institutions théologiques et des animateurs de nos ateliers en présentiel à Cape Coast, au Ghana (juillet 2024) et à Kingston, en Jamaïque (août 2024). **Michael Clarke**, directeur (aujourd'hui à la retraite) du Codrington College (Barbade) et conférencier invité à notre atelier au Ghana, partage plusieurs « réflexions instantanées » sur sa visite. Il évoque notamment sa rencontre avec un prêtre traditionnel, son voyage à Assin Manso pour visiter le site historique du « dernier bain » des Africains victimes de la traite sur le chemin de la côte, et ses réflexions sur l'identité et l'ascendance. Il écrit également sur l'importance des partenariats entre les institutions théologiques transatlantiques pour rembourser ce qu'il appelle la « dette psychologique » du commerce transatlantique grâce à des efforts intentionnels visant à réparer les ruptures historiques. Ensuite, **Oral Thomas**, ancien directeur du United Theological College of the West Indies et l'un de nos hôtes institutionnels à Kingston, partage ses réflexions sur le « récit » : son pouvoir de créer ou de détruire, et le rôle transformateur qu'il peut jouer dans la promotion des voix transatlantiques. « Commencer l'histoire sous un angle différent peut être transformateur », affirme-t-il. « Qui nous sommes (*identité*), où nous vivons (*espace social*), comment nous survivons au quotidien (*expérience*) […]

tout cela doit influencer l'histoire que nous racontons ». Enfin, **Joseph Justice Bain-Doodu**, doyen du St Nicholas Theological Seminary et notre hôte institutionnel à Cape Coast, écrit avec passion sur la précarité financière à laquelle sont confrontées de nombreuses institutions théologiques dans le monde, y compris la sienne, tout en défendant l'importance constante de l'enseignement théologique et en particulier de la formation ministérielle en présentiel dans son contexte institutionnel anglican.

Les contributions suivantes traitent d'expériences vécues en Jamaïque, notamment les points de vue jamaïcains, américains et nigérians sur la visite du TWP à Seville Great House. **Donald Chambers**, dans « *Honour the Memory of Our Ancestors* » (Honorer la mémoire de nos ancêtres), partage un éditorial qu'il a publié dans le journal *Jamaica Gleaner*. Il y revient sur son expérience en tant que Jamaïcain visitant le site avec des collègues africains et appelle à accorder une plus grande attention à l'entretien des quartiers africains du Seville Great House Heritage Park (St Ann's Jamaica) ; suivi de la réponse éditoriale du Gleaner. **Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel** partage ensuite l'expérience choquante et profondément émouvante qu'elle a vécue en découvrant, en tant que Nigériane et membre de la communauté Ibibio, que son histoire inclut la réalité des Ibibios qui ont été victimes de traite en Jamaïque, histoire qu'elle a découverte et qui est consignée à Seville Great House. Enfin, **Susan Felch**, conseillère principale du projet TWP et conférencière invitée en Jamaïque, réfléchit à son expérience en tant qu'Américaine blanche visitant Seville Great House. Elle résume magistralement cette visite en déclarant que « la juxtaposition vertigineuse de la beauté tropicale […] et de l'holocauste historique […] provoque un vertige spirituel ». Elle souligne le rôle de la prière et du culte dans de tels espaces, le besoin profond d'attention et d'amitié — et d'écoute des « grands-mères » — par opposition à la culpabilité impuissante des Blancs, afin d'œuvrer de manière significative à la réparation.

Les deux essais suivants nous ramènent au Ghana. **Frank Entsi Williams**, prêtre anglican, participant au projet et assistant étudiant pour notre atelier au séminaire théologique St Nicholas, écrit sur l'impact du projet sur l'orientation de sa recherche de maîtrise, dans laquelle il explore le rôle complexe des Africains de l'Ouest dans le commerce transatlantique, en accordant une attention particulière aux réactions et à l'héritage de l'Église anglicane. Dans une autre perspective, dans « *A Dutchwoman in Ghana* » (Une Néerlandaise au Ghana), **Tessel Jonquière**, rédactrice en chef des acquisitions chez Brill et conférencière invitée au Ghana, partage ses expériences lors de sa visite des châteaux d'Elmina et de Cape Coast. Elle écrit sur le travail complexe et troublant qui consiste à prendre pleinement conscience des intersections entre le christianisme, les intérêts nationaux concurrents et le commerce au sein de ces entreprises historiques coloniales et de traite des êtres humains, et soulève

des questions sur la culpabilité, la honte, la responsabilité et la réparation contemporaines, tout en notant la juxtaposition de la découverte fortuite d'un café néerlandais dans l'enceinte du château.

Les trois derniers essais de cette section traitent, chacun à leur manière, du rôle de l'écriture dans la formation de l'identité personnelle et nationale, ainsi que dans la préservation de la mémoire et de l'histoire. Dans son première Réflexion Personnelle, **Donald Chambers** réfléchit à la nécessité de continuer à mettre au jour les éléments historiques du passé de la Jamaïque à travers les noms de lieux. Nous passons ensuite à **Stephen Usher**, assistant étudiant pour l'atelier TWP en Jamaïque, qui partage sa conception de l'écriture comme discipline académique et spirituelle, ainsi que son engagement à consigner les voix et l'histoire de sa communauté. Pour conclure cette section, **Donald Chambers** propose une deuxième réflexion personnelle, dans laquelle il explore la liberté rafraîchissante qu'il a rencontrée dans « le mariage de la tête et du cœur dans la recherche et l'écriture académiques » au sein du TWP.

Notre prochaine section, *Réflexions Poétiques*, commence par un court essai intitulé « Racheter la mémoire, retrouver la voix : une réflexion théologique sur la création/l'écriture dans le contexte post-esclavagiste transatlantique », rédigé par **Victor Atta-Baffoe**, évêque de Cape Coast. Il y défend avec conviction l'importance de faire une place à l'écriture créative dans le discours théologique académique. Nous proposons ensuite une sélection de six poèmes. Certains reflètent les expériences douloureuses vécues lors de visites de sites historiques horribles et les réflexions sur les traumatismes transatlantiques intergénérationnels et la guérison, notamment les deux premiers poèmes : **Emmanuel Egbunu**, « Départ et retour » et Jacqueline Porter, « Une expérience à retenir ». **Anna Kasafi Perkins** capture ensuite les tensions autour des séparations entre catholiques et protestants en réfléchissant de manière poétique aux arbres commémoratifs que nous avons plantés à Cape Coast et à Kingston dans le cadre du TWP — et dans ce dernier cas, un à l'United Theological College of the West Indies et un au St Michael's College and Seminary, deux institutions théologiques voisines et nos hôtes communs à Kingston, mais fermement séparées par des clôtures — physiques et théologiques. Enfin, les expériences liées aux défis et aux vulnérabilités de l'écriture sont capturées de manière poétique par **Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel** (« *I Will Not Stop !* » / Je n'arrêterai pas) et **Taniecia McFarlane** (« *Illmetered* » / *mal rimé*). Enfin, un autre poème d'**Emmanuel Egbunu**, « *Prayer for a New Day* » (Prière pour une nouvelle journée), clôt utilement cette section tout en nous orientant vers la section suivante.

Dans la troisième et dernière section, *Réflexions Liturgiques*, nous proposons une sélection de prières, d'essais et de liturgies qui ont été écrits ou adaptés spécialement pour les moments de culte lors de nos ateliers en

présentiel. En prenant le temps de visiter certains sites historiques et de réfléchir aux préjudices transatlantiques et aux traumatismes durables, nous avons jugé important d'ancrer et d'accompagner ces expériences par la prière et le rituel.

Au Ghana, nous avons organisé un court moment de prière et de réflexion liturgique avant de visiter le Château de Cape Coast. La « *Tears in a Bottle Liturgy — Ghana* » (liturgie des larmes dans une bouteille — Ghana) a été adaptée pour cet événement par **Janice McLean-Farrell** et **Anna Kasafi Perkins** à partir d'une liturgie inédite écrite à l'origine par la révérende **Nicole Ashwood**. Après cette visite, nous avons organisé un « service œcuménique de réflexion et de réconciliation » à la Cathédrale Anglicane de Cape Coast. Les documents pour le service ont été compilés conjointement par plusieurs dirigeants, participants et membres du clergé local, les « prières d'intercession » ayant été écrites pour l'occasion par **Daniel Justice Eshun** et **Sara Fretheim**. Janice, Anna et Daniel ont ensuite adapté le matériel de Nicole Ashwood pour compiler « *Tears in a Bottle Liturgy — Jamaica* » (Liturgie des larmes dans une bouteille — Jamaïque), pour un moment de prière et de réponse organisé à la tombe des ancêtres africains à Seville Great House, St Ann's, Jamaïque. Bien que ces liturgies soient presque identiques, les lecteurs apprécieront les quelques éléments distinctifs des rassemblements au Ghana et en Jamaïque. Ensuite, un essai de **Sara Fretheim** sur « les mots, le tissage, et la reconciliation » a été partagé lors du culte matinal au Séminaire de St Michael, à Kingston, et offre des réflexions sur la complexité de ces enchevêtrements transatlantiques et de notre condition humaine, avec une propension égale au bien et au mal. Enfin, nous concluons ce numéro avec la « liturgie de cloture », écrite par **Daniel Justice Eshun** et **Janice Mclean-Farrell** pour la clôture de cette série du TWP.

Réponses Incarnées

Au-delà de tous ces mots, cependant, il y avait encore d'autres réactions qui défient les mots ; ce que la théologienne spécialiste des traumatismes Shelly Rambo appelle « *unlanguageable* » (en anglais ; c'est-à-dire *inlangible* en français, de *ne pas* + *langue* + *-ible* — ou, plus simplement, c'est-à-dire, « Ce que l'a langue ne peut pas articuler »).[13] Divers chercheurs spécialisés dans les traumatismes soulignent les effets physiologiques des traumatismes sur le cerveau et le corps, qui ont souvent un impact, ou peut-être plus exactement, fragmentent notre langage, soulignant l'importance des approches somatiques pour la guérison et la réparation.[14] Ce qui ne peut être adéquatement

[13] Shelly L. RAMBO, « Beyond Redemption? Reading Cormac McCarthy's The Road After the End of the World », p. 109.

[14] Voir, par exemple, Bessel VAN DER KOLK, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* ou Peter LEVINE, *In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness*.

communiqué dans ces pages, ce sont ces réactions incarnées : les invitations impromptues à bouger à la fin d'une séance intense ; la danse extatique pendant le culte ; les halètements bruyants, les cris silencieux — ces « gémissements ineffables » de l'esprit (Romains 8:26 BJ) ; les larmes ; les rires ; les mains creusant la terre pour planter des arbres commémoratifs ; la marche et la natation ; une main douce posée sur le dos d'un voisin bouleversé, le conduisant vers un siège tranquille ; le simple fait de s'asseoir à côté d'un collègue alors que ses larmes coulent, d'être présent et de témoigner — les corps réagissant et exprimant des sentiments de vulnérabilité, de prise de risque, de tristesse et, dans certains cas, de douleur personnelle et collective.

L'écrivain et activiste Darnell L. Moore affirme que si une théologie de l'incarnation peut sembler « agréable, bénéfique et curative », nous devons également tenir compte du fait qu'écouter les récits de notre corps — et il parle ici spécifiquement des corps noirs ayant subi des traumatismes — peut également s'accompagner de « cris horribles, de rimes terrifiantes et de hurlements déchirants ».[15] Nous avons certainement été témoins et/ou avons vécu quelque chose de ce genre, et nous avons constaté qu'il était très important d'avoir le temps, l'espace et la flexibilité nécessaires pour intégrer et honorer ces réponses incarnées. Il serait toutefois négligent de ne pas souligner que la joie était tout aussi palpable : les repas, les jeux de société et les conversations formelles ou informelles étaient également ponctués de nombreux éclats de rire.

Les fruits d'un Cadre Communautaire tenant compte des Traumatismes

Au cours de ces moments de partage, de rituels, de visites, d'apprentissage, de jeux et de réflexion, nous avons été surpris par les émotions et les réactions qui ont émergé. Et à mesure que ces réactions affluaient, nous nous sommes demandé quoi en faire. En les rassemblant et en les partageant ici, notre objectif est de les rendre accessibles afin d'inviter à une réflexion plus approfondie et à une conversation plus large. Nous les partageons non pas dans une posture triomphante, mais avec hésitation ; beaucoup de choses ici touchent à des sujets sensibles et nous espérons que nos voix seront reçues avec bienveillance.

Notre espoir en partageant ces articles est quadruple. Tout d'abord, il s'agit d'un effort visant à pratiquer et à encourager une plus grande vulnérabilité et transparence académiques. En tant que groupe d'universitaires et d'ecclésiastiques-universitaires, nous sommes plus habitués à publier nos résultats et analyses de recherche formels ou peut-être à présenter des sermons raffinés. Cependant, dans le cadre du développement de nos compétences rédactionnelles, nous avons souvent évoqué la vulnérabilité inhérente à

[15] Darnell L. MOORE, « Theorizing the 'Black Body' as a Site of Trauma : Implications for Theologies of Embodiment », p. 18 ; notre traduction.

l'écriture en tant qu'acte de risque et de créativité. Les ouvrages présentés ici sont, dans de nombreux cas, plus personnels, et peut-être inattendus dans une revue universitaire ; mais ils témoignent de la richesse qui émerge lorsque nous accordons de la place à la réflexion, à la conversation et à l'engagement liturgique. Et, dans ce contexte transatlantique de guérison et de réparation, il est essentiel de disposer de cet espace. Nous espérons que cela encouragera d'autres personnes à faire de même et à partager leurs opinions avec confiance, qu'elles soient savantes, poétiques, militantes, pastorales ou autres !

Deuxièmement, cette collection se veut un point de départ accessible pour ceux qui commencent à explorer l'histoire, la théologie et/ou les discours actuels sur la justice réparatrice liés à la traite transatlantique et à l'esclavage des Africains dans les Caraïbes et en Afrique. Il s'agit de questions lourdes et complexes, et il peut être intimidant de ne pas savoir par où commencer — que ce soit en tant que chercheurs, bailleurs de fonds, institutions, églises ou simplement en tant que personnes concernées. Nous espérons que ces réflexions honnêtes et de première ligne constitueront pour un large éventail de lecteurs un point de départ accessible à une conversation plus approfondie.

Troisièmement, nous espérons que ces articles seront compris à juste titre comme les fruits d'un travail intentionnel dans le cadre d'un modèle tenant compte des traumatismes. Cela comprenait notamment la création d'espaces de sécurité et de confiance, l'intégration de la liturgie et des rituels, ainsi que le développement de liens et d'une intégration personnels et interpersonnels. Comme on le fait souvent remarquer, l'écriture est toujours un acte vulnérable ; mais surtout dans ces contextes complexes de traumatismes historiques et contemporains, les approches plus classiques des rencontres universitaires — qui souvent sont fondées sur des structures de pouvoir et des hiérarchies explicites ou implicites — sont probablement moins utiles et peuvent, en fait, perpétuer davantage les préjudices. Nous espérons qu'en lisant et en s'intéressant à ces riches publications (y compris celles répertoriées dans la bibliographie du projet TWP incluse dans ce numéro), d'autres seront encouragés à privilégier les approches tenant compte des traumatismes dans leurs travaux universitaires.

Enfin, nous partageons ces ouvrages dans l'espoir d'encourager la poursuite du dialogue *Africain-Caribéen*. Nous notons que la TCA se veut un moyen de stimuler et impliquer

> les enseignants en théologie et les responsables d'église à aborder les questions pertinentes auxquelles sont confrontées l'église et la société en Afrique. *Théologie Chrétienne Africaine* est au service de l'ensemble de l'Afrique et constitue un lieu de dialogue entre les différentes régions d'Afrique. Elle sert ainsi d'organe par lequel les voix africaines peuvent s'adresser au christianisme mondial (« World Christianity »)

dans son ensemble.[16]

Comme nous l'avons déjà mentionné ailleurs, cette réflexion ne se limite pas au continent, mais s'étend à une diaspora très étendue, y compris les Caraïbes. En effet, dans son ouvrage *Caribbean Contextual Theology : An Introduction* (Théologie Contextuelle Caribéenne : une introduction), le théologien contextuel bahamien Carlton Turner (un autre conférencier invité au Ghana) utilise tout au long du livre le terme « Africain Caribéen » (sans trait d'union) comme marqueur géographique et identitaire, nous rappelant cette histoire et cette identité communes, ainsi que la nécessité d'une remise en question et d'une intégration continues. Nous espérons que ce numéro trouvera des lecteurs dans les Caraïbes et que les universitaires chrétiens africains-caribéens trouveront dans TCA un support utile pour leurs futures publications. Nous nous réjouissons à l'idée que ces conversations théologiques transatlantiques continuent à se développer et à s'épanouir !

À titre de note éditoriale, en raison de la nature de ces articles, ils n'ont pas fait l'objet d'un processus traditionnel d'évaluation par les pairs, mais ont tous été examinés et acceptés pour publication par les quatre directeurs-éditeurs de la TCA ainsi que par certains membres du comité rédaction de la TCA. Ils n'ont fait l'objet que d'une légère révision (à l'exception des poèmes, qui sont publiés tels qu'ils ont été reçus), afin de conserver autant que possible la voix des auteurs, tout en favorisant une certaine uniformité et en se conformant aux directives de publication de la revue.

Nous exprimons notre profonde gratitude envers nos bailleurs de fonds, nos co-dirigeants, nos mentors, nos hôtes institutionnels et nos participants, qui ont rendu le TWP non seulement possible, mais aussi extrêmement productif ; ainsi qu'aux contributeurs ici présents, qui ont généreusement partagé une partie d'eux-mêmes. Nous tenons également à exprimer notre sincère gratitude à Joshua Robert Barron, à l'équipe éditoriale et aux collègues de TCA pour leur soutien chaleureux et leur aide précieuse dans la réalisation de ce numéro spécial. À l'instar du participant qui a découvert qu'un atelier d'écriture était devenu de manière inattendue « bien plus », nous espérons que les lecteurs venus pour un contenu académique trouveront également « bien plus » dans ces pages.

Bibliography

BURNARD, Trevor. « The Atlantic Slave Trade ». Chapitre 5 dans *The Routledge History of Slavery*, sous dir. Gad HEUMAN and Trevor BURNARD, pp. 80–98.

[16] Ce texte est imprimé dans les pages liminaires de chaque numéro de la revue. Il figure également sur la page « À Propos » du site web de la revue, https://africanchristiantheology.org/index.php/act/about

Routledge Histories. Londres : Routledge, 2011.

FRETHEIM, Sara J. *Kwame Bediako and African Christian Scholarship: Emerging Religious Discourse in Twentieth-Century Ghana*. Eugene, Oregon, États-Unis : Pickwick Publications, 2018.

FRETHEIM, Sara, Daniel Justice ESHUN, Janice MCLEAN-FARRELL, Anna Kasafi PERKINS, et Jo SADGROVE. « Drinking from the Same Well ? African and Caribbean Theological Oversights and a Call for a Mutual (Re)connection and a Theology of Repair/Remaking ». *Exchange* 53 (2024) : 306–335. https://doi.org/10.1163/1572543x-bja10082

HOGUE, David A. *Remembering the Future, Imagining the Past: Story, Ritual, and the Human Brain*. Cleveland, Ohio, États-Unis : The Pilgrim Press, 2003.

LEVINE, Peter. *In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness*. Berkley, California, États-Unis : North Atlantic Books, 2010.

MOORE, Darnell L. « Theorizing the 'Black Body' as a Site of Trauma : Implications for Theologies of Embodiment ». *Theology & Sexuality* 15, nº 2 (2015) : 175–188. https://doi.org/10.1558/tse.v15i2.175

RAMBO, Shelly L. « Beyond Redemption ? Reading Cormac McCarthy's *The Road After the End of the World* ». *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 41, nº 2 (2008) : 99–120.

———. « Living in the 'New Normal' : Refiguring Resurrection in the Aftermath of Trauma », Partie 2 : « Interpreting Holy Saturday through Case Studies ». 7 mars 2014, Boston College Clough School of Theology and Ministry. https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/stm/sites/encore/main/2014/normal-resurrection-trauma.html

ROHR, Richard. *A Spring Within Us : A Year of Daily Meditations*. Albuquerque, Nouveau-Mexique, États-Unis : Center for Action and Contemplation, 2016.

« The Role of Story ». Allender Center à Seattle School. Podcast et discussion, 31 mai 2024. https://theallendercenter.org/ 2024/05/the-role-of-story/

TURNER, Carlton. *Caribbean Contextual Theology : An Introduction*. Londres: SCM Press, 2024.

VAN DER KOLK, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score : Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. New York: Viking Press, 2014.

YOUNG, Adam, host. *The Place We Find Ourselves*, podcast, saison 6, épisode 107, « Racial Trauma : What's Going On ? Part 2 », avec Wendell MOSS, 28 février 2022, https://adamyoungcounseling.com/racial-trauma-whats-going-on-part-2/

TEOLOGIA CHRISTÃ AFRICANA
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 28–41

EDITORIAL

Uma Viagem de Cape Coast a Kingston

Reflexões sobre um Projeto Literário Transatlântico

Sara J. FRETHEIM

Editora Convidada
ORCID: 0000-0002-8960-8762
Lincoln Bishop University, Lincoln, Inglaterra
editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

Introdução

É com alegria e um privilégio muito especial que apresento e edito esta edição especial, uma compilação dos resultados inesperados de um projeto intitulado "*Religion, Faith, and Development in Ghana and Jamaica: Connecting Transatlantic Theological Voices and Enhancing Leadership through Academic Writing Workshops Religion* (em português, "Religião, Fé, e Desenvolvimento no Gana e na Jamaica: Conectando Vozes Teológicas Transatlânticas e Aprimorando a Liderança por meio de Oficinas de Redação Acadêmica")," ou, mais sucintamente, o Projeto de Escrita Transatlântica ("*Transatlantic Writing Project*" em inglês ou TWP).

A prática de publicar um número especial de uma revista contendo artigos provenientes de um encontro universitário é comum. No entanto, embora esse número contenha os resultados de um projeto de escrita de dois anos, é improvável que corresponda ao que os leitores esperam. Na verdade, as palavras, ideias e sentimentos que nos passam pela cabeça como autores e oradores também pegaram muitos de nós de surpresa. Não se trata aqui de textos académicos cuidadosamente elaborados, revisados e corrigidos, mas, como você verá, de textos mais crus e diretos. Vulneráveis. Sinceros. É claro que as publicações académicas habituais, revistas por pares e aperfeiçoadas (artigos, capítulos de livros, monografias, etc.) também estão presentes e listadas na bibliografia no final desta edição.

Mas as obras aqui apresentadas assemelham-se mais a vidro marinho: pequenos tesouros de diferentes formas, tamanhos, tonalidades e texturas que surgiram inesperadamente durante a nossa viagem juntos. Em alguns casos, os fragmentos remetem-nos para algo que existiu no passado — pequenas lembranças de realidades mais vastas. Outros ainda têm bordas afiadas, que ainda não foram suavizadas pelo tempo ou pelas circunstâncias. Outros,

Publicado com licença pela ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/d01bs607

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

embora novos para nós, revelaram-se, após uma análise mais aprofundada, estar em gestação há muito tempo. Orações, liturgias, poemas, reflexões pessoais, apelos à ação; vozes de lamentação, empoderamento e ativismo. Como vidro marinho ao sol, todos brilham como joias coloridas, cada um à sua maneira. Antes de apresentar o conteúdo desta edição, pode ser útil dar algumas informações sobre o *ethos* (a filosofia e o caráter) e o *telos* (a finalidade e o objetivo) do projeto.

Visão geral do Projeto TWP

O *Projeto Transatlântico de Escrita* (TWP, na sigla em inglês) surgiu como um pequeno grupo de pesquisadores cristãos preocupados com o baixo número de publicações produzidas por académicos e teólogos do Sul/do mundo maioritário e com as dificuldades encontradas por alguns para aceder a essas publicações; eles também partilhavam uma preocupação comum com a atual ausência de interação teológica transatlântica (Africano-Caribenho).[1] Para responder a essas preocupações, obtivemos financiamento de uma organização de caridade confessional americana, em colaboração com a USPG (United Society Partners for the Gospel, Reino Unido), para um projeto de dois anos (agosto de 2023 – agosto de 2025) reunindo participantes do Gana e da Jamaica, bem como de alguns países vizinhos da África Ocidental e das Caraíbas, para webinars de desenvolvimento de competências em redação/edição, mentoria prática e workshops presenciais em Cape Coast (Gana) e Kingston (Jamaica). O nosso objetivo era que todos os participantes saíssem com uma publicação, além de competências de redação aprimoradas e novos colegas e redes para futuras colaborações.[2]

Reunimo-nos como uma comunidade de colegas cristãos transatlânticos para aperfeiçoar as nossas competências redacionais, mas também para começar a (re)construir pontes teológicas transatlânticas, em particular as que ligam o Gana e a Jamaica, tendo em conta a sua importante história comum. Estabelecemos uma parceria com o Seminário [anglicano] St Nicholas (Cape Coast), o United Theological College of the West Indies e o Colégio e Seminário

[1] Para maior clareza e coerência, utilizo o termo *Africano-Caribenho* com hífen, conforme indicado numa publicação TWP co-redigida anteriormente, na qual especificámos que se destinava a designar "uma comunidade transatlântica africana e caribenha (distinta do termo *Africano Caribenho* sem hífen, utilizado para reconhecer as raízes africanas nas identidades caribenhas)." Ver Fretheim et al., "'Drinking from the Same Well ?' African and Caribbean Theological Oversights and a Call for a Mutual (Re)connection and a Theology of Repair/Remaking," p. 308, nota de rodapé 2.

[2] Uma lista atualizada das publicações relacionadas ao projeto consta da seção bibliográfica deste número. Para uma análise mais aprofundada do projeto e do seu contexto, ver Fretheim et al., "'Drinking from the Same Well ?'"

[católico romano] de St Michael (Kingston), onde fomos recebidos para workshops presenciais em julho e agosto de 2024.

A nossa parceria com o Gana e a Jamaica foi intencional, tendo em conta as suas estreitas ligações históricas e contemporâneas. De facto, no âmbito da justificação do nosso projeto, observámos que os dados disponíveis sugerem que mais africanos foram vítimas de tráfico humano do Gana (ou Guiné ou Costa do Ouro, como era então chamada) para a Jamaica do que de outras regiões de África,[3] e que vestígios da língua, culinária, música e espiritualidade ganesas ainda são visíveis hoje em dia. Por outro lado, encontram-se várias influências jamaicanas no Gana contemporâneo, nomeadamente a herança crucial dos missionários morávios das Antilhas, que conseguiram estabelecer o cristianismo onde os seus homólogos missionários europeus falharam,[4] e o *RastafarI*.[5]

Apesar destas ligações importantes, constatámos que havia pouco compromisso teológico ganês-jamaicano (e, por extensão, compromisso teológico entre África e as Caraíbas), o que consideramos importante tanto no contexto dos discursos atuais sobre reparação como para a saúde e o crescimento do Cristianismo Mundial (ou seja, em inglês, *World Christianity*). Além disso, consideramos que reunir colegas desses países e regiões, que continuam a carregar as marcas traumáticas do comércio transatlântico, era e continua a ser um importante caminho missionário para apoiar a cura, a reconciliação, a justiça reparadora e a recuperação de uma história e identidade comuns.

Traumatismo e Cura: Segurança, Ritual e Comunidade

Embora o trauma transatlântico não fosse o nosso principal tema de interesse, a dor associada a esses traumas históricos e contemporâneos estava sempre presente, seja nas instituições teológicas, nas visitas a locais históricos, na exploração de histórias pessoais ou na reflexão sobre as ligações históricas,

---

[3] Ver, por exemplo, Trevor BURNARD, "The Atlantic Slave Trade," p. 93.

[4] Para mais informações sobre os missionários morávios no Gana, consulte Sara Fretheim, *Kwame Bediako and African Christian Scholarship : Emerging Religious Discourse in Twentieth-Century Ghana*, pp. 148–156.

[5] Como explica Anna Kasafi PERKINS, uma das líderes do TWP e teóloga jamaicana: "Os chamados *rastafarianos* rejeitam os ismos e os cismas, e as referências eruditas ao *rastafarismo*, embora úteis, não correspondem à forma como eles se percebem e falam de si mesmos. Eles são*Rasta* ou *RastafarI*. A capitalização do *-I-* final indica a centralidade do *I-n-I* (ou *eu-em-eu* em português) — a presença da divindade no Rasta — e faz referência imediata ao imperador Haile I, onde o *I* é pronunciado como *pai* — e, portanto, como a palavra inglesa *eye* (olho) em vez das palavras inglesas *one* (um) ou *the First* (o Primeiro). As palavras e os sons são poderosos na vida rasta". Correspondência pessoal, 13 de janeiro de 2026; tradução editorial.

eclesiásticas, organizacionais, políticas e, em alguns casos, familiares, dolorosas e complexas com essa herança transatlântica. Da mesma forma, a realidade do trabalho colaborativo dentro de um grupo muito diversificado de líderes e participantes — com diferenças de género, etnia, nacionalidade, tradição/confissão religiosa, estatuto socioeconómico, idade, etc. — fez com que algumas das nossas esperanças e sofrimentos estivessem mal alinhados ou invisíveis, provocando rupturas que precisavam de ser reparadas.

Conscientes de que estávamos a entrar num espaço tenso e frágil, abordámos esta questão de várias maneiras, algumas planeadas com antecedência, outras integradas à medida que avançávamos, demonstrando flexibilidade para nos adaptarmos de forma criativa às circunstâncias e às necessidades do grupo. Durante os nossos workshops presenciais, tivemos momentos de oração, reflexão e conversa em que falámos da necessidade de *nomear* para *domar* e *recuperar*[6] — nomear feridas, danos, pecados, história, responsabilidade — como forma de avançar para a reparação e a cura, com base em conceitos de vários teólogos, estudiosos do trauma e psicólogos.

Richard Rohr, por exemplo, defende que a dor que não é transformada é transmitida. Ele usa uma linguagem forte para enfatizar esse ponto, que merece ser levado a sério no contexto de uma iniciativa de reparação como a nossa: "*Se não transformarmos a nossa dor, certamente a transmitiremos* — geralmente àqueles que nos são mais próximos: a nossa família, os nossos vizinhos, os nossos colegas de trabalho... ".[7] Da mesma forma, ao abordar os traumas raciais e comunitários herdados, Wendell Moss refere-se aos riscos e às realidades da "reconstituição traumática", que define como "o nosso passado que continua a acompanhar-nos e que revivemos repetidamente", até que o resolvamos.[8]

Com o objetivo de cultivar a segurança, a confiança e o espírito comunitário, planeámos os nossos workshops de forma a incluir pausas para refeições e períodos de descanso mais longos para promover conversas e descanso, momentos de turismo e entretenimento e, em alguns casos, estadias em casas partilhadas, com a possibilidade de tomar o pequeno-almoço juntos em pequenos grupos. Foi um esforço deliberado para promover o espírito comunitário e os laços entre os participantes. Também demos prioridade aos momentos de culto e resposta, criando liturgias e rituais para criar uma sensação de segurança, preparar e assimilar as nossas experiências num contexto

[6] Nota do tradutor: Observe que, em inglês, trata-se de um jogo de palavras, pois *name* (nomear), *tame* (domar) e *reclaim* (recuperar) rimam.

[7] Richard Rohr, *A Spring Within Us: A Year of Daily Meditations*, p. 123 ; tradução editorial; itálico no original. Trecho da Semana 15: Sofrimento Transformador, Dia 1.

[8] Adam Young, apresentador, The Place We Find Ourselves, podcast, 6.ª temporada, episódio 107, "Racial Trauma: What's Going On ? Part 2", com Wendell Moss.

significativo. Como partilhou um participante num comentário anónimo: "Começar as sessões após o pequeno-almoço na capela foi divino. Foi enriquecedor" (tradução nossa).

Coisas muito interessantes aconteceram quando começámos a crescer juntos, com agendas diversas e, em alguns casos, identificando experiências traumáticas comuns relacionadas com preconceitos raciais ou sexistas; experiências de abuso e impotência em diferentes espaços; o trauma de viver em contextos de instabilidade económica de longa data;[9] de ser vítima de marginalização, escassez e competição em contextos eclesiais, universitários e comunitários. Ao interagirem formalmente uns com os outros em workshops, momentos de culto e fraternidade informal, os participantes começaram a partilhar as suas histórias e reflexões pessoais, aproveitando a oportunidade para nomear e transformar os preconceitos e, em seguida, testemunhar coletivamente essas histórias. Surpreendentemente, um primeiro participante corajoso, seguido por vários outros, pediu para partilhar poemas que tinham composto em resposta a uma apresentação ou a um encontro transatlântico mais amplo.

Essas reações refletiam uma resposta emocional, por um lado, à gravidade das questões relacionadas ao trauma transatlântico e, por outro, ao fato de revelar e nomear as vulnerabilidades relacionadas à escrita e à publicação, bem como a rejeição e a ansiedade que afetam todos nós que corremos o risco de submeter as nossas palavras e ideias ao escrutínio público. Elas também testemunhavam o crescente sentimento de segurança e conexão que sentimos. Reservar tempo e criar um espaço para partilhar e testemunhar as histórias individuais e coletivas de cada um é um elemento-chave de qualquer trabalho de cura e reparação. Como outro participante confiou num comentário anónimo, "[o workshop presencial foi] muito mais profundo do que eu imaginava, muito além das minhas expectativas. Mobilizámos o nosso corpo, a nossa mente e a nossa alma. Não estava à espera disso, mas estou muito grato. Estou profundamente grato a todos aqueles que se atreveram a partilhar a sua história, foi muito importante para mim".

O teólogo pastoral David A. Hogue aborda os conceitos de memória, imaginação, ritual e culto, e destaca como o ritual e o culto podem facilitar o processo de revisitação e "*re-membering*" das memórias coletivas, tanto a nível

[9] A teóloga especialista em traumas Shelly Rambo fala sobre a dificuldade de classificar a pobreza e a carência económica na categoria de "traumas", na medida em que não correspondem aos critérios de um evento, mas que, no entanto, como ela salienta, apresentam claramente as marcas e as consequências de um trauma. Ver Rambo, "Living in the "New Normal": Refiguring Resurrection in the Aftermath of Trauma", Parte 2: "Interpreting Holy Saturday through Case Studies".

individual como coletivo, para fins de cura e redenção.[10] Como observou um participante,

> A unidade, a fraternidade, essa mistura de indivíduos — tudo isso está maravilhosamente entrelaçado, e não creio que fosse nossa intenção inicial, mas o Espírito Santo nos uniu de forma maravilhosa. Os muitos recursos que recebemos — a documentação impressa; e as experiências que nem sequer podemos começar a retribuir … as experiências vividas dos rituais, a plantação de árvores e as coisas que fizemos [... Isso] foi tão enriquecedor a nível pessoal.

Da mesma forma, o psicólogo e especialista em traumas Dan Allender realizou um trabalho considerável, tanto nos seus escritos como na elaboração de programas de estudo, sobre o papel das narrativas como elemento-chave dos processos de cura.[11] Segundo Allender, é importante ouvir e partilhar as nossas narrativas, porque

> As nossas histórias dão origem às nossas vocações, e as nossas vocações traçam o caminho para que outros descubram as suas histórias. Se aprendermos a ler bem as nossas histórias, veremos pelo menos um vislumbre, se não todo o arco-íris colorido, dos temas que nos moldam e compõem a paleta multicolorida do que realmente somos e do que devemos fazer pelo reino.[12]

Ainda haveria muito a dizer sobre o importante papel dos rituais, das narrativas e das relações interpessoais na construção de sentido e na cura dentro das comunidades transatlânticas e entre elas. No entanto, esta breve visão geral revela algo sobre a ética com que trabalhámos e sobre o objetivo mais amplo do projeto, oferecendo aos leitores um quadro útil para abordar as diversas vozes e histórias apresentadas nesta edição. Deixarei a palavra final nesta secção para outro participante, que partilhou anonimamente os seguintes comentários durante um workshop presencial:

> Gostei do facto de este workshop ser "o nosso próprio workshop". Embora tudo fosse feito para respeitar os horários, nada era apressado. O workshop ganhou vida e nós florescemos graças a isso … Era um "workshop de escrita", mas rapidamente se tornou muito mais do que

[10] Ver David A. HOGUE, *Remembering the Future, Imagining the Past: Story, Ritual, and the Human Brain*. Em inglês, o verbo *remember* significa "lembrar-se" ou talvez "recordar/relembrar." Mas o verbo inglês *to member* significa "tornar-se membro." Assim, "*re-member*" é um jogo de palavras que sugere tanto o ato de recordar como a ideia do processo de reintegração num grupo ou numa comunidade. Este processo envolve tanto a memória como o reconhecimento do facto de que a pessoa que é *re-membered* é reintegrada na comunidade humana com toda a sua dignidade.

[11] Ver, por exemplo, o podcast e a discussão "The Role of Story," https://theallendercenter.org/ 2024/05/the-role-of-story/.

[12] ALLENDER e LOERZEL, *Redeeming Heartache*, p. 173.

> isso. Amizades, curas [e] laços foram criados inconscientemente, e a escrita transformou-se num exercício espiritual. (nossa tradução)

Visão Geral da Número

Na revista atual, dividimos os artigos em seções que, esperamos, despertem a curiosidade e a reflexão, graças a textos que abordam temas semelhantes e são apresentados em formatos semelhantes. Procuramos organizar as contribuições de forma a permitir aos leitores ter uma visão geral da diversidade de diálogos e perspetivas em jogo, incluindo artigos que "dialogam" entre si, uma vez que lemos autores que abordam o mesmo local e o mesmo evento sob diferentes ângulos.

Para começar, temos um segundo editorial de **Joshua Robert Barron**, coeditor desta revista e mentor do TWP. Usando o exemplo do valor do mel numa colmeia, ele oferece uma visão geral dos ricos recursos de escrita e edição encontrados em África e nas Caraíbas, ao mesmo tempo que reflete sobre os aspetos relacionados com o fornecimento de recursos do TWP. Assim como este editorial que apresenta a edição, o ensaio de Barron está disponível em inglês, francês e português.

Em seguida, a primeira secção, *Reflexões Pessoais*, começa com três ensaios curtos escritos por responsáveis de instituições teológicas e facilitadores dos nossos workshops presenciais em Cape Coast, no Gana (julho de 2024), e em Kingston, na Jamaica (agosto de 2024). **Michael Clarke**, diretor (agora aposentado) do Codrington College (Barbados) e palestrante convidado em nosso workshop em Gana, compartilha várias "reflexões instantâneas" sobre sua visita. Ele menciona, em particular, o seu encontro com um sacerdote tradicional, a sua viagem a Assin Manso para visitar o local histórico do "último banho" dos africanos vítimas do tráfico a caminho da costa e as suas reflexões sobre identidade e ascendência. Ele também escreve sobre a importância das parcerias entre instituições teológicas transatlânticas para saldar o que chama de "dívida psicológica" do comércio transatlântico, por meio de esforços intencionais para reparar as rupturas históricas. Em seguida, **Oral Thomas**, ex-diretor do United Theological College of the West Indies e um dos nossos anfitriões institucionais em Kingston, partilha as suas reflexões sobre a "narrativa": o seu poder de criar ou destruir e o papel transformador que pode desempenhar na promoção das vozes transatlânticas. "Começar a história de um ângulo diferente pode ser transformador", afirma. "Quem somos (*identidade*), onde vivemos (*espaço social*), como sobrevivemos no dia a dia (*experiência*) … tudo isso deve influenciar a história que contamos". Por fim, **Joseph Justice Bain-Doodu**, reitor do St Nicholas Theological Seminary e nosso anfitrião institucional em Cape Coast, escreve com paixão sobre a precariedade financeira que muitas instituições teológicas enfrentam em todo o mundo, incluindo a sua,

ao mesmo tempo que defende a importância constante do ensino teológico e, em particular, da formação ministerial presencial no seu contexto institucional anglicano.

As contribuições a seguir tratam de experiências vividas na Jamaica, incluindo as perspetivas jamaicanas, americanas e nigerianas sobre a visita do TWP à Seville Great House. **Donald Chambers**, em "*Honour the Memory of Our Ancestors*" (Honrar a memória dos nossos antepassados), partilha um editorial que publicou no jornal *Jamaica Gleaner*. Nele, ele relata a sua experiência como jamaicano visitando o local com colegas africanos e apela para que se dê mais atenção à manutenção dos bairros africanos do Seville Great House Heritage Park (St Ann's Jamaica); seguido da resposta editorial do Gleaner. **Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel** partilha então a experiência chocante e profundamente comovente que viveu ao descobrir, como nigeriana e membro da comunidade Ibibio, que a sua história inclui a realidade dos Ibibios que foram vítimas de tráfico na Jamaica, história que ela descobriu e que está registada na Seville Great House. Por fim, **Susan Felch**, consultora sênior do projeto TWP e palestrante convidada na Jamaica, reflete sobre sua experiência como americana branca visitando a Seville Great House. Ela resume magistralmente essa visita ao afirmar que "a justaposição vertiginosa da beleza tropical ... e do holocausto histórico ... provoca uma vertigem espiritual". Ela destaca o papel da oração e do culto nesses espaços, a profunda necessidade de atenção e amizade — e de ouvir as "avós" — em oposição à culpa impotente dos brancos, a fim de trabalhar de forma significativa para a reparação.

Os dois ensaios seguintes levam-nos de volta ao Gana. **Frank Entsi Williams**, padre anglicano, participante do projeto e assistente estudantil do nosso workshop no seminário teológico St Nicholas, escreve sobre o impacto do projeto na orientação da sua pesquisa de mestrado, na qual explora o papel complexo dos africanos ocidentais no comércio transatlântico, com especial atenção às reações e ao legado da Igreja Anglicana. Numa outra perspetiva, em "*A Dutchwoman in Ghana*" (Uma holandesa no Gana), **Tessel Jonquière**, editora-chefe de aquisições da Brill e palestrante convidada no Gana, partilha as suas experiências durante a sua visita aos castelos de Elmina e Cape Coast. Ela escreve sobre o trabalho complexo e perturbador de tomar plena consciência das interseções entre o cristianismo, os interesses nacionais concorrentes e o comércio nessas empresas históricas coloniais e de tráfico de seres humanos, e levanta questões sobre culpa, vergonha, responsabilidade e reparação contemporâneas, ao mesmo tempo que observa a justaposição da descoberta fortuita de um café holandês dentro do recinto do castelo.

Os três últimos ensaios desta secção abordam, cada um à sua maneira, o papel da escrita na formação da identidade pessoal e nacional, bem como na preservação da memória e da história. Na sua primeira Reflexão Pessoal, **Donald**

Chambers reflete sobre a necessidade de continuar a revelar os elementos históricos do passado da Jamaica através dos nomes dos locais. Em seguida, passamos para **Stephen Usher**, assistente estudantil do workshop TWP na Jamaica, que partilha a sua visão da escrita como disciplina académica e espiritual, bem como o seu compromisso em registar as vozes e a história da sua comunidade. Para concluir esta secção, **Donald Chambers** apresenta uma segunda reflexão pessoal, na qual explora a liberdade revigorante que encontrou na "união da mente e do coração na pesquisa e na escrita académicas" no âmbito do TWP.

A nossa próxima secção, *Reflexões Poéticas*, começa com um pequeno ensaio intitulado "Resgatar a memória, recuperar a voz: uma reflexão teológica sobre a criação/escrita no contexto pós-escravista transatlântico", escrito por **Victor Atta-Baffoe**, bispo de Cape Coast. Nele, ele defende com convicção a importância de dar espaço à escrita criativa no discurso teológico académico. Em seguida, apresentamos uma seleção de seis poemas. Alguns refletem as experiências dolorosas vividas durante visitas a locais históricos horríveis e reflexões sobre os traumas transatlânticos intergeracionais e a cura, nomeadamente os dois primeiros poemas: **Emmanuel Egbunu**, "Partida e regresso" e Jacqueline Porter, "Uma experiência a recordar". **Anna Kasafi Perkins** capta então as tensões em torno das separações entre católicos e protestantes, refletindo poeticamente sobre as árvores comemorativas que plantámos em Cape Coast e Kingston no âmbito do TWP — e, neste último caso, uma no United Theological College of the West Indies e outra no St Michael's College and Seminary, duas instituições teológicas vizinhas e nossos anfitriões comuns em Kingston, mas firmemente separadas por cercas — físicas e teológicas. Por fim, as experiências relacionadas aos desafios e vulnerabilidades da escrita são capturadas poeticamente por **Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel** ("*I Will Not Stop!*" / Não vou parar) e **Taniecia McFarlane** ("*Illmetered*" / mal rimado). Por fim, outro poema de **Emmanuel Egbunu**, "*Prayer for a New Day*" (Oração por um novo dia), encerra utilmente esta secção, ao mesmo tempo que nos orienta para a secção seguinte.

Na terceira e última secção, *Reflexões Litúrgicas*, propomos uma selecção de orações, ensaios e liturgias que foram escritos ou adaptados especialmente para os momentos de culto durante os nossos ateliers presenciais. Ao dedicarmos tempo à visita de alguns sítios históricos e à reflexão sobre os prejuízos transatlânticos e os traumas duradouros, considerámos importante ancorar e acompanhar essas experiências através da oração e do ritual.

No Gana, organizámos um breve momento de oração e reflexão litúrgica antes de visitar o Castelo de Cape Coast. A "*Tears in a Bottle Liturgy — Ghana*" (Liturgia das Lágrimas numa Garrafa — Gana) foi adaptada para este evento por **Janice McLean-Farrell** e **Anna Kasafi Perkins** a partir de uma liturgia inédita

escrita originalmente pela reverenda **Nicole Ashwood**. Após esta visita, organizámos um "serviço ecuménico de reflexão e reconciliação" na Catedral Anglicana de Cape Coast. Os documentos para o serviço foram compilados em conjunto por vários líderes, participantes e membros do clero local, tendo as "orações de intercessão" sido escritas para a ocasião por **Daniel Justice Eshun** e **Sara Fretheim**. Janice, Anna e Daniel adaptaram o material de Nicole Ashwood para compilar "*Tears in a Bottle Liturgy — Jamaica*" (Liturgia das lágrimas numa garrafa — Jamaica), para um momento de oração e resposta organizado no túmulo dos antepassados africanos em Seville Great House, St Ann's, Jamaica. Embora essas liturgias sejam quase idênticas, os leitores apreciarão alguns elementos distintivos das reuniões em Gana e na Jamaica. Em seguida, um ensaio de **Sara Fretheim** sobre "as palavras, a tecelagem e a reconciliação" foi partilhado durante o culto matinal no Seminário de St Michael, em Kingston, e oferece reflexões sobre a complexidade destes entrelaçamentos transatlânticos e da nossa condição humana, com uma propensão igual para o bem e para o mal. Por fim, concluímos esta edição com a "liturgia de encerramento", escrita por **Daniel Justice Eshun** e **Janice Mclean-Farrell** para o encerramento desta série do TWP.

Respostas Encarnadas

Além de todas essas palavras, no entanto, havia ainda outras reações que desafiam a linguagem; o que a teóloga especialista em traumas Shelly Rambo chama de "*unlanguageable*" (em inglês; ou seja, *inlangível* em português, de *não* + *língua* + *-ível* — ou, mais simplesmente, "aquilo que a língua não consegue articular").[13] Vários investigadores especializados em traumas destacam os efeitos fisiológicos dos traumas no cérebro e no corpo, que muitas vezes têm um impacto, ou talvez mais precisamente, fragmentam a nossa linguagem, ressaltando a importância das abordagens somáticas para a cura e a reparação.[14] O que não pode ser adequadamente comunicado nestas páginas são essas reações encarnadas: os convites improvisados para se mexer no final de uma sessão intensa; a dança extática durante o culto; os suspiros ruidosos, os gritos silenciosos — esses "gemidos inexprimíveis" do espírito (Romanos 8:26, ARA); as lágrimas; as risadas; as mãos cavando a terra para plantar árvores comemorativas; a caminhada e a natação; uma mão suave colocada nas costas de um vizinho abalado, conduzindo-o a um assento tranquilo; o simples facto de se sentar ao lado de um colega enquanto as lágrimas correm, de estar presente

[13] Shelly L. Rambo, "Beyond Redemption? Reading Cormac McCarthy's The Road After the End of the World", p. 109.

[14] Ver, por exemplo, Bessel van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* ou Peter Levine, *In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness*.

e testemunhar — os corpos a reagir e a expressar sentimentos de vulnerabilidade, de risco, de tristeza e, em alguns casos, de dor pessoal e coletiva.

O escritor e ativista Darnell L. Moore afirma que, embora uma teologia da encarnação possa parecer "agradável, benéfica e curativa", também devemos levar em conta que ouvir as narrativas do nosso corpo — e ele se refere especificamente aos corpos negros que sofreram traumas — também pode vir acompanhado de "gritos horríveis, rimas aterrorizantes e uivos lancinantes".[15] Certamente já testemunhámos e/ou vivemos algo semelhante e percebemos que era muito importante ter o tempo, o espaço e a flexibilidade necessários para integrar e honrar essas respostas encarnadas. No entanto, seria negligente não salientar que a alegria era igualmente palpável: as refeições, os jogos de tabuleiro e as conversas formais ou informais também eram pontuadas por muitas gargalhadas.

Os frutos de um Quadro Comunitário que leva em consideração os traumas

Durante esses momentos de partilha, rituais, visitas, aprendizagem, jogos e reflexão, ficámos surpreendidos com as emoções e reações que surgiram. E, à medida que essas reações iam surgindo, perguntámo-nos o que fazer com elas. Ao reuni-las e partilhá-las aqui, o nosso objetivo é torná-las acessíveis, a fim de convidar a uma reflexão mais profunda e a uma conversa mais ampla. Partilhamos não com uma postura triunfante, mas com hesitação; muitas coisas aqui tocam assuntos delicados e esperamos que as nossas vozes sejam recebidas com benevolência.

A nossa esperança ao partilhar estes artigos é quádrupla. Em primeiro lugar, trata-se de um esforço para praticar e incentivar uma maior vulnerabilidade e transparência académicas. Como grupo de académicos e eclesiásticos-académicos, estamos mais habituados a publicar os nossos resultados e análises de investigação formais ou talvez a apresentar sermões refinados. No entanto, no âmbito do desenvolvimento das nossas competências de escrita, temos frequentemente referido a vulnerabilidade inerente à escrita como um ato de risco e criatividade. Os trabalhos aqui apresentados são, em muitos casos, mais pessoais e talvez inesperados numa revista académica; mas eles testemunham a riqueza que surge quando damos espaço à reflexão, à conversa e ao compromisso litúrgico. E, neste contexto transatlântico de cura e reparação, é essencial ter esse espaço. Esperamos que isso incentive outras pessoas a fazer o mesmo e a partilhar as suas opiniões com confiança, sejam elas académicas, poéticas, militantes, pastorais ou outras!

Em segundo lugar, esta coleção pretende ser um ponto de partida acessível

[15] Darnell L. Moore, "Theorizing the 'Black Body' as a Site of Trauma: Implications for Theologies of Embodiment", p. 18; a nossa tradução.

para aqueles que começam a explorar a história, a teologia e/ou os discursos atuais sobre justiça restaurativa relacionados com o tráfico transatlântico e a escravatura de africanos nas Caraíbas e em África. Trata-se de questões pesadas e complexas, e pode ser intimidante não saber por onde começar — seja como pesquisadores, financiadores, instituições, igrejas ou simplesmente como pessoas interessadas. Esperamos que essas reflexões honestas e diretas constituam, para um amplo leque de leitores, um ponto de partida acessível para uma conversa mais aprofundada.

Em terceiro lugar, esperamos que estes artigos sejam corretamente entendidos como o resultado de um trabalho intencional no âmbito de um modelo que leva em consideração os traumas. Isso incluiu, em particular, a criação de espaços de segurança e confiança, a integração da liturgia e dos rituais, bem como o desenvolvimento de laços e integração pessoais e interpessoais. Como frequentemente se observa, escrever é sempre um ato vulnerável; mas, especialmente nestes contextos complexos de traumas históricos e contemporâneos, as abordagens mais clássicas dos encontros académicos — que muitas vezes se baseiam em estruturas de poder e hierarquias explícitas ou implícitas — são provavelmente menos úteis e podem, na verdade, perpetuar ainda mais os preconceitos. Esperamos que, ao ler e se interessar por estas ricas publicações (incluindo as listadas na bibliografia do projeto TWP incluída nesta edição), outros sejam encorajados a privilegiar abordagens que levem em conta os traumas em seus trabalhos académicos.

Por fim, partilhamos estas obras na esperança de incentivar a continuação do diálogo *Africano-Caribenho*. Observamos que a TCA pretende ser um meio de estimular e envolver

> os professores de teologia e os líderes religiosos a abordar questões relevantes que a igreja e a sociedade enfrentam em África. A *Teologia Cristã Africana* está ao serviço de toda a África e constitui um local de diálogo entre as diferentes regiões africanas. Serve assim como um órgão através do qual as vozes africanas podem dirigir-se ao cristianismo mundial ("World Christianity") no seu conjunto.[16]

Como já mencionámos noutro local, esta reflexão não se limita ao continente, mas estende-se a uma diáspora muito vasta, incluindo as Caraíbas. De facto, na sua obra *Caribbean Contextual Theology: An Introduction* (Teologia Contextual Caribenha: uma introdução), o teólogo contextual das Bahamas Carlton Turner (outro palestrante convidado no Gana) utiliza ao longo do livro o termo "Africano Caribenho" (sem hífen) como marcador geográfico e identitário, lembrando-nos essa história e identidade comuns, bem como a necessidade de

[16] Este texto está impresso nas páginas iniciais de cada número da revista. Ele também aparece na página "Sobre" do site da revista, https://africanchristiantheology.org/index.php/act/about

um questionamento e integração contínuos. Esperamos que esta edição encontre leitores nas Caraíbas e que os académicos cristãos afro-caribenhos encontrem na TCA um suporte útil para as suas futuras publicações. Estamos entusiasmados com a ideia de que estas conversas teológicas transatlânticas continuem a desenvolver-se e a florescer!

Como nota editorial, devido à natureza destes artigos, eles não foram submetidos ao processo tradicional de revisão por pares, mas foram todos analisados e aceitos para publicação pelos quatro diretores editoriais da TCA, bem como por alguns membros do comitê editorial da TCA. Eles foram submetidos apenas a uma revisão leve (com exceção dos poemas, que são publicados tal como foram recebidos), a fim de preservar, tanto quanto possível, a voz dos autores, promovendo ao mesmo tempo uma certa uniformidade e em conformidade com as diretrizes de publicação da revista.

Expressamos a nossa profunda gratidão aos nossos financiadores, co-líderes, mentores, anfitriões institucionais e participantes, que tornaram o TWP não só possível, mas também extremamente produtivo; bem como aos colaboradores aqui presentes, que generosamente partilharam uma parte de si mesmos. Gostaríamos também de expressar a nossa sincera gratidão a Joshua Robert Barron, à equipa editorial e aos colegas da TCA pelo seu caloroso apoio e ajuda preciosa na realização desta edição especial. Tal como o participante que descobriu que um workshop de escrita se tornou inesperadamente "muito mais", esperamos que os leitores que vieram em busca de conteúdo académico também encontrem "muito mais" nestas páginas.

Bibliography

BURNARD, Trevor. "The Atlantic Slave Trade". Capítulo5 em *The Routledge History of Slavery*, ed. Gad HEUMAN and Trevor BURNARD, pp. 80–98. Routledge Histories. Londres: Routledge, 2011.

FRETHEIM, Sara J. *Kwame Bediako and African Christian Scholarship: Emerging Religious Discourse in Twentieth-Century Ghana*. Eugene, Oregon, Estados Unidos: Pickwick Publications, 2018.

FRETHEIM, Sara, Daniel Justice ESHUN, Janice MCLEAN-FARRELL, Anna Kasafi PERKINS, e Jo SADGROVE. "Drinking from the Same Well? African and Caribbean Theological Oversights and a Call for a Mutual (Re)connection and a Theology of Repair/Remaking". *Exchange* 53 (2024): 306–335. https://doi.org/10.1163/1572543x-bja10082

HOGUE, David A. *Remembering the Future, Imagining the Past: Story, Ritual, and the Human Brain*. Cleveland, Ohio, Estados Unidos: The Pilgrim Press, 2003.

LEVINE, Peter. *In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness*. Berkley, Califórnia, Estados Unidos: North Atlantic Books, 2010.

MOORE, Darnell L. "Theorizing the 'Black Body' as a Site of Trauma : Implications for Theologies of Embodiment". *Theology & Sexuality* 15, nº 2 (2015): 175–188. https://doi.org/10.1558/tse.v15i2.175

RAMBO, Shelly L. "Beyond Redemption ? Reading Cormac McCarthy's *The Road After the End of the World*". *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 41, nº 2 (2008): 99–120.

———. "Living in the 'New Normal': Refiguring Resurrection in the Aftermath of Trauma", Parte 2: Interpreting Holy Saturday through Case Studies ". 7 março 2014, Boston College Clough School of Theology and Ministry. https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/stm/sites/encore/main/ 2014/normal-resurrection-trauma.html

ROHR, Richard. *A Spring Within Us: A Year of Daily Meditations*. Albuquerque, Novo México, Estados Unidos: Center for Action and Contemplation, 2016.

"The Role of Story". Allender Center na Seattle School. Podcast e debate, 31 maio 2024. https://theallendercenter.org/ 2024/05/the-role-of-story/

TURNER, Carlton. *Caribbean Contextual Theology: An Introduction*. Londres: SCM Press, 2024.

VAN DER KOLK, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score : Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. Nova Iorque: Viking Press, 2014.

YOUNG, Adam, host. *The Place We Find Ourselves*, podcast, temporada 6, episódio 107, "Racial Trauma: What's Going On? Parte", com Wendell MOSS, 28 fevereiro 2022, https://adamyoungcounseling.com/racial-trauma-whats-going-on-part-2/

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 42–49

EDITORIAL ESSAY

Retrieving Honey from the Hive

Resource Accessibility in Africa and the Caribbean

Joshua Robert BARRON

ORCID: 0000-0002-9503-6799
ACTEA, Enoomatasiani, Kenya
Joshua.Barron@ACTEAweb.org

Introduction

Africa is not poor. Depending on the data set being used, the annual GDP of the African continent, where I live, is between 2.8 and 3.7 trillion US dollars.[1] While the per capita GDP in Global North (minority world) nations remains impressively higher than those of Africa, the continent's GDP represents an amount of wealth that is unimaginably large for most of us. But obviously not all Africans have equal access to resources. Libya's oil wealth gives it a per capita GDP of USD $ 7,091. Little Burundi's per capita GDP is only $ 233. However, Burundi is home to a number of multimillionaires who take a lion's share of the annual income gained each year, distorting the average: Burundi's poor are, by global standards, very poor indeed. Statistics for the Caribbean tell a similar story. While many Caribbeans, like many Africans, suffer real and devasting poverty, the Caribbean itself is not poor.

Africa and the Black Caribbean are not poor. Whether in terms of natural resources or the potential of human work and creativity, they are wealthy. But it often seems as though the wealthy industrialized nations of the world — the former imperial colonizers from Europe, the new economic colonizers in both West (e.g., the USA, Canada, EU countries) and East (e.g., China) — are

[1] All of my calculations are based on figures reported by Pallavi Rao, "Mapped: Just Five Countries Make Up Half of Africa's GDP," *Visual Capitalist*, 5 October 2024, https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-just-five-countries-make-up-half-of-africas-gdp/. By way of locating myself within this discussion, I was born and raised in the United States, but have lived with my family in Kenya for more than two decades, where I have served in various ministry capacities and currently as a theological educator and editor. While I am engaging both African and Caribbean realities in this essay, my primary context, and therefore the source of more of my statistics and examples, is the African continent.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/m380g321

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

continuing to become wealthier at the expense of Africa and Africans, of the Caribbean and Caribbeans.

Africa and the Black Caribbean are not poor. When it comes to creativity, knowledge production, and sheer entrepreneurial invention, Africa and the Caribbean are wealthy beyond measure. In my home of Kenya, for example, seminomadic pastoralists who live far from access to paved roads or electricity (other than solar panels and small but expensive portable generators) have nonetheless had access to mobile money services, even without having a smart phone, since M-Pesa was launched by Safaricom in 2007. Its use was widespread across all economic levels before most people in North America were aware of the possibilities. When it comes to knowledge production, specifically in the areas of theology, biblical studies, and World Christianity, Africans and Caribbeans of African descent are regularly producing many new articles, chapters, monographs, and launching new journals each year to catalogue. However, accessibility remains very uneven.

Publishing and Resource Access in Africa and the Black Caribbean

Many African and Caribbean scholars publish their work with publishers in the Global North. As a result, even venerable senior scholars like Kenya's Jesse N. K. Mugambi cannot afford to buy a copy of a book in which they have a chapter, meaning it is most likely also unaffordable to their local faith and academic communities, whom we might otherwise expect to be a primary audience.[2] While theological education in the Global North / minority world seems to be rapidly plummeting — the theological world was recently stunned by the announcement that after 130 years, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS), one of the largest and most influential seminaries in the world, would be shuttering its campus — theological education in Africa continues to rise. Every year, more theological institutions are applying to the Association for Christian Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA) for accreditation and the membership rolls of academic societies such as the Africa Society of Evangelical Theology (ASET) and the African Homiletics Society (AHS) continue to grow. Likewise, the Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association (CETA) continues to be active and participates in International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE) international conferences. The Conference on Theology in the Caribbean Today (CTCT) maintains robust activity.

Yet in both Africa and the Caribbean, teaching faculty and students alike are often unable to afford access to premier minority world journals and publishers. Subscription services such as Brill, EBSCO Host, JSTOR, Project Muse, Routledge, Sage Journals, and Wiley Online Journals are generally priced

[2] This is a complaint Prof. Jesse has shared with me on more than one occasion.

for prestigious (wealthy) minority world academic libraries and are simply out-of-reach for most of us here in Africa and the Caribbean. The same is true of essential book series such as Bible and Theology in Africa (Peter Lang), African Theological Studies (Brill), and Studies of Religion in Africa (Brill). Some series are more reasonably priced — such as African Christian Studies Series (Pickwick Publications, an imprint of Wipf and Stock) and the ASET Series (Langham Global Library, an imprint of Langham Literature)[3] — but international shipping and exorbitant local customs duties on imported books prove an obstacle that is difficult to overcome.[4] Therefore, knowledge produced by scholars here in Africa (I am writing from Kenya) is frequently exported to the minority world and then imported back to Africa for minority world profit at rates that we here in Africa simply cannot afford to access. The situation is all too similar for Caribbean scholars.

As a grassroots theological educator, I have long been passionate about accessibility of materials for my students. During the Covid pandemic, my Bible Institute certificate level courses in rural areas of Kenya were canceled by government shutdowns. Unable to engage in my usual teaching activities, I turned to the opportunities offered by social media platforms and virtual venues to continue to engage with and mentor African pastors, students, and theological instructors. One result of that was that I co-founded, with my Zambian friend Wakahuholesanga Chisola, the African Christian Theology network as a private (closed) Facebook group (www.facebook.com/groups/AfricanChristianTheology). The group caters to both Africans on the continent and those of African descent in the Diaspora, including in the Caribbean; as well as to a diverse contingent of interested scholars. Two resources of this group include a small but growing curated digital library (we are careful to stay within the bounds of local and international copyright laws) for use by members; and a number of curated topical bibliographies to help members know what is available and where to find those resources. My involvement in this network led to some important, if unexpected, opportunities: my coming on staff with ACTEA, my being part of the founding of ACTEA's diamond open access academic journal[5] (which you, dear reader, are now reading),and being invited to participate as a mentor in the Transatlantic Writing Project (TWP) — of which this special issue is one encouraging outcome.

---

[3] For the sake of full disclosure, I will note that I am currently one of the series editors of African Christian Studies Series and I have contributed chapters to a number of volumes in the ASET Series. However, I do not receive any income from either of those series.

[4] In francophone Africa, the many works published locally by Éditions du CITAF are more accessible..

[5] Note well that the network group is not affiliated with ACTEA, in spite of its sharing a name with this journal.

Publishing and Resource Acquisition in the TWP

Working with my TWP mentees to help them hone the crafts of researching and writing has been both delightful and rewarding. I particularly enjoyed our face-to-face workshops in Cape Coast, Ghana and Kingston, Jamaica. I was glad to help one of the participants to connect with a publisher (the HippoBooks imprint of Langham) and am looking forward to seeing his monograph; he has also become a dear friend. For the TWP as a whole, I offered introductions to the wide theological wealth coming out of Africa (lists of book series, key minority world journals particularly pertinent to Africa and the Black Caribbean, and key journals published in Africa, with a focus on open access journals); production of Africana bibliographies; the process of submitting articles to journals; and how to write book reviews. I emphasized the importance of both taking advantage of existing Africana material and considering the accessibility of our own published work.

Mentors and participants enjoying the TWP bookshop and resources — St Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana

One aspect of this, and a delightful part of our in-person workshops, was the opportunity to run "conference book shops" where we were able to provide

relevant materials at low or no cost due to the generosity of several publishers, as well as USPG (United Society Partners for the Gospel), who helped to make this vision a reality. Wipf & Stock provided us with at-cost titles from their African Christian Studies Series; SCM Press offered a discount on selected new publications; and Brill provided a variety of materials — free, low-cost, and full-cost — for our participants. Colleagues from Akrofi-Christaller Institute (Akropong-Akuapem, Ghana) helpfully brought us a wide-ranging selection of issues of their *Journal of African Christian Thought* and selected Regnum publications for re-sale. Though these materials from Akrofi are already affordably priced for the continent, they are only available in print and so not always readily accessible to a wide readership. So, we were delighted to make these treasures available to our participants at our two in-person conferences (in Cape Coast, Ghana, and Kingston, Jamaica).

Of Honey and Knowledge

Several years ago, I read Psalm 119:11 in the Maa (the language of the Maasai people, sometimes known in East Africa as *kiMaasai*) translation. As a boy, I had memorized this verse in KJV and NIV-1984: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" and "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." The Maa Bible, however, does not use the usual verb for 'hide,' *aisudoó*. Instead, it uses *ashum*, which means 'to put something of value in a safe place so as to have access to it when it is needed.' This verb is much closer in meaning to the Hebrew verb (*ṣāpanětî*) used in that verse. I translate the Maa, *atashuma nanu ororei lino to ltau lai pee maas ng'oki tialo iyie*, into English as 'I have stored up your word in my heart as a valuable resource so that I might not sin before you.'[6] The whole point of storing up God's word as a valuable resource is not simply so that it will be kept safe from being stolen or damaged but more specifically so that it will be readily accessible when one has need of it.

I tend to have Psalm 119:11 in the back of my mind whenever I read or hear Matthew 13:52 — "Now [Jesus] said to them, 'Therefore every knowledge professional who has been made a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is similar to a person who manages a household who brings out from his or her treasury what is new as well as what is old'" (my translation). As a knowledge professional — or a *scribe*, as *grammateùs* is traditionally translated — and theological educator, it is not my job to hide away knowledge as a hoarder. It is rather my vocation to store up knowledge so that I can bring out treasured

[6] I have explored this previously, and with more technical detail, in my article, "My God is enkAi: A Reflection of Vernacular African Theology," *Journal of Language, Culture, and Religion* 2, no. 1 (2021): 1–20, pp. 14–15.

resources both new and old to share with my students (and with my colleagues) for the benefit of the community . . . and to equip them to do the same.

In Maasai culture, honey is very important, even more so than in the ancient Israelite culture of the Old Testament. But honey is fiercely protected by bees. There are some people who know the way of safely retrieving honey from the wild bee hives. I was once on a foot safari, in 2007 or 2008, accompanying a group of Christian Maasai elders visiting remote homesteads to share the good news about Jesus. We chanced upon some young men who knew the ways of bees. They were harvesting some honeycomb from a wild hive. Cultural assumptions about community and hospitality dictated that we each be given a taste of the honey. Under the fierce equatorial sun, the honey brightened our eyes. I have also seen my students' eyes brighten from the sweetness of unexpected access to important resources.

Too often, published materials are like honey in a comb — too well protected by the sting of pricing that is too much for scholars from African and Caribbean economies to bear. It is critical that those of us who know the ways not of bees but of publishing intervene to make the 'eye-brightening honey' of resources as widely accessible as possible to those seeking it.

From Inaccessible to Un-accessed Resources

While I have briefly outlined some of the many challenges relating to the inaccessibility of critical scholarly resources in Africa and the Caribbean, there is also a separate question of those resources which remain un-accessed. On that foot safari, we were offered both types of comb — pieces of sweet, dripping honeycomb and pieces of comb housing *inkera oo lotorok* ('bee larvae'). For pastoralists tending livestock all day under a blazing equatorial sun, the bee larvae, composed of approximately 50% protein and 50% fat, are a nutritional powerhouse. I have been told that a little *enaisho oo lotorok* ('honey') and a little *inkera oo lotorok* can keep a man on his feet all day. But as an American then still new to Maasai culture, I confess that the very thought of eating bee larvae made me feel a bit squeamish. But it turns out that not all Maasai like to eat *inkera oo lotorok*. While some of us partook of this rich source of nutrients, a couple of my Maasai peers in line before me refrained. "We don't eat the baby bees," they told me. So, I was able to gratefully accept the honey yet politely decline the larvae without cultural offense. Nevertheless, I am sure some of those with us were puzzled by our refusal of such a revitalizing offering.

Similarly, while reflecting on the outcomes of the TWP conferences with other TWP leaders, one point of ongoing pondering brought this second half of my anecdote to mind. We certainly saw 'brightened eyes' as participants went in and out of our 'book shops.' Indeed, some of the best conference photos were those capturing the expression of delight on the faces of those who were finally

able to hold in their hands a published, physical copy of their own work, or that of a new-found colleague in the TWP, or a long-sought, seemingly inaccessible treasure finally procured — not to mention those whose eyes were brightened with the unexpected discovery of past African-Caribbean theological conversations in older publications. But another helpful offering, and a small way to address the imbalances discussed above, was a generous offer from Brill to provide free access, where possible, to selected online resources (otherwise behind paywalls), with TWP participants invited to contact Brill's representative with requests for specific titles relevant for their research/writing. Two of us project leaders (interestingly, one in Africa and one in the Caribbean), made glad use of this offer, but — puzzlingly for us — none of the approximately 25 participants did. We remain uncertain as to why this free offer was not enthusiastically taken up — perhaps in the same what that those on my foot safari who appreciated the taste and nutritional bounty of the 'baby bees' might have wondered why others of us declined such a rich source of sustenance.

It remains a point for our ongoing consideration: on the one hand, the realities of the 'hiddenness' and inaccessibility of many academic materials remain true; but perhaps there are other factors we have not identified which made partaking, on this occasion, somehow unpalatable, just as the idea of eating 'baby bees' is unpalatable to me. Was the offer not understood by participants? Or, was the online aspect of these resources somehow off-putting, or was further support needed in conducting literature searches with Brill? Or something else?

Another Maasai cultural reference might be pertinent here. The Maa word *erutore* means "collecting / collection-of wild-honey." Curiously, even though honey is a highly valued commodity that is necessary for many traditional cultural practices (including formal marriage engagements), traditionally the practice of *erutore* was despised as 'non-Maasai' work. The honey is recognized as immensely valuable, but the act of harvesting of honey has traditionally been scorned within Maasai culture. It seems as if the work of gathering academic resources is sometimes similarly devalued.

Conclusion

Africa and the Black Caribbean may be poor by the standards of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Certainly, there are individuals in those regions who are afflicted with material poverty. But Africa and the Black Caribbean are not poor theologically or academically. In both cases, what is needed is more equitable access — *equitable* being not just in terms of cost, but accessible in ways that meet the needs and preferences of scholars – to existing wealth. The TWP leadership and mentors have been blessed with access to treasures of knowledge and experience.

We have endeavored — successfully, I think — to "bring out treasures both new and old" for the project participants, likewise benefitting as leaders and mentors. This has included skill development in how to *find* treasures new and old in the research process and how to *share* this knowledge and wisdom in their own writing and publication, making these treasures more widely accessible for academy, classroom, and congregation. The treasures found in this special issue, in addition to the extensive bibliography of project publications, speak for themselves.

THÉOLOGIE CHRÉTIENNE AFRICAINE
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 50–58

ESSAI ÉDITORIAL

Récupérer le Miel dans la Ruche

Accessibilité des Ressources en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes

Joshua Robert BARRON

ORCID: 0000-0002-9503-6799
ACTEA, Enoomatasiani, Kenya
Joshua.Barron@ACTEAweb.org

Introduction

L'Afrique n'est pas pauvre. Selon les données utilisées, le PIB annuel du continent africain, où je vis, se situe entre 2,8 et 3,7 billions de dollars américains.[1] Alors que le PIB par habitant des pays du Nord (minorité mondiale) reste nettement supérieur à celui des pays africains, le PIB du continent représente une richesse inimaginable pour la plupart d'entre nous. Mais il est évident que tous les Africains n'ont pas un accès égal aux ressources. La richesse pétrolière de la Libye lui confère un PIB par habitant de 7 091 dollars américains. Le PIB par habitant du petit Burundi n'est que de 233 dollars. Cependant, le Burundi compte un certain nombre de multimillionnaires qui s'accaparent la part du lion des revenus annuels, faussant ainsi la moyenne : les pauvres du Burundi sont, selon les normes mondiales, très pauvres. Les statistiques pour les Caraïbes racontent une histoire similaire. Si de nombreux Caribéens, comme de nombreux Africains, souffrent d'une pauvreté réelle et dévastatrice, les Caraïbes elles-mêmes ne sont pas pauvres.

L'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires ne sont pas pauvres. Qu'il s'agisse de ressources naturelles ou du potentiel de travail et de créativité humaine, elles sont riches. Mais il semble souvent que les nations industrialisées riches du

[1] Tous mes calculs sont basés sur les chiffres rapportés par Pallavi Rao, « Mapped: Just Five Countries Make Up Half of Africa's GDP » ('Cartographie : cinq pays seulement représentent la moitié du PIB africain'), *Visual Capitalist*, 5 octobre 2024, https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-just-five-countries-make-up-half-of-africas-gdp/. Pour me situer dans cette discussion, je suis né et j'ai grandi aux États-Unis, mais je vis avec ma famille au Kenya depuis deux décennies, où j'ai occupé diverses fonctions ministérielles et où je travaille actuellement comme enseignant en théologie et éditeur. Bien que je traite à la fois des réalités africaines et caribéennes dans cet essai, mon contexte principal, et donc la source de la plupart de mes statistiques et exemples, est le continent africain.

Publié avec licence par ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/2f59r228

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

monde — les anciens colonisateurs impériaux d'Europe, les nouveaux colonisateurs économiques à l'Ouest (par exemple, les États-Unis, le Canada, les pays de l'UE) et à l'Est (par exemple, la Chine) — continuent de s'enrichir aux dépens de l'Afrique et des Africains, des Caraïbes et des Caribéens.

L'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires ne sont pas pauvres. En matière de créativité, de production de connaissances et d'inventivité entrepreneuriale, l'Afrique et les Caraïbes sont d'une richesse incommensurable. Au Kenya, où je me sens chez moi et où je vis depuis près de vingt ans, par exemple, les éleveurs semi-nomades qui vivent loin des routes goudronnées et de l'électricité (à l'exception des panneaux solaires et des petits générateurs portables coûteux) ont néanmoins accès à des services de paiement mobile, même sans smartphone, depuis le lancement de M-Pesa par Safaricom en 2007. Son utilisation s'est généralisée à tous les niveaux économiques avant même que la plupart des Nord-Américains ne prennent conscience de ses possibilités. En matière de production de connaissances, en particulier dans les domaines de la théologie, des études bibliques et du christianisme mondial, les Africains et les Caribéens d'origine africaine produisent régulièrement de nombreux nouveaux articles, chapitres, monographies et lancent chaque année de nouvelles revues à cataloguer. Cependant, l'accessibilité reste très inégale.

Édition et Accès aux Ressources en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes Noires

De nombreux universitaires africains et caribéens publient leurs travaux auprès d'éditeurs du Nord. En conséquence, même des universitaires chevronnés et respectés comme Jesse N. K. Mugambi, du Kenya, n'ont pas les moyens d'acheter un exemplaire d'un ouvrage dans lequel ils ont publié un chapitre, ce qui signifie qu'il est probablement également inabordable pour leurs communautés religieuses et universitaires locales, qui devraient pourtant constituer leur public principal.[2] Alors que l'enseignement théologique dans les pays du Nord/le monde minoritaire semble connaître un déclin rapide — le monde théologique a récemment été stupéfait par l'annonce de la fermeture, après 130 ans d'existence, de *Trinity Evangelical Divinity School* (TEDS), l'une des facultés de théologie les plus importantes et les plus influentes au monde — l'enseignement théologique en Afrique continue de se développer. Chaque année, de plus en plus d'institutions théologiques demandent leur accréditation à l'Association Chrétienne de Théologie et d'Éducation en Afrique (ACTEA) et le nombre de membres d'associations universitaires telles que l'*Africa Society of Evangelical Theology* (ASET) et l'*African Homiletics Society* (AHS) ne cesse d'augmenter. De même, la *Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association* (CETA) reste active et participe aux conférences internationales du Conseil

[2] C'est une plainte dont le professeur Jesse m'a fait part à plusieurs reprises.

International pour l'Éducation Théologique Évangélique (ICETE en anglais). La *Conference on Theology in the Caribbean Today* (CTCT) maintient une activité soutenue.

Pourtant, tant en Afrique que dans les Caraïbes, les enseignants et les étudiants n'ont souvent pas les moyens d'accéder aux principales revues et maisons d'édition du monde minoritaire. Les services d'abonnement tels que Brill, EBSCO Host, JSTOR, Project Muse, Routledge, Sage Journals, et Wiley Online Journals sont généralement destinés aux bibliothèques universitaires prestigieuses (et riches) du monde minoritaire et sont tout simplement hors de portée pour la plupart d'entre nous ici en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes. Il en va de même pour les séries de livres essentiels tels que la *Bible and Theology in Africa* (Peter Lang), Études Théologiques Africaines (Brill), et *Studies of Religion in Africa* (Brill). Certaines séries sont proposées à des prix plus raisonnables, comme *African Christian Studies Series* (Pickwick Publications, une marque de Wipf et Stock) et ASET Series (Langham Global Library, une marque de Langham Literature),[3] toutes deux publiant en anglais — mais les frais d'expédition internationaux et les droits de douane locaux exorbitants sur les livres importés constituent un obstacle difficile à surmonter.[4] Par conséquent, les connaissances produites par les chercheurs ici en Afrique (j'écris depuis le Kenya) sont souvent exportées vers le monde minoritaire, puis réimportées en Afrique pour le profit du monde minoritaire à des prix que nous, ici en Afrique, ne pouvons tout simplement pas nous permettre. La situation est très similaire pour les chercheurs des Caraïbes.

En tant que formateur théologique de terrain, je me passionne depuis longtemps pour l'accessibilité des ressources pour mes étudiants. Pendant la pandémie de Covid, mes cours certifiés de l'Institut biblique dans les zones rurales du Kenya ont été annulés en raison des mesures de confinement imposées par le gouvernement. Dans l'impossibilité de mener à bien mes activités d'enseignement habituelles, je me suis tourné vers les possibilités offertes par les réseaux sociaux et les espaces virtuels pour continuer à échanger avec des pasteurs, des étudiants et des professeurs de théologie africains et à leur servir de mentor. Cela m'a notamment amené à cofonder, avec mon ami zambien Wakahuholesanga Chisola, le réseau *African Christian Theology* (Théologie Chrétienne Africaine), un groupe Facebook privé (fermé aux non-membres) (voir www.facebook.com/groups/AfricanChristianTheology). Le

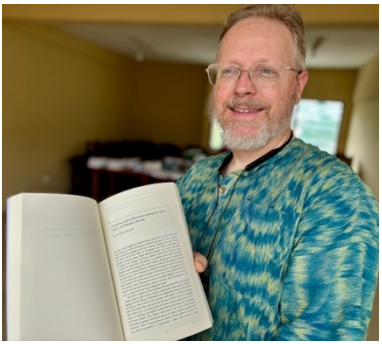
[3] Par souci de transparence totale, je tiens à préciser que je suis actuellement l'un des éditeurs de la série *African Christian Studies Series* (Série d'Études Chrétiennes Africaines) et que j'ai contribué à plusieurs volumes de la Série ASET. Cependant, je ne perçois aucun revenu provenant de ces deux séries.

[4] En Afrique francophone, les nombreux ouvrages publiés localement par les Éditions du CITAF sont plus accessibles.

groupe s'adresse à la fois aux Africains du continent et aux personnes d'origine africaine de la Diaspora, y compris dans les Caraïbes, ainsi qu'à un groupe diversifié de chercheurs intéressés. Ce groupe dispose de deux ressources : une petite bibliothèque numérique en pleine expansion (nous veillons à respecter les lois locales et internationales sur le droit d'auteur) à l'usage des membres, et un certain nombre de bibliographies thématiques sélectionnées pour aider les membres à savoir quelles ressources sont disponibles et où les trouver. Ma participation à ce réseau m'a ouvert des portes inattendues, mais importantes : j'ai rejoint l'équipe de l'ACTEA, j'ai participé à la création de la revue académique en libre accès de l'ACTEA (que vous êtes en train de lire, cher lecteur) et j'ai été invité à participer en tant que mentor au Projet d'Écriture Transatlantique ('Transatlantic Writing Project' en anglais ou TWP) — dont ce numéro spécial est l'un des résultats encourageants.

Publication et Aquisition de Ressources dans le TWP

Travailler avec mes mentorés du TWP pour les aider à perfectionner leurs compétences en matière de recherche et d'écriture a été à la fois agréable et enrichissant. J'ai particulièrement apprécié nos ateliers en face à face à Cape Coast, au Ghana, et à Kingston, en Jamaïque. J'ai été ravi d'aider l'un des participants à entrer en contact avec un éditeur (HippoBooks, une marque de Langham) et j'ai hâte de découvrir sa monographie ; il est également devenu un ami cher. Pour le TWP dans son ensemble, j'ai proposé une introduction à la riche tradition théologique africaine (listes de séries de livres, revues clés du monde minoritaire particulièrement pertinentes pour l'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires, et revues clés publiées en Afrique, en mettant l'accent sur les revues en libre accès) ; la production de bibliographies *Africana* ; le processus de soumission d'articles à des revues ; et la rédaction de critiques de livres. J'ai souligné l'importance à la fois de tirer parti du matériel *Africana* existant et de tenir compte de l'accessibilité de nos propres publications.



Mentors et participants profitant de la librairie et des ressources du TWP — St Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana

Remarque importante :

Le terme « *Africana* », dérivé du latin et désormais couramment utilisé en anglais, n'est pas simplement synonyme de l'adjectif « africain(e) ». *Africana* signifie plutôt « ayant trait à l'Afrique » et fait référence à des objets (par exemple, des artefacts, des objets artisanaux, des livres, des documents) qui sont liés à la culture, à l'histoire et/ou aux langues africaines, ou qui en sont issus. Le terme *Africana* désigne ici à la fois le continent africain et l'Atlantique Noir. *Africana* englobe à la fois les peuples et les traditions d'Afrique et ceux d'origine africaine. En termes de recherche universitaire, un ouvrage *Africana* fait preuve d'une connaissance approfondie et pertinente des cultures, des contextes et des langues africains. Il peut être rédigé par un auteur non africain, mais inclut des perspectives africaines. De même, certaines œuvres africaines sont entièrement écrites dans une perspective du monde minoritaire (c'est-à-dire « l'Occident » ou « le Nord global ») et ne tiennent pas compte des réalités contextuelles africaines : ces œuvres ne font pas partie de la recherche sur l'*Africana*. Il est essentiel de s'intéresser aux contextes africains ou de les appliquer.[5]

L'un des aspects les plus réjouissants de nos ateliers en présentiel était la possibilité d'organiser des « librairies de conference » où nous pouvions fournir des documents pertinents à faible coût ou gratuitement grâce à la générosité de plusieurs éditeurs, ainsi que de l'USPG (*United Society Partners for the Gospel*), qui a contribué à concrétiser cette vision. Wipf et Stock nous a fourni à prix coûtant des titres de sa série African Christian Studies Series ; SCM Press a offert une réduction sur certaines nouvelles publications ; et Brill a fourni une variété de documents — gratuits, à bas prix ou à prix plein — à nos participants. Nos collègues de l'Institut Akrofi-Christaller (Akropong-Akuapem, Ghana) nous ont aimablement apporté une large sélection de numéros de leur revue, *Journal*

[5] Cette note est adaptée du manuel des politiques de la revue, d'une section rédigée par moi-même en collaboration avec le professeur Fohle Lygunda Li-M.

of African Christian Thought ('Revue de Pensée Chrétienne Africaine'), et une sélection de publications Regnum à revendre. Bien que ces documents provenant d'Akrofi soient déjà proposés à des prix abordables pour le continent, ils ne sont disponibles qu'en version imprimée et ne sont donc pas toujours facilement accessibles à un large public. Nous avons donc été ravis de mettre ces trésors à la disposition de nos participants lors de nos deux conférences en présentiel (à Cape Coast, au Ghana, et à Kingston, en Jamaïque).

De Miel et de Savoir

Il y a plusieurs années, j'ai lu le Psaume 119:11 dans la traduction Maa (la langue du people Maasaï, parfois connue en Afrique de l'Est sous le nom *kiMaasai*). Enfant, j'avais mémorisé ce verset en anglais dans les versions KJV et NIV-1984: « *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee* » et « *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you* ». Ces deux traductions peuvent être rendues en français par « J'ai caché ta parole dans mon cœur afin de ne pas pécher contre toi ». Cependant, la Bible en maa n'utilise pas le verbe habituel pour « cacher », *aisudoó*. Elle utilise plutôt *ashum*, qui signifie « mettre quelque chose de valeur dans un endroit sûr afin d'y avoir accès en cas de besoin ». Ce verbe est beaucoup plus proche du sens du verbe hébreu (*ṣāpanĕtî*) utilisé dans ce verset. Je traduis le maa, *atashuma nanu ororei lino to ltau lai pee maas ng'oki tialo iyie*, en français par « J'ai conservé ta parole dans mon cœur comme une ressource précieuse afin de ne pas pécher devant toi ».[6] Le but de garder la parole de Dieu comme une ressource précieuse n'est pas simplement de la protéger contre le vol ou les dommages, mais plus précisément de la rendre facilement accessible lorsque l'on en a besoin.

J'ai tendance à avoir le Psaume 119 :11 à l'esprit chaque fois que je lis ou entends Matthieu 13:52 : « Alors [Jésus] leur dit : " C'est pourquoi tout professionnel du savoir qui est devenu disciple du royaume des cieux est semblable à un homme qui gère une maison et qui tire de son trésor des choses nouvelles et des choses anciennes " », (ma traduction). En tant que professionnel du savoir — ou *scribe*, selon la traduction traditionnelle du mot grec *grammateùs* — et enseignant en théologie, mon travail ne consiste pas à accumuler des connaissances comme un avare. Ma vocation est plutôt d'accumuler des connaissances afin de pouvoir mettre à disposition des ressources précieuses, nouvelles et anciennes, que je partage avec mes étudiants (et mes collègues) pour le bien de la communauté... et pour leur donner les moyens de faire de même.

[6] J'ai déjà abordé ce sujet en anglais, avec davantage de détails techniques, dans mon article intitule, « My God is enkAi: A Reflection of Vernacular African Theology », *Journal of Language, Culture, and Religion* 2, nº 1 (2021): 1–20, aux pp. 14–15.

Joshua Robert Barron, *co-directeur-éditeur*

Essai Éditorial : Récupérer le Miel dans la Ruche : Accessibilité des Ressources en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes

Dans la culture maasaï, le miel revêt une importance capitale, bien plus encore que dans l'ancienne culture israélite de l'Ancien Testament. Mais le miel est farouchement protégé par les abeilles. Certaines personnes connaissent les techniques permettant de récolter le miel en toute sécurité dans les ruches sauvages. En 2007 ou 2008, j'ai participé à un safari à pied, accompagnant un groupe d'anciens maasaïs chrétiens qui visitaient des fermes isolées pour partager la bonne nouvelle de Jésus. Nous avons rencontré par hasard des jeunes hommes qui connaissaient le comportement des abeilles. Ils récoltaient du miel dans une ruche sauvage. Les coutumes culturelles en matière de communauté et d'hospitalité voulaient que chacun d'entre nous goûte au miel. Sous le soleil brûlant de l'équateur, le miel nous a éclairci les yeux. J'ai également vu les yeux de mes élèves s'éclaircir devant la douceur d'un accès inattendu à des ressources importantes.

Trop souvent, les publications sont comme le miel dans un rayon de la ruche : trop bien protégées par le dard du prix, qui est trop élevé pour les chercheurs des économies africaines et caribéennes. Il est essentiel que ceux d'entre nous qui connaissent non pas les abeilles, mais l'édition, interviennent pour rendre le « miel qui éclaircit les yeux » des ressources aussi accessible que possible à ceux qui le recherchent.

Des Ressources Inaccessibles aux Ressources qui n'ont Pas été Accédées *(c'est-à-dire, Ressources non consultées)*

J'ai brièvement décrit certains des nombreux défis liés à l'inaccessibilité des ressources scientifiques essentielles en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes, mais il existe également une question distincte concernant les ressources qui restent inaccessibles. Lors de ce safari à pied, on nous a offert les deux types de rayons — des morceaux de miel sucré et coulant et des morceaux de rayons contenant des *inkera oo lotorok* (« larves d'abeilles »). Pour les pasteurs (c'est-à-dire, éleveurs pastorals) qui s'occupent de leur bétail toute la journée sous le soleil brûlant de l'équateur, les larves d'abeilles, composées d'environ 50 % de protéines et 50 % de matières grasses, sont une source nutritionnelle très riche. On m'a dit qu'un peu d'*enaisho oo lotorok* (« miel ») et un peu des *inkera oo lotorok* suffisent pour permettre à un homme de tenir toute la journée. Mais en tant qu'américain encore novice dans la culture maasaï, j'avoue que l'idée même de manger des larves d'abeilles me donnait un peu la nausée. Il s'avère cependant que tous les Maasaï n'aiment pas manger des *inkera oo lotorok*. Alors que certains d'entre nous ont goûté à cette riche source de nutriments, deux de mes compagnons maasaï qui faisaient la queue devant moi s'en sont abstenus. « Nous ne mangeons pas les bébés abeilles », m'ont-ils dit. J'ai donc pu accepter le miel avec gratitude tout en refusant poliment les larves sans offenser la culture

locale. Néanmoins, je suis sûr que certains d'entre nous ont été perplexes devant notre refus d'une offrande aussi revitalisante.

De même, alors que je réfléchissais aux résultats des conférences TWP avec d'autres dirigeants du TWP, une question qui me préoccupait depuis longtemps m'a rappelé la deuxième partie de mon anecdote. Nous avons certainement vu des « yeux éclaircis » lorsque les participants entraient et sortaient de nos « librairies ». En effet, certaines des meilleures photos de la conférence sont celles qui capturent l'expression de joie sur les visages de ceux qui ont enfin pu tenir entre leurs mains une copie physique publiée de leur propre travail, ou de celui d'un nouveau collègue du TWP, ou d'un trésor longtemps recherché et apparemment inaccessible enfin obtenu — sans parler de ceux dont les yeux se sont éclaircis à la découverte inattendue d'anciennes conversations théologiques afro-caribéennes dans des publications plus anciennes. Mais une autre offre utile, et un petit moyen de remédier aux déséquilibres évoqués ci-dessus, a été la généreuse proposition de Brill d'offrir un accès gratuit, dans la mesure du possible, à certaines ressources en ligne (normalement payantes), les participants au TWP étant invités à contacter le représentant de Brill pour demander des titres spécifiques pertinents pour leurs recherches/écrits. Deux d'entre nous, dirigeants du projet (il est intéressant de noter que l'un se trouvait en Afrique et l'autre dans les Caraïbes), avons volontiers profité de cette offre, mais — à notre grande surprise — aucun des quelque 25 participants ne l'a fait. Nous ne savons toujours pas pourquoi cette offre gratuite n'a pas été accueillie avec enthousiasme. Peut-être que, tout comme ceux qui, lors de mon safari à pied, ont apprécié le goût et la richesse nutritionnelle des « bébés abeilles », les autres se sont demandé pourquoi certains d'entre nous avaient refusé une source de nourriture aussi riche.

Cela reste un point à examiner : d'une part, la réalité du caractère « caché » et l'inaccessibilité de nombreux documents universitaires demeure vraie ; mais peut-être y a-t-il d'autres facteurs que nous n'avons pas identifiés qui ont rendu la participation, dans ce cas précis, quelque peu déplaisante, tout comme l'idée de manger des « bébés abeilles » me déplaît. Les participants n'ont-ils pas compris l'offre ? Ou bien l'aspect en ligne de ces ressources était-il rebutant, ou bien un soutien supplémentaire était-il nécessaire pour effectuer des recherches bibliographiques avec Brill ? Ou bien y avait-il autre chose ?

Une autre référence culturelle maasaï pourrait être pertinente ici. Le mot maa *erutore* signifie « récolte / collecte de miel sauvage ». Curieusement, même si le miel est un produit très prisé et nécessaire à de nombreuses pratiques culturelles traditionnelles (y compris les fiançailles officielles), la pratique de l'*erutore* était traditionnellement méprisée comme un travail « non maasaï ». Le miel est reconnu comme extrêmement précieux, mais la récolte du miel a

toujours été méprisée dans la culture maasaï. Il semble que le travail de collecte de ressources académiques soit parfois dévalorisé de la même manière.

Conclusion

L'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires sont peut-être pauvres selon les critères de la Banque Mondiale et du Fonds Monétaire International (IMF en anglais). Il existe certainement dans ces régions des personnes qui souffrent de pauvreté matérielle. Mais l'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires ne sont pas pauvres sur le plan théologique ou académique. Dans les deux cas, ce qu'il faut, c'est un accès plus équitable à la richesse existante — équitable non seulement en termes de coût, mais aussi en termes d'accessibilité — afin de répondre aux besoins et aux préférences des chercheurs. Les dirigeants et les mentors du TWP ont eu la chance d'avoir accès à des trésors de connaissances et d'expérience.

Nous nous sommes efforcés — avec succès, je pense — de « faire ressortir les trésors anciens et nouveaux » pour les participants au projet, tout en bénéficiant nous-mêmes, en tant que leaders et mentors. Cela a notamment consisté à développer des compétences pour *trouver* des trésors anciens et nouveaux dans le processus de recherche et pour *partager* ces connaissances et cette sagesse dans leurs propres écrits et publications, rendant ainsi ces trésors plus largement accessibles à l'université, en classe et dans les congrégations. Les trésors découverts dans ce numéro spécial, en plus de la bibliographie exhaustive des publications du projet, parlent d'eux-mêmes.

THÉOLOGIE CHRÉTIENNE AFRICAINE
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 50–58

ESSAI ÉDITORIAL

Récupérer le Miel dans la Ruche

Accessibilité des Ressources en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes

Joshua Robert BARRON

ORCID: 0000-0002-9503-6799
ACTEA, Enoomatasiani, Kenya
Joshua.Barron@ACTEAweb.org

Introduction

L'Afrique n'est pas pauvre. Selon les données utilisées, le PIB annuel du continent africain, où je vis, se situe entre 2,8 et 3,7 billions de dollars américains.[1] Alors que le PIB par habitant des pays du Nord (minorité mondiale) reste nettement supérieur à celui des pays africains, le PIB du continent représente une richesse inimaginable pour la plupart d'entre nous. Mais il est évident que tous les Africains n'ont pas un accès égal aux ressources. La richesse pétrolière de la Libye lui confère un PIB par habitant de 7 091 dollars américains. Le PIB par habitant du petit Burundi n'est que de 233 dollars. Cependant, le Burundi compte un certain nombre de multimillionnaires qui s'accaparent la part du lion des revenus annuels, faussant ainsi la moyenne : les pauvres du Burundi sont, selon les normes mondiales, très pauvres. Les statistiques pour les Caraïbes racontent une histoire similaire. Si de nombreux Caribéens, comme de nombreux Africains, souffrent d'une pauvreté réelle et dévastatrice, les Caraïbes elles-mêmes ne sont pas pauvres.

L'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires ne sont pas pauvres. Qu'il s'agisse de ressources naturelles ou du potentiel de travail et de créativité humaine, elles sont riches. Mais il semble souvent que les nations industrialisées riches du

[1] Tous mes calculs sont basés sur les chiffres rapportés par Pallavi Rao, « Mapped: Just Five Countries Make Up Half of Africa's GDP » ('Cartographie : cinq pays seulement représentent la moitié du PIB africain'), *Visual Capitalist*, 5 octobre 2024, https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-just-five-countries-make-up-half-of-africas-gdp/. Pour me situer dans cette discussion, je suis né et j'ai grandi aux États-Unis, mais je vis avec ma famille au Kenya depuis deux décennies, où j'ai occupé diverses fonctions ministérielles et où je travaille actuellement comme enseignant en théologie et éditeur. Bien que je traite à la fois des réalités africaines et caribéennes dans cet essai, mon contexte principal, et donc la source de la plupart de mes statistiques et exemples, est le continent africain.

Publié avec licence par ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/2f59r228

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

monde — les anciens colonisateurs impériaux d'Europe, les nouveaux colonisateurs économiques à l'Ouest (par exemple, les États-Unis, le Canada, les pays de l'UE) et à l'Est (par exemple, la Chine) — continuent de s'enrichir aux dépens de l'Afrique et des Africains, des Caraïbes et des Caribéens.

L'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires ne sont pas pauvres. En matière de créativité, de production de connaissances et d'inventivité entrepreneuriale, l'Afrique et les Caraïbes sont d'une richesse incommensurable. Au Kenya, où je me sens chez moi et où je vis depuis près de vingt ans, par exemple, les éleveurs semi-nomades qui vivent loin des routes goudronnées et de l'électricité (à l'exception des panneaux solaires et des petits générateurs portables coûteux) ont néanmoins accès à des services de paiement mobile, même sans smartphone, depuis le lancement de M-Pesa par Safaricom en 2007. Son utilisation s'est généralisée à tous les niveaux économiques avant même que la plupart des Nord-Américains ne prennent conscience de ses possibilités. En matière de production de connaissances, en particulier dans les domaines de la théologie, des études bibliques et du christianisme mondial, les Africains et les Caribéens d'origine africaine produisent régulièrement de nombreux nouveaux articles, chapitres, monographies et lancent chaque année de nouvelles revues à cataloguer. Cependant, l'accessibilité reste très inégale.

Édition et Accès aux Ressources en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes Noires

De nombreux universitaires africains et caribéens publient leurs travaux auprès d'éditeurs du Nord. En conséquence, même des universitaires chevronnés et respectés comme Jesse N. K. Mugambi, du Kenya, n'ont pas les moyens d'acheter un exemplaire d'un ouvrage dans lequel ils ont publié un chapitre, ce qui signifie qu'il est probablement également inabordable pour leurs communautés religieuses et universitaires locales, qui devraient pourtant constituer leur public principal.[2] Alors que l'enseignement théologique dans les pays du Nord/le monde minoritaire semble connaître un déclin rapide — le monde théologique a récemment été stupéfait par l'annonce de la fermeture, après 130 ans d'existence, de *Trinity Evangelical Divinity School* (TEDS), l'une des facultés de théologie les plus importantes et les plus influentes au monde — l'enseignement théologique en Afrique continue de se développer. Chaque année, de plus en plus d'institutions théologiques demandent leur accréditation à l'Association Chrétienne de Théologie et d'Éducation en Afrique (ACTEA) et le nombre de membres d'associations universitaires telles que l'*Africa Society of Evangelical Theology* (ASET) et l'*African Homiletics Society* (AHS) ne cesse d'augmenter. De même, la *Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association* (CETA) reste active et participe aux conférences internationales du Conseil

[2] C'est une plainte dont le professeur Jesse m'a fait part à plusieurs reprises.

International pour l'Éducation Théologique Évangélique (ICETE en anglais). La *Conference on Theology in the Caribbean Today* (CTCT) maintient une activité soutenue.

Pourtant, tant en Afrique que dans les Caraïbes, les enseignants et les étudiants n'ont souvent pas les moyens d'accéder aux principales revues et maisons d'édition du monde minoritaire. Les services d'abonnement tels que Brill, EBSCO Host, JSTOR, Project Muse, Routledge, Sage Journals, et Wiley Online Journals sont généralement destinés aux bibliothèques universitaires prestigieuses (et riches) du monde minoritaire et sont tout simplement hors de portée pour la plupart d'entre nous ici en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes. Il en va de même pour les séries de livres essentiels tels que la *Bible and Theology in Africa* (Peter Lang), Études Théologiques Africaines (Brill), et *Studies of Religion in Africa* (Brill). Certaines séries sont proposées à des prix plus raisonnables, comme *African Christian Studies Series* (Pickwick Publications, une marque de Wipf et Stock) et ASET Series (Langham Global Library, une marque de Langham Literature),[3] toutes deux publiant en anglais — mais les frais d'expédition internationaux et les droits de douane locaux exorbitants sur les livres importés constituent un obstacle difficile à surmonter.[4] Par conséquent, les connaissances produites par les chercheurs ici en Afrique (j'écris depuis le Kenya) sont souvent exportées vers le monde minoritaire, puis réimportées en Afrique pour le profit du monde minoritaire à des prix que nous, ici en Afrique, ne pouvons tout simplement pas nous permettre. La situation est très similaire pour les chercheurs des Caraïbes.

En tant que formateur théologique de terrain, je me passionne depuis longtemps pour l'accessibilité des ressources pour mes étudiants. Pendant la pandémie de Covid, mes cours certifiés de l'Institut biblique dans les zones rurales du Kenya ont été annulés en raison des mesures de confinement imposées par le gouvernement. Dans l'impossibilité de mener à bien mes activités d'enseignement habituelles, je me suis tourné vers les possibilités offertes par les réseaux sociaux et les espaces virtuels pour continuer à échanger avec des pasteurs, des étudiants et des professeurs de théologie africains et à leur servir de mentor. Cela m'a notamment amené à cofonder, avec mon ami zambien Wakahuholesanga Chisola, le réseau *African Christian Theology* (Théologie Chrétienne Africaine), un groupe Facebook privé (fermé aux non-membres) (voir www.facebook.com/groups/AfricanChristianTheology). Le

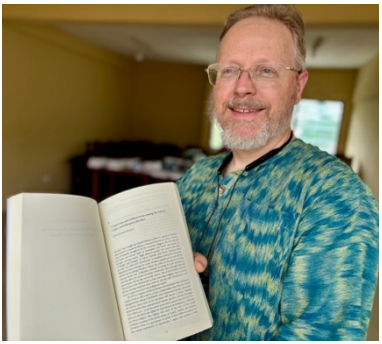
[3] Par souci de transparence totale, je tiens à préciser que je suis actuellement l'un des éditeurs de la série *African Christian Studies Series* (Série d'Études Chrétiennes Africaines) et que j'ai contribué à plusieurs volumes de la Série ASET. Cependant, je ne perçois aucun revenu provenant de ces deux séries.

[4] En Afrique francophone, les nombreux ouvrages publiés localement par les Éditions du CITAF sont plus accessibles.

groupe s'adresse à la fois aux Africains du continent et aux personnes d'origine africaine de la Diaspora, y compris dans les Caraïbes, ainsi qu'à un groupe diversifié de chercheurs intéressés. Ce groupe dispose de deux ressources : une petite bibliothèque numérique en pleine expansion (nous veillons à respecter les lois locales et internationales sur le droit d'auteur) à l'usage des membres, et un certain nombre de bibliographies thématiques sélectionnées pour aider les membres à savoir quelles ressources sont disponibles et où les trouver. Ma participation à ce réseau m'a ouvert des portes inattendues, mais importantes : j'ai rejoint l'équipe de l'ACTEA, j'ai participé à la création de la revue académique en libre accès de l'ACTEA (que vous êtes en train de lire, cher lecteur) et j'ai été invité à participer en tant que mentor au Projet d'Écriture Transatlantique ('Transatlantic Writing Project' en anglais ou TWP) — dont ce numéro spécial est l'un des résultats encourageants.

Publication et Aquisition de Ressources dans le TWP

Travailler avec mes mentorés du TWP pour les aider à perfectionner leurs compétences en matière de recherche et d'écriture a été à la fois agréable et enrichissant. J'ai particulièrement apprécié nos ateliers en face à face à Cape Coast, au Ghana, et à Kingston, en Jamaïque. J'ai été ravi d'aider l'un des participants à entrer en contact avec un éditeur (HippoBooks, une marque de Langham) et j'ai hâte de découvrir sa monographie ; il est également devenu un ami cher. Pour le TWP dans son ensemble, j'ai proposé une introduction à la riche tradition théologique africaine (listes de séries de livres, revues clés du monde minoritaire particulièrement pertinentes pour l'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires, et revues clés publiées en Afrique, en mettant l'accent sur les revues en libre accès) ; la production de bibliographies *Africana* ; le processus de soumission d'articles à des revues ; et la rédaction de critiques de livres. J'ai souligné l'importance à la fois de tirer parti du matériel *Africana* existant et de tenir compte de l'accessibilité de nos propres publications.



Mentors et participants profitant de la librairie et des ressources du TWP — St Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana

Remarque importante :

Le terme « *Africana* », dérivé du latin et désormais couramment utilisé en anglais, n'est pas simplement synonyme de l'adjectif « africain(e) ». *Africana* signifie plutôt « ayant trait à l'Afrique » et fait référence à des objets (par exemple, des artefacts, des objets artisanaux, des livres, des documents) qui sont liés à la culture, à l'histoire et/ou aux langues africaines, ou qui en sont issus. Le terme *Africana* désigne ici à la fois le continent africain et l'Atlantique Noir. *Africana* englobe à la fois les peuples et les traditions d'Afrique et ceux d'origine africaine. En termes de recherche universitaire, un ouvrage *Africana* fait preuve d'une connaissance approfondie et pertinente des cultures, des contextes et des langues africains. Il peut être rédigé par un auteur non africain, mais inclut des perspectives africaines. De même, certaines œuvres africaines sont entièrement écrites dans une perspective du monde minoritaire (c'est-à-dire « l'Occident » ou « le Nord global ») et ne tiennent pas compte des réalités contextuelles africaines : ces œuvres ne font pas partie de la recherche sur l'*Africana*. Il est essentiel de s'intéresser aux contextes africains ou de les appliquer.[5]

L'un des aspects les plus réjouissants de nos ateliers en présentiel était la possibilité d'organiser des « librairies de conference » où nous pouvions fournir des documents pertinents à faible coût ou gratuitement grâce à la générosité de plusieurs éditeurs, ainsi que de l'USPG (*United Society Partners for the Gospel*), qui a contribué à concrétiser cette vision. Wipf et Stock nous a fourni à prix coûtant des titres de sa série African Christian Studies Series ; SCM Press a offert une réduction sur certaines nouvelles publications ; et Brill a fourni une variété de documents — gratuits, à bas prix ou à prix plein — à nos participants. Nos collègues de l'Institut Akrofi-Christaller (Akropong-Akuapem, Ghana) nous ont aimablement apporté une large sélection de numéros de leur revue, *Journal*

[5] Cette note est adaptée du manuel des politiques de la revue, d'une section rédigée par moi-même en collaboration avec le professeur Fohle Lygunda Li-M.

of African Christian Thought ('Revue de Pensée Chrétienne Africaine'), et une sélection de publications Regnum à revendre. Bien que ces documents provenant d'Akrofi soient déjà proposés à des prix abordables pour le continent, ils ne sont disponibles qu'en version imprimée et ne sont donc pas toujours facilement accessibles à un large public. Nous avons donc été ravis de mettre ces trésors à la disposition de nos participants lors de nos deux conférences en présentiel (à Cape Coast, au Ghana, et à Kingston, en Jamaïque).

De Miel et de Savoir

Il y a plusieurs années, j'ai lu le Psaume 119:11 dans la traduction Maa (la langue du people Maasaï, parfois connue en Afrique de l'Est sous le nom *kiMaasai*). Enfant, j'avais mémorisé ce verset en anglais dans les versions KJV et NIV-1984: « *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee* » et « *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you* ». Ces deux traductions peuvent être rendues en français par « J'ai caché ta parole dans mon cœur afin de ne pas pécher contre toi ». Cependant, la Bible en maa n'utilise pas le verbe habituel pour « cacher », *aisudoó*. Elle utilise plutôt *ashum*, qui signifie « mettre quelque chose de valeur dans un endroit sûr afin d'y avoir accès en cas de besoin ». Ce verbe est beaucoup plus proche du sens du verbe hébreu (*ṣāpanĕtî*) utilisé dans ce verset. Je traduis le maa, *atashuma nanu ororei lino to ltau lai pee maas ng'oki tialo iyie*, en français par « J'ai conservé ta parole dans mon cœur comme une ressource précieuse afin de ne pas pécher devant toi ».[6] Le but de garder la parole de Dieu comme une ressource précieuse n'est pas simplement de la protéger contre le vol ou les dommages, mais plus précisément de la rendre facilement accessible lorsque l'on en a besoin.

J'ai tendance à avoir le Psaume 119 :11 à l'esprit chaque fois que je lis ou entends Matthieu 13:52 : « Alors [Jésus] leur dit : " C'est pourquoi tout professionnel du savoir qui est devenu disciple du royaume des cieux est semblable à un homme qui gère une maison et qui tire de son trésor des choses nouvelles et des choses anciennes " », (ma traduction). En tant que professionnel du savoir — ou *scribe*, selon la traduction traditionnelle du mot grec *grammateùs* — et enseignant en théologie, mon travail ne consiste pas à accumuler des connaissances comme un avare. Ma vocation est plutôt d'accumuler des connaissances afin de pouvoir mettre à disposition des ressources précieuses, nouvelles et anciennes, que je partage avec mes étudiants (et mes collègues) pour le bien de la communauté... et pour leur donner les moyens de faire de même.

[6] J'ai déjà abordé ce sujet en anglais, avec davantage de détails techniques, dans mon article intitule, « My God is enkAi: A Reflection of Vernacular African Theology », *Journal of Language, Culture, and Religion* 2, nº 1 (2021): 1–20, aux pp. 14–15.

Joshua Robert Barron, *co-directeur-éditeur*

Essai Éditorial : Récupérer le Miel dans la Ruche : Accessibilité des Ressources en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes

Dans la culture maasaï, le miel revêt une importance capitale, bien plus encore que dans l'ancienne culture israélite de l'Ancien Testament. Mais le miel est farouchement protégé par les abeilles. Certaines personnes connaissent les techniques permettant de récolter le miel en toute sécurité dans les ruches sauvages. En 2007 ou 2008, j'ai participé à un safari à pied, accompagnant un groupe d'anciens maasaïs chrétiens qui visitaient des fermes isolées pour partager la bonne nouvelle de Jésus. Nous avons rencontré par hasard des jeunes hommes qui connaissaient le comportement des abeilles. Ils récoltaient du miel dans une ruche sauvage. Les coutumes culturelles en matière de communauté et d'hospitalité voulaient que chacun d'entre nous goûte au miel. Sous le soleil brûlant de l'équateur, le miel nous a éclairci les yeux. J'ai également vu les yeux de mes élèves s'éclaircir devant la douceur d'un accès inattendu à des ressources importantes.

Trop souvent, les publications sont comme le miel dans un rayon de la ruche : trop bien protégées par le dard du prix, qui est trop élevé pour les chercheurs des économies africaines et caribéennes. Il est essentiel que ceux d'entre nous qui connaissent non pas les abeilles, mais l'édition, interviennent pour rendre le « miel qui éclaircit les yeux » des ressources aussi accessible que possible à ceux qui le recherchent.

Des Ressources Inaccessibles aux Ressources qui n'ont Pas été Accédées *(c'est-à-dire, Ressources non consultées)*

J'ai brièvement décrit certains des nombreux défis liés à l'inaccessibilité des ressources scientifiques essentielles en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes, mais il existe également une question distincte concernant les ressources qui restent inaccessibles. Lors de ce safari à pied, on nous a offert les deux types de rayons — des morceaux de miel sucré et coulant et des morceaux de rayons contenant des *inkera oo lotorok* (« larves d'abeilles »). Pour les pasteurs (c'est-à-dire, éleveurs pastorals) qui s'occupent de leur bétail toute la journée sous le soleil brûlant de l'équateur, les larves d'abeilles, composées d'environ 50 % de protéines et 50 % de matières grasses, sont une source nutritionnelle très riche. On m'a dit qu'un peu d'*enaisho oo lotorok* (« miel ») et un peu des *inkera oo lotorok* suffisent pour permettre à un homme de tenir toute la journée. Mais en tant qu'américain encore novice dans la culture maasaï, j'avoue que l'idée même de manger des larves d'abeilles me donnait un peu la nausée. Il s'avère cependant que tous les Maasaï n'aiment pas manger des *inkera oo lotorok*. Alors que certains d'entre nous ont goûté à cette riche source de nutriments, deux de mes compagnons maasaï qui faisaient la queue devant moi s'en sont abstenus. « Nous ne mangeons pas les bébés abeilles », m'ont-ils dit. J'ai donc pu accepter le miel avec gratitude tout en refusant poliment les larves sans offenser la culture

locale. Néanmoins, je suis sûr que certains d'entre nous ont été perplexes devant notre refus d'une offrande aussi revitalisante.

De même, alors que je réfléchissais aux résultats des conférences TWP avec d'autres dirigeants du TWP, une question qui me préoccupait depuis longtemps m'a rappelé la deuxième partie de mon anecdote. Nous avons certainement vu des « yeux éclaircis » lorsque les participants entraient et sortaient de nos « librairies ». En effet, certaines des meilleures photos de la conférence sont celles qui capturent l'expression de joie sur les visages de ceux qui ont enfin pu tenir entre leurs mains une copie physique publiée de leur propre travail, ou de celui d'un nouveau collègue du TWP, ou d'un trésor longtemps recherché et apparemment inaccessible enfin obtenu — sans parler de ceux dont les yeux se sont éclaircis à la découverte inattendue d'anciennes conversations théologiques afro-caribéennes dans des publications plus anciennes. Mais une autre offre utile, et un petit moyen de remédier aux déséquilibres évoqués ci-dessus, a été la généreuse proposition de Brill d'offrir un accès gratuit, dans la mesure du possible, à certaines ressources en ligne (normalement payantes), les participants au TWP étant invités à contacter le représentant de Brill pour demander des titres spécifiques pertinents pour leurs recherches/écrits. Deux d'entre nous, dirigeants du projet (il est intéressant de noter que l'un se trouvait en Afrique et l'autre dans les Caraïbes), avons volontiers profité de cette offre, mais — à notre grande surprise — aucun des quelque 25 participants ne l'a fait. Nous ne savons toujours pas pourquoi cette offre gratuite n'a pas été accueillie avec enthousiasme. Peut-être que, tout comme ceux qui, lors de mon safari à pied, ont apprécié le goût et la richesse nutritionnelle des « bébés abeilles », les autres se sont demandé pourquoi certains d'entre nous avaient refusé une source de nourriture aussi riche.

Cela reste un point à examiner : d'une part, la réalité du caractère « caché » et l'inaccessibilité de nombreux documents universitaires demeure vraie ; mais peut-être y a-t-il d'autres facteurs que nous n'avons pas identifiés qui ont rendu la participation, dans ce cas précis, quelque peu déplaisante, tout comme l'idée de manger des « bébés abeilles » me déplaît. Les participants n'ont-ils pas compris l'offre ? Ou bien l'aspect en ligne de ces ressources était-il rebutant, ou bien un soutien supplémentaire était-il nécessaire pour effectuer des recherches bibliographiques avec Brill ? Ou bien y avait-il autre chose ?

Une autre référence culturelle maasaï pourrait être pertinente ici. Le mot maa *erutore* signifie « récolte / collecte de miel sauvage ». Curieusement, même si le miel est un produit très prisé et nécessaire à de nombreuses pratiques culturelles traditionnelles (y compris les fiançailles officielles), la pratique de l'*erutore* était traditionnellement méprisée comme un travail « non maasaï ». Le miel est reconnu comme extrêmement précieux, mais la récolte du miel a

toujours été méprisée dans la culture maasaï. Il semble que le travail de collecte de ressources académiques soit parfois dévalorisé de la même manière.

Conclusion

L'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires sont peut-être pauvres selon les critères de la Banque Mondiale et du Fonds Monétaire International (IMF en anglais). Il existe certainement dans ces régions des personnes qui souffrent de pauvreté matérielle. Mais l'Afrique et les Caraïbes noires ne sont pas pauvres sur le plan théologique ou académique. Dans les deux cas, ce qu'il faut, c'est un accès plus équitable à la richesse existante — équitable non seulement en termes de coût, mais aussi en termes d'accessibilité — afin de répondre aux besoins et aux préférences des chercheurs. Les dirigeants et les mentors du TWP ont eu la chance d'avoir accès à des trésors de connaissances et d'expérience.

Nous nous sommes efforcés — avec succès, je pense — de « faire ressortir les trésors anciens et nouveaux » pour les participants au projet, tout en bénéficiant nous-mêmes, en tant que leaders et mentors. Cela a notamment consisté à développer des compétences pour *trouver* des trésors anciens et nouveaux dans le processus de recherche et pour *partager* ces connaissances et cette sagesse dans leurs propres écrits et publications, rendant ainsi ces trésors plus largement accessibles à l'université, en classe et dans les congrégations. Les trésors découverts dans ce numéro spécial, en plus de la bibliographie exhaustive des publications du projet, parlent d'eux-mêmes.

TEOLOGIA CHRISTÃ AFRICANA
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 59–67

ESAIO EDITORIAL

Recolher o Mel da Colmeia

Acessibilidade dos Recursos na África e nas Caraíbas

Joshua Robert BARRON

ORCID: 0000-0002-9503-6799
ACTEA, Enoomatasiani, Quénia
Joshua.Barron@ACTEAweb.org

Introdução

África não é pobre. De acordo com os dados utilizados, o PIB anual do continente africano, onde vivo, situa-se entre 2,8 e 3,7 biliões de dólares americanos.[1] Embora o PIB per capita dos países do Norte (minoria mundial) continue a ser significativamente superior ao dos países africanos, o PIB do continente representa uma riqueza inimaginável para a maioria de nós. Mas é evidente que nem todos os africanos têm acesso igual aos recursos. A riqueza petrolífera da Líbia confere-lhe um PIB per capita de 7091 dólares americanos. O PIB per capita do pequeno Burundi é de apenas 233 dólares. No entanto, o Burundi tem vários multimilionários que acumulam a maior parte dos rendimentos anuais, distorcendo assim a média: os pobres do Burundi são, segundo os padrões mundiais, muito pobres. As estatísticas para as Caraíbas contam uma história semelhante. Embora muitos caribenhos, tal como muitos africanos, sofram de uma pobreza real e devastadora, as próprias Caraíbas não são pobres.

A África e as Caraíbas negras não são pobres. Quer se trate de recursos naturais ou do potencial de trabalho e criatividade humana, são ricas. Mas muitas vezes parece que as nações industrializadas ricas do mundo — os antigos colonizadores imperiais da Europa, os novos colonizadores económicos do

[1] Todos os meus cálculos baseiam-se nos números apresentados por Pallavi Rao, "Mapped: Just Five Countries Make Up Half of Africa's GDP" ('Mapeado: apenas cinco países representam metade do PIB africano'), *Visual Capitalist*, 5 de outubro de 2024, https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-just-five-countries-make-up-half-of-africas-gdp/. Para contextualizar a minha participação nesta discussão, nasci e cresci nos Estados Unidos, mas vivo com a minha família no Quénia há duas décadas, onde ocupei vários cargos ministeriais e atualmente trabalho como professor de teologia e editor. Embora trate tanto das realidades africanas como caribenhas neste ensaio, o meu contexto principal, e, portanto, a fonte da maioria das minhas estatísticas e exemplos, é o continente africano.

Publicado com licença pela ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/m16y9c02
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (impresso); 3007-1771 (em linha)

Ocidente (por exemplo, os Estados Unidos, o Canadá, os países da UE) e do Leste (por exemplo, a China) — continuam a enriquecer às custas de África e dos africanos, das Caraíbas e dos caribenhos.

A África e as Caraíbas negras não são pobres. Em termos de criatividade, produção de conhecimento e inventividade empresarial, a África e as Caraíbas são de uma riqueza incomensurável. No Quénia, onde me sinto em casa e vivo há quase vinte anos, por exemplo, os criadores de gado seminómadas que vivem longe de estradas asfaltadas e de eletricidade (com exceção de painéis solares e pequenos geradores portáteis caros) têm, no entanto, acesso a serviços de pagamento móvel, mesmo sem smartphone, desde o lançamento do M-Pesa pela Safaricom em 2007. A sua utilização generalizou-se a todos os níveis económicos, mesmo antes de a maioria dos norte-americanos ter tomado consciência das suas possibilidades. Em matéria de produção de conhecimento, particularmente nas áreas da teologia, estudos bíblicos e cristianismo global, os africanos e caribenhos de origem africana produzem regularmente muitos novos artigos, capítulos, monografias e lançam anualmente novas revistas para catalogar. No entanto, a acessibilidade continua a ser muito desigual.

Publicação e acesso a recursos na África e nas Caraíbas Negras

Muitos académicos africanos e caribenhos publicam os seus trabalhos em editoras do Norte. Consequentemente, mesmo académicos experientes e respeitados como Jesse N. K. Mugambi, do Quénia, não têm meios para comprar um exemplar de uma obra na qual publicaram um capítulo, o que significa que provavelmente também é inacessível para as suas comunidades religiosas e académicas locais, que deveriam ser o seu público principal.[2] Enquanto o ensino teológico nos países do Norte/mundo minoritário parece estar em rápido declínio — o mundo teológico ficou recentemente chocado com o anúncio do encerramento, após 130 anos de existência, da *Trinity Evangelical Divinity School* (TEDS), uma das faculdades de teologia mais importantes e influentes do mundo —, o ensino teológico em África continua a desenvolver-se. A cada ano, mais e mais instituições teológicas solicitam seu credenciamento à Associação Cristã de Teologia e Educação na África (ACTEA) e o número de membros de associações acadêmicas como a *Africa Society of Evangelical Theology* (ASET) et a *African Homiletics Society* (AHS) continua a aumentar. Da mesma forma, a *Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association* (CETA) continua ativa e participa em conferências internacionais do Conselho Internacional para a Educação Teológica Evangélica (ICETE em inglês). A *Conference on Theology in the Caribbean Today* (CTCT) mantém uma atividade intensa.

[2] É uma queixa que o professor Jesse me fez várias vezes.

No entanto, tanto na África como nas Caraíbas, professores e estudantes muitas vezes não têm meios para aceder às principais revistas e editoras do mundo minoritário. Serviços de assinatura como Brill, EBSCO, JSTOR, Project Muse, Routledge, Sage Journals e Wiley Online Journals são geralmente destinados a bibliotecas universitárias de prestígio (e ricas) do mundo minoritário e estão simplesmente fora do alcance da maioria de nós aqui na África e nas Caraíbas. O mesmo se aplica a séries de livros essenciais, como *Bible and Theology in Africa* (Peter Lang), *Études Théologiques Africaines* (Brill), e *Studies of Religion in Africa* (Brill). Algumas séries são oferecidas a preços mais razoáveis, como *African Christian Studies Series* (Pickwick Publications, une marque de Wipf et Stock) e ASET Series (Langham Global Library, uma marca da Langham Literature),[3] ambas publicadas em inglês — mas os custos de envio internacional e os exorbitantes direitos aduaneiros locais sobre livros importados constituem um obstáculo difícil de superar.[4] Consequentemente, o conhecimento produzido pelos investigadores aqui em África (escrevo a partir do Quénia) é frequentemente exportado para o mundo minoritário e depois reimportado para África para benefício do mundo minoritário a preços que nós, aqui em África, simplesmente não podemos pagar. A situação é muito semelhante para os investigadores das Caraíbas.

Como formador teológico em campo transcultural, há muito que me interesso pela acessibilidade dos recursos para os meus alunos. Durante a pandemia da Covid, as minhas aulas certificadas pelo Instituto Bíblico nas zonas rurais do Quénia foram canceladas devido às medidas de confinamento impostas pelo governo. Na impossibilidade de realizar as minhas atividades habituais de ensino, recorri às possibilidades oferecidas pelas redes sociais e pelos espaços virtuais para continuar a interagir com pastores, estudantes e professores de teologia africanos e a servir-lhes de mentor. Isso levou-me, em particular, a cofundar, com o meu amigo zambiano Wakahuholesanga Chisola, a rede *African Christian Theology* (Teologia Cristã Africana), um grupo privado no Facebook (fechado a não membros) (ver http://www.facebook.com/groups/AfricanChristianTheology). O grupo destina-se tanto aos africanos do continente como às pessoas de origem africana da diáspora, incluindo as das Caraíbas, bem como a um grupo diversificado de investigadores interessados. Este grupo dispõe de dois recursos: uma pequena biblioteca digital em plena expansão (respeitamos as leis locais e internacionais sobre direitos de autor) para uso dos membros e uma série de bibliografias temáticas selecionadas para

[3] Por uma questão de total transparência, gostaria de esclarecer que atualmente sou um dos editores da série *African Christian Studies Series* (Série de Estudos Cristãos Africanos) e que contribui para vários volumes da série ASET. No entanto, não recebo qualquer rendimento proveniente destas duas séries.

[4] Na África francófona, as numerosas obras publicadas localmente pela *Éditions du CITAF* são mais acessíveis.

ajudar os membros a saber quais recursos estão disponíveis e onde encontrá-los. A minha participação nesta rede abriu-me portas inesperadas, mas importantes: juntei-me à equipe da ACTEA, participei na criação da revista académica de acesso livre da ACTEA (que está a ler neste momento, caro leitor) e fui convidado a participar como mentor no Projeto de Escrita Transatlântica (*Transatlantic Writing Project* em inglês ou TWP) — cujo resultado encorajador é esta edição especial.

Publicação e Aquisição de Recursos no TWPf

Trabalhar com os meus mentorados do TWP para ajudá-los a aperfeiçoar as suas competências em pesquisa e escrita foi agradável e gratificante. Gostei particularmente dos nossos workshops presenciais em Cape Coast, no Gana, e em Kingston, na Jamaica. Fiquei muito feliz por ajudar um dos participantes a entrar em contacto com uma editora (HippoBooks, uma marca da Langham) e estou ansioso por descobrir a sua monografia; ele também se tornou um amigo querido. Para o TWP como um todo, propus uma introdução à rica tradição teológica africana (listas de séries de livros, revistas importantes do mundo minoritário particularmente relevantes para a África e as Caraíbas negras e revistas importantes publicadas em África, com ênfase nas revistas de acesso livre); a produção de bibliografias *Estudos Africanos*; o processo de submissão de artigos a revistas; e a redação de críticas de livros. Salientou a importância tanto de aproveitar o material *Estudos Africanos* existente como de ter em conta a acessibilidade das nossas próprias publicações.

> Observação importante:
>
> Por *Estudos Africanos*, queremos significar antes "relacionado com África" e refere-se a objetos (por exemplo, artefactos, artesanato, livros, documentos) que estão ligados à cultura, história e/ou línguas africanas, ou que são originários desses contextos. O termo Africana designa aqui tanto o continente africano como o Atlântico Negro. *Estudos Africanos* abrange tanto os povos e tradições da África como os de origem africana. Em termos de investigação académica, uma obra de *Estudos Africanos* demonstra um conhecimento profundo e relevante das culturas, contextos e línguas africanas. Pode ser escrita por um autor não africano, mas inclui perspetivas africanas. Da mesma forma, algumas obras africanas são inteiramente escritas numa perspetiva do mundo minoritário (ou seja, "o Ocidente" ou "o Norte global") e não levam em consideração as realidades contextuais africanas: essas obras não fazem parte da investigação sobre *Estudos Africanos*. É essencial interessar-se pelos contextos africanos ou aplicá-los.[5]

[5] Esta nota foi adaptada do manual de políticas da revista, de uma secção redigida por mim em colaboração com o professor Fohle Lygunda Li-M.

Mentores e participantes aproveitando a biblioteca e os recursos do TWP — St Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Gana

Um dos aspetos mais gratificantes dos nossos workshops presenciais era a possibilidade de organizar «bibliotecas de conferências», onde podíamos fornecer documentos relevantes a baixo custo ou gratuitamente, graças à generosidade de várias editoras, bem como da USPG (*United Society Partners for the Gospel*), que ajudou a concretizar essa visão. A Wipf e Stock forneceu-nos, a preço de custo, títulos da sua série *African Christian Studies Series*; a SCM Press ofereceu um desconto em algumas novas publicações; e a Brill forneceu uma variedade de documentos — gratuitos, a baixo custo ou a preço integral — aos nossos participantes. Os nossos colegas do Instituto Akrofi-Christaller (Akropong-Akuapem, Gana) gentilmente nos trouxeram uma ampla seleção de edições da sua revista, *Journal of African Christian Thought* (Revista de Pensamento Cristão Africano), e uma seleção de publicações Regnum para revenda. Embora esses documentos provenientes de Akrofi já sejam oferecidos a preços acessíveis para o continente, eles estão disponíveis apenas em versão impressa e, portanto, nem sempre são facilmente acessíveis a um público amplo. Ficamos, portanto, muito felizes em disponibilizar esses tesouros aos nossos

participantes durante nossas duas conferências presenciais (em Cape Coast, Gana, e em Kingston, Jamaica).

De Mel e Conhecimento

Há vários anos, li o Salmo 119:11 na tradução Maa (a língua do povo Maasai, por vezes conhecida na África Oriental como *kiMaasai*). Em criança, memorizei este versículo em inglês nas versões KJV e NIV-1984: "*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*" e "*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you*." Essas duas traduções podem ser traduzidas para o português como "Escondi a tua palavra no meu coração, para eu não pecar contra ti" (ARC). No entanto, a Bíblia em maa não usa o verbo habitual para "esconder," *aisudoó*. Em vez disso, usa *ashum*, que significa "colocar algo de valor num local seguro para ter acesso a ele em caso de necessidade." Este verbo está muito mais próximo do significado do verbo hebraico (*ṣāpanĕtî*) usado neste versículo. Traduzo o Maa,, *atashuma nanu ororei lino to ltau lai pee maas ng'oki tialo iyie*, para o português como "Guardei a tua palavra no meu coração como um recurso precioso para não pecar diante de ti."[6] O objetivo de guardar a palavra de Deus como um recurso precioso não é simplesmente protegê-la contra roubo ou danos, mas mais precisamente torná-la facilmente acessível quando necessário.

Tenho tendência a lembrar-me do Salmo 119:11 sempre que leio ou ouço Mateus: "Então [Jesus] disse-lhes: 'É por isso que todo profissional do conhecimento que se tornou discípulo do reino dos céus é semelhante a um homem que administra uma casa e tira do seu tesouro coisas novas e coisas antigas'" (minha tradução). Como profissional do saber — ou *escriba*, de acordo com a tradução tradicional da palavra grega *grammateùs* — e docente de teologia, o meu trabalho não consiste em acumular conhecimento como um avarento. A minha vocação é, antes, acumular conhecimento para poder disponibilizar recursos valiosos, novos e antigos, que partilho com os meus alunos (e colegas) para o bem da comunidade... e para lhes dar os meios para fazerem o mesmo.

Na cultura Maasai, o mel tem uma importância capital, muito mais do que na antiga cultura israelita do Antigo Testamento. Mas o mel é ferozmente protegido pelas abelhas. Algumas pessoas conhecem as técnicas para colher mel com segurança em colmeias selvagens. Em 2007 ou 2008, participei num safari a pé, acompanhando um grupo de anciãos Maasai cristãos que visitavam quintas isoladas para partilhar a boa nova de Jesus. Encontrámos por acaso alguns jovens que conheciam o comportamento das abelhas. Estavam a colher mel

[6] Já abordei este assunto em inglês, com mais detalhes técnicos, no meu artigo intitulado, "My God is enkAi: A Reflection of Vernacular African Theology," *Journal of Language, Culture, and Religion* 2, nº 1 (2021): 1–20, nas pp. 14–15.

numa colmeia selvagem. Os costumes culturais em matéria de comunidade e hospitalidade exigiam que cada um de nós provasse o mel. Sob o sol escaldante do equador, o mel iluminou os nossos olhos. Também vi os olhos dos meus alunos brilharem diante da doçura de um acesso inesperado a recursos importantes.

Muitas vezes, as publicações são como o mel num favo de abelhas: demasiado bem protegidas pelo ferrão do preço, que é demasiado elevado para os investigadores das economias africanas e caribenhas. É essencial que aqueles de nós que conhecem não as abelhas, mas a edição, intervenham para tornar o "mel que ilumina os olhos" dos recursos o mais acessível possível para aqueles que o procuram.

Recursos Inacessíveis para Recursos que Não foram Acessados *(ou seja, Recursos não Consultados)*

Descrevi brevemente alguns dos muitos desafios relacionados com a inacessibilidade de recursos científicos essenciais em África e nas Caraíbas, mas há também uma questão distinta relativa aos recursos que permanecem inacessíveis. Durante este safari a pé, foram-nos oferecidos os dois tipos de favos — pedaços de mel doce e escorrendo e pedaços de favos contendo *inkera oo lotorok* ('larvas de abelhas'). Para os pastores (ou seja, criadores de gado) que cuidam do seu gado o dia inteiro sob o sol escaldante do equador, as larvas de abelha, compostas por cerca de 50% de proteínas e 50% de gorduras, são uma fonte nutricional muito rica. Disseram-me que um pouco de *enaisho oo lotorok* ('mel') e um pouco de *inkera oo lotorok* são suficientes para dar energia a um homem durante todo o dia. Mas, como americano ainda novato na cultura maasai, confesso que a simples ideia de comer larvas de abelha me deixava um pouco enjoado. No entanto, acontece que nem todos os Maasai gostam de comer *inkera oo lotorok*. Enquanto alguns de nós provámos esta rica fonte de nutrientes, dois dos meus companheiros Maasai que estavam na fila à minha frente abstiveram-se. "Não comemos bebés de abelhas," disseram-me. Assim, pude aceitar o mel com gratidão, recusando educadamente as larvas, sem ofender a cultura local. No entanto, tenho a certeza de que alguns de nós ficaram perplexos com a nossa recusa de uma oferta tão revigorante.

Da mesma forma, enquanto refletia sobre os resultados das conferências da TWP com outros líderes da TWP, uma questão que me preocupava há muito tempo lembrou-me a segunda parte da minha anedota. Certamente vimos "olhos brilhantes" quando os participantes entravam e saíam das nossas "bibliotecas." De facto, algumas das melhores fotos da conferência são aquelas que capturam a expressão de alegria nos rostos daqueles que finalmente puderam segurar nas mãos uma cópia física publicada do seu próprio trabalho, ou do trabalho de um novo colega do TWP, ou de um tesouro há muito

procurado e aparentemente inacessível finalmente obtido — sem mencionar aqueles cujos olhos brilharam com a descoberta inesperada de antigas conversas teológicas afro-caribenhas em publicações mais antigas. Mas outra oferta útil, e uma pequena forma de remediar os desequilíbrios acima mencionados, foi a generosa proposta da Brill de oferecer acesso gratuito, na medida do possível, a certos recursos online (normalmente pagos), convidando os participantes do TWP a contactar o representante da Brill para solicitar títulos específicos relevantes para as suas pesquisas/escritos. Dois de nós, líderes do projeto (é interessante notar que um estava em África e o outro nas Caraíbas), aproveitámos de bom grado esta oferta, mas — para nossa grande surpresa — nenhum dos cerca de 25 participantes o fez. Ainda não sabemos por que razão esta oferta gratuita não foi recebida com entusiasmo. Talvez, tal como aqueles que, durante o meu safari a pé, apreciaram o sabor e a riqueza nutricional das «abelhas bebés», os outros se tenham questionado por que razão alguns de nós recusaram uma fonte de alimento tão rica.

Isso continua a ser um ponto a ser analisado: por um lado, a realidade do caráter "oculto" e a inacessibilidade de muitos documentos universitários continua a ser verdadeira; mas talvez haja outros fatores que não identificámos e que tornaram a participação, neste caso específico, um pouco desagradável, assim como a ideia de comer «bebés abelhas» me desagrada. Será que os participantes não compreenderam a oferta? Ou será que o aspeto online destes recursos era repugnante, ou era necessário apoio adicional para realizar pesquisas bibliográficas com o Brill? Ou será que havia outra coisa?

Outra referência cultural maasai pode ser relevante aqui. A palavra maa *erutore* significa "colheita/recolha de mel selvagem." Curiosamente, embora o mel seja um produto muito apreciado e necessário para muitas práticas culturais tradicionais (incluindo noivados oficiais), a prática do *erutore* era tradicionalmente menosprezada como um trabalho "não maasai." O mel é reconhecido como extremamente valioso, mas a colheita de mel sempre foi menosprezada na cultura maasai. Parece que o trabalho de recolha de recursos académicos é, por vezes, desvalorizado da mesma forma.

Conclusão

A África e as Caraíbas negras podem ser pobres segundo os critérios do Banco Mundial e do Fundo Monetário Internacional (IMF em inglês). Certamente existem pessoas nessas regiões que sofrem de pobreza material. Mas a África e as Caraíbas negras não são pobres em termos teológicos ou académicos. Em ambos os casos, o que é necessário é um acesso mais equitativo à riqueza existente — equitativo não só em termos de custo, mas também em termos de acessibilidade — a fim de responder às necessidades e preferências

dos investigadores. Os líderes e mentores do TWP tiveram a sorte de ter acesso a tesouros de conhecimento e experiência.

Esforçámo-nos — com sucesso, creio eu — por «revelar tesouros antigos e novos» aos participantes do projeto, enquanto nós próprios, enquanto líderes e mentores, também beneficiamos com isso. Isso consistiu, nomeadamente, em desenvolver competências para *encontrar* tesouros antigos e novos no processo de investigação e para *partilhar* esses conhecimentos e sabedoria nos seus próprios escritos e publicações, tornando assim esses tesouros mais amplamente acessíveis na universidade, nas aulas e nas congregações. Os tesouros descobertos nesta edição especial, além da bibliografia exaustiva das publicações do projeto, falam por si.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 68–71

Reflections

Memories of Ghana

Michael CLARKE[1]

Codrington College, St John, Barbados
michael@hierlife.com

This is my second visit to Ghana, and without a doubt, it will not be my last. This trip, however, was my most memorable, as I had the opportunity to explore new parts of the country. The vastness of Ghana is mind-blowing, yet there is a quietness and homeliness to it, no matter where one is. I spent about a week in Koforidua visiting a fellow minister before returning to Accra and continuing on to Cape Coast.

At times, it was amusing to hear people remark that I resembled someone they knew, only to be surprised to learn that I was not from Ghana, but from Barbados. Moments like these underscored the language barrier, making me acutely aware of the limitations in communication. In so many ways, I felt at home, yet I was unable to express more than the few words I had learned upon arriving.

A few experiences from my time in Ghana stand out for continued reflection:

Meeting a Traditional Priest

On this occasion, I had requested an opportunity to meet with a traditional priest. With the help of friends at the Anglican Television station, I was able to spend most of Saturday morning in conversation with a priest. This interaction was deeply meaningful, offering me insight into the process and function of the traditional priesthood in the Ghanaian context.

My request stemmed from my thoughts about how assertive forms of Christianity have historically sought to marginalize and delegitimize spiritual expressions different from their own. My greatest wonder is what these faith

[1] The Reverend Dr Michael Clarke, an Anglican clergyman, is the recently-retired Principal of Codrington College, Barbados, and was a guest speaker for the TWP workshop in Ghana. He currently crafts immersive, integrative connecting experiences through HIER life.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/d85j9w27
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

traditions might have evolved into had they historically been allowed the freedom to remain mainstream and engage with the emerging human community. As it stands, many have been pushed to the sidelines, undoubtedly hampering their development through the centuries.

A pressing concern of mine is the state of our world today, particularly regarding climate change — a crisis brought about by humanity's disregard for nature. We have exploited the earth at every turn. I wonder what insights nature-based religions might have provided as a counter to this wanton abuse. Could communities with a deeper respect for the earth, guided by men and women attuned to the spirits of the land, have offered a path distinct from the one that led us to this crisis?

In the West, we are the inheritors of the fallout from the Roman Empire, which blazed its way across the world. Its demise left behind a Church that had ridden on its back for decades, learning to pillage as effectively as the empire itself. That we have not examined this as a matter of urgency is troubling. We continue as though the way in which the Gospel was spread is beyond question, yet one must ask: whose Gospel was truly being proclaimed over the centuries?

Sitting that Saturday morning in the sacred space of the priest, listening to an explanation of the training process for priesthood, I sensed the deep spiritual undergirding of their practice. Where our focus tends to be on the revealed word and the doctrines of the past, their tradition resembles that of the early Church — guided significantly by the Spirit as received in the present moment. At times, I see not just the benefits but also the hindrances associated with a reliance on printed text. While Christianity's reference is received tradition, traditional religion sees the Spirit as its reference.

Identity, Ancestry, and the "Last Bath"

Building on these reflections, another moment of profound interest arose during a dialogue with my Ghanaian colleague and friend, and one of the writing project mentors, Daniel Eshun, over lunch. We spoke about those who had been taken from these lands and sent across the ocean during the transatlantic trade. He described the traditional Ghanaian naming ceremony and the demonstrative use of water and gin to emphasize the importance of identity. He then spoke of the "last bath," where that identity was stripped away, and the person became property — the beginning of a new, tragic text in their life.

I reflected on this a few days later while having lunch with my niece, who lives in Austria and is married to an Austrian. She recounted her husband's disbelief when she mentioned that she could not trace her ancestry beyond her great-grandmother. This conversation reminded me of what Daniel had shared. The unnamed person stepping onto that slave vessel would be at least seven generations removed from my niece's great-grandmother. For many, it is

incomprehensible not to know one's ancestors beyond a few generations. While DNA testing offers some assistance, it can only approximate origins rather than fully restore lost lineage. In a time when awareness of ancestry is increasingly significant, this historical erasure remains a heavy burden.

During my stay, with the help of Kofi, my taxi driver, I visited Assin Manso, the place of the "last bath," and stood in the water where my ancestors likely took their last baths, about 30 km from the coast. In that moment, I wondered how far they had walked to reach that place — some, I was told, as much as 400 km. The sheer scale of this suffering is unimaginable. Words cannot truly convey it; the reality is beyond comprehension. The entire undertaking seemed inhuman, and even that word feels inadequate. One is left numb.

Transatlantic Anglican Institutional Connections and Disconnections

The remainder of my time in Ghana paled in comparison to what I had learned. Yet, it held its own significance. During our time hosted at St Nicholas Seminary, we explored ways in which the seminaries of St Nicholas and Codrington College could connect across the ocean. Four hundred years ago, the crossing was made with immense interest, yet today, facilitating such a connection seems insurmountable. There is little interest from those with the means to establish direct paths between Ghana and the Caribbean, largely because there is no immediate profit in doing so. Yet, a crucial aspect of reparative justice should be the provision of direct access at a reasonable cost, facilitating the reunification of families torn apart by greed.

At some level, there is a psychological debt due. Such a debt is not about money but about the deliberate effort to mend the historical rupture. Some argue that slavery has always existed in human history — but the transatlantic slave trade occurred on an unprecedented scale and left a wound that remains unhealed. Acknowledging this is not about dwelling on the past but about understanding its impact on the present and taking meaningful steps toward reconciliation. Just as the original inhabitants of the Americas were forced onto reservations, entire generations were torn from their homelands, leaving a legacy of fragmentation. While we cannot condemn past individuals who acted within their historical contexts, we can — and must — recognize the necessity of accountability in addressing these enduring wrongs.

The Transatlantic Writing Project, and particularly the in-person workshops, facilitated the sharing and engagement of writers and potential writers across the ocean. Outcomes included the encouragement of young theologians to write, the sharing of information on publishing, and suggestions for engaging in theological discourse through papers and texts. This was a significant undertaking and signals a future of greater transatlantic collaboration in scholarship and storytelling. Despite centuries of separation, there is now an opportunity to bridge these gaps, to learn from each other's

experiences, and to reclaim a shared history that has been deliberately obscured. The challenge before us is whether we will take the necessary steps to dismantle these imposed barriers and foster a deeper, more authentic engagement between Africa and the Caribbean — one that is built not on commerce or exploitation, but on shared identity, history, and mutual growth.

In reflecting on my journey to Ghana, I am left with a profound sense of connection and responsibility. This trip was not just about exploring a country; it was about confronting history, engaging with tradition, and envisioning a future where the descendants of the displaced can reconnect with their roots. The pain of the past remains, but so too does the possibility of healing. It is through conversations, cultural exchanges, and conscious efforts to bridge the divide that we can move towards a more just and reconciled world. Ghana has left an indelible mark on my soul, and as I leave, I carry with me not just memories but a renewed commitment to fostering understanding and unity across the Atlantic.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 72–73

Reflections

Tell the Story
Raising Our Transatlantic Voices

Oral A. W. THOMAS[1]

United Theological College of the West Indies (UTCWI), Kingston, Jamaica
oawthomas@gmail.com

In her TEDtalk on "The Danger of a Single Story," Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warns us that the way stories are told, the identity of the storyteller, and the diversity of stories told are all influenced by power, highlighting the potential of storytelling to challenge and reshape dominant narratives.[2] As she reminds us, power is not just the ability to narrate another person's story but to make it the definitive account of that person.

The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti makes a similar point when he says that "it is easy to blur the truth with a simple linguistic trick: start your story from 'Secondly.' . . . [Simply neglect] to speak of what happened first. Start your story with 'Secondly,' and the world will be turned upside-down."[3] Barghouti gives several examples of starting a story with 'secondly,' to which I would add, begin the story of colonialism with Columbus, the "discoverer," and not with those he claimed to have discovered, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the European marauders on the search for gold and not with the souls they dehumanized and oppressed in the process, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the West and not the Rest, and you have an altogether different story of the exploitation of the Rest by the West,

[1] The Reverend Dr Oral Thomas, a Methodist minister, was the (now-retired) President of the United Theological College of the West Indies, Jamaica, and served as one of the TWP institutional hosts for the Jamaica workshop. He is currently the Superintendent Minister of the St Thomas/St John Methodist Circuit and pastor of Christchurch and Trinity congregations in St Thomas (US Virgin Islands).

[2] Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story," TEDGlobal, July 2009, 18:39, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

[3] Mourid Barghouti, "Reunion," chapter 8 in Barghouti's *I Saw Ramallah*, trans. by Ahdaf Soueif, Foreword by Edward W. Said (New York: Anchor Books, 2002), n.p., https://istandwithpalestine.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/OceanofPDF.com_I_Saw_Ramallah_-_Mourid_Barghouti.pdf

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/hpce7325
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

corrected by Walter Rodney in his work *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972, 1974; rev. 1981), which highlights the inequity of global inequality.

It is crucial to start the story from the beginning. This will reveal the true culprits behind the narrative. It's not just about what comes 'secondly' that requires our attention, but full consideration of other, earlier factors that tell a different story. Starting the story from a different perspective can be transformative. The Transatlantic Writing workshop allowed formerly colonized voices to speak of what happened first, not second. Who we are *(identity),* where we live *(social space),* how we survive from day to day *(experiences)*, our interests — these must influence the story we tell.

In Ghana, one of the more sobering and dehumanizing experiences was to stand at a door labelled the ***Door of No Return*** at Cape Coast Castle, through which trafficked Africans passed as they were taken to the canoes to be rowed out to the waiting ships. On our visit there, our guide said, *"You see how this door was labelled. The idea was: 'Go through this door, and you are no longer human. Everything about your former life, including being human, is now over, gone.'"* The purpose of our gathering, and this wider project, is to produce more written materials. To consider the value and impact of our words. To encourage one another that our voices matter, and that words are powerful, as tools for both good and evil. In this visit to Cape Coast Castle, we were reminded that just by someone's words — the words of a human being — another human being, whom God equally created in God's image and likeness, in whom God equally breathed the breath of life, is suddenly no longer considered a human being.

The movement from the sea, from Cape Coast (Ghana) via the Atlantic Ocean to the Caribbean, recalled at the Cape Coast Castle, was no liberation. We were told that having gone through the voyage, should they survive, the indignity and horror as they went through the *Door of No Return*, being no longer regarded as human beings, was of lasting traumatic impact. They lost not only their homes, families, language, communities, but their very right to be considered human. But on what basis? Based on what philosophy? Grounded in what belief? Who can render asunder those of whom God is mindful and whom He has put together? Who God visited and made a little lower than the angels and crowned with glory and honor? To whom God gave dominion and put all earthly creatures under their feet? But, as we saw from the example at Cape Coast Castle, and as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie reminds us, this dehumanization starts with a word or a single story. Words are powerful.

Here is our opportunity to raise our voices against that state of nobodyness. May the purposes for which we have gathered — to raise our transatlantic voices — be realized to the fullest measure.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 74–78

Reflections

Reflection on the Challenges and Prospects of Theological Education within the Transatlantic Slave Trade Enclave:

The Case of St Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana [1]

Joseph Justice BAIN-DOODU [2]

St Nicholas Theological Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana
josephbaindoodu@gmail.com

Introduction

Challenges facing theological institutions today are multifaceted, including funding, world economics, pedagogy, theology, colonization, culture, national churches' history, attitudes, and the lasting impact of coronavirus across the globe. In particular, funding theological education is a serious challenge. Investment in theological education by charitable organizations, governments, and philanthropists seems to be a thing of the past. Unlike the sciences, agriculture, engineering, technology, and so on, theological education is not often considered to offer immediate economic returns or to positively influence the well-being of society. Consequently, the most familiar funding sources for higher education often do not include theological education.

This is a wide-spread problem; for example, many well-known seminaries and theological departments and institutions of international repute have closed in America and the United Kingdom. This trend continues to affect theological education in Africa and in the Caribbean, leading to low enrolment and underutilization of infrastructure in some theological institutions. Yet, as many of us believe, theological education and the training and formation of those called to serve as ordained priests remains an important pastoral and

[1] Editor's note: This was first presented, in part, as a keynote address during our workshop at UTCWI in Jamaica, August 2024.

[2] The Very Reverend Joseph Justice Bain-Doodu currently serves as the Dean of St Nicholas (Anglican) Theological Seminary in Cape Coast, Ghana, and served as the TWP institutional host for the Ghana workshop.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/ac9jm151
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 74–78

Reflections

Reflection on the Challenges and Prospects of Theological Education within the Transatlantic Slave Trade Enclave:

The Case of St Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana [1]

Joseph Justice BAIN-DOODU [2]

St Nicholas Theological Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana
josephbaindoodu@gmail.com

Introduction

Challenges facing theological institutions today are multifaceted, including funding, world economics, pedagogy, theology, colonization, culture, national churches' history, attitudes, and the lasting impact of coronavirus across the globe. In particular, funding theological education is a serious challenge. Investment in theological education by charitable organizations, governments, and philanthropists seems to be a thing of the past. Unlike the sciences, agriculture, engineering, technology, and so on, theological education is not often considered to offer immediate economic returns or to positively influence the well-being of society. Consequently, the most familiar funding sources for higher education often do not include theological education.

This is a wide-spread problem; for example, many well-known seminaries and theological departments and institutions of international repute have closed in America and the United Kingdom. This trend continues to affect theological education in Africa and in the Caribbean, leading to low enrolment and underutilization of infrastructure in some theological institutions. Yet, as many of us believe, theological education and the training and formation of those called to serve as ordained priests remains an important pastoral and

[1] Editor's note: This was first presented, in part, as a keynote address during our workshop at UTCWI in Jamaica, August 2024.

[2] The Very Reverend Joseph Justice Bain-Dodoo currently serves as the Dean of St Nicholas (Anglican) Theological Seminary in Cape Coast, Ghana, and served as the TWP institutional host for the Ghana workshop.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/ac9jm151
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

What investment had Bishop Roseveare put in place for the Seminary before he relinquished his position? How was the investment managed to ensure the Seminary's sustainability and financial independence? What reasons account for the re-introduction of the proposal for, and the establishment of, St Nicholas Seminary in 1975 several years after the departure of Bishop Roseveare?

The climate leaves a lot of speculation. It may be that the establishment of St Nicholas Seminary was a rushed decision after Bishop Roseveare left. Prudent planning and costing of running a sustainable institution like a seminary may have escaped the imagination of our forebears. One remarkable issue to consider fairly is that St Nicholas Seminary began as a seasonal institution. This means that one intake of students would complete their course of studies and leave before new admissions were made. This arrangement might have been more financially viable for the Seminary. Financial challenges increased from 1983 when a regular and consistent admission system was introduced by Revd Canon Ralph Martin (SSM). This system exposed the Seminary's financial unpreparedness and the permanent dependence on foreign assistance for survival; yet, as we see today, funding from any corner remains a challenge.

In reflecting on this historical link of missions and theological education, and the inherited impacts on indigenous leadership, perhaps one hard liberating truth may be to have a critical appraisal of the missionary agent today, to refute the old impression of imperialist attitudes in history. How missionary oriented are their policies? What kind of relationship exists between mission agencies and mission partners? How involved are the mission fields in the planning and execution of missionary strategies for mission expansion? How are theological institutions enabled to engage, participate, and contribute to the missionary plans of the society? Are mission fields neighbours or they are strangers needing help? These suggested questions may help to reshape the missionary approach and make their work more engaging, participatory, and encompassing.

Global Economies, the Diocese, and Ministerial Formation: Issues of Funding

All theological institutions are impacted by the economic challenges facing their respective host countries; in many cases, the ability of Anglican dioceses to fund their seminaries are likewise impacted. In Ghana, the situation becomes even worse with high inflation and constant increases in prices of goods and services. St Nicholas Seminary depends upon tuition fees to fund the institution but struggles with low enrolment. The reason for low enrolment is partly a global phenomenon. The harsh global economy has seemingly reduced the willingness of people to give to charity and philanthropic work. Donations, endowments, and legacies have waned. This in turn means the Church cannot

give meaningful allowances to students at the Seminary that would support them and their families to live a decent life. Moreover, those who have the desire to support priestly training cannot afford much. To avoid further financial challenges, people find it difficult to leave their jobs and families to undertake residential ministerial training for a long time in a distant place. These are some of the reasons for the regular decline in student enrolment at St Nicholas, as other seminaries also experience.

Since St Nicholas depends on student tuition fees to run, these low enrolment numbers mean the Seminary is generally in arrears with staff salaries and allowances to both full and part-time lecturers for months. This affects staff commitment, our ability to attract lecturers, and other workers, all of which erodes the credibility of the Seminary. This in turn means a decline in ordained clergy receiving their theological training and ministerial formation in an Anglican context.

Another challenging aspect responsible for the financial predicament of the Seminary is a lack of commitment by the dioceses. Some dioceses have established ministerial training centres, which compete with the work at St Nicholas Seminary. Some bishops consider it cheaper to train priests in their own dioceses, which obviously leads to dissipation of scarce resources. To depend on fee payment to run a centralized seminary is a stressful encounter. When dioceses do not send candidates to seminary because they lack the resources to provide for them, the result is low enrolment. This throws the budget of the seminary into deficit, and the cycle continues. It would seem prudent as an [Anglican] Church for us to determine a more unified course of action for training our priests.

Most dioceses started life on fractured legs. They need funds to mend their own painful and fractured legs. How much money can they spare to take care of a baby (St Nicholas Seminary) that was born from a wishful thought? The story may be similar in most theological institutions and seminaries. Any church with an ailing seminary has a fundamental problem. The seminary should be the powerhouse of the church, and its condition reflects the status of the church now and the future. The future mission, expansion, and growth of such a church remains uncertain.

The impact of coronavirus on theological education

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented both challenges and opportunities for theological education.[7] It has brought in the use of modern technology for

[7] Editors' note: E.g., see *Decolonizing the Theological Curricula in an Online Age*, edited by Felix Chimera Nyika, Mzee Hermann Y. Mbula, and Kenneth Ross (Zomba, Malawi: TSM

communication, networking and effective collaboration. There is a shift from face-to-face to online teaching and learning. This has helped us to use time efficiently and offers a helpful work-life balance. Virtual universities, theological colleges, and seminaries have come as an answer to travelling long distances for studies. While this may be convenient for some, it is problematic for others. Not everyone has access to the internet. Until recently, St Nicholas has lacked the necessary communication equipment and internet connection to enable the provision of online lectures; however, we have recently received support to for this and look forward to developing a virtual classroom. A significant downside to online learning, however, is that we lose aspects of [priestly] formation which come from being together in community. Online learning is not a perfect answer to our financial question.

Prospects

We regularly witness cuts in charitable grants to institutions due to obvious reasons emerging from global economic perspectives. Funding theological education cannot be a burden on missionary agents alone. A number of solutions were suggested at the Summit on African Theological Education in the Anglican Communion at Gaborone, Botswana, in November 2022, to help theological institutions become financially sustainable. My sincere opinion is that, to implement and achieve every single decision requires some initial financial support. Again, a practical approach may be to invest in some income generating projects, which would promise some inflows at regular times for the work of the theological institutions.

The challenges facing theological education are multifaceted, with finances being perhaps the most urgent. This reflection simply highlights the present challenges so that we can begin to think about possible strategies. Answers to these challenges are not straightforward. Though suggestions have been made in some instances, they require careful reflection and collective action. St Nicholas Seminary is not alone as far as these challenges are concerned, and we look forward to creative collaborations to address them.

Press, 2022); a review was published in the March 2025 issue of this journal.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 79–83

Reflections

Honour the Memory of Our Ancestors [1]

Donald CHAMBERS [2]

Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica; Antilles Episcopal Conference
frdon63@hotmail.com

Recently, a group of visitors from West Africa and Jamaica had the opportunity to visit Seville Heritage Park, the site of Emancipation Jubilee 2024. Managed by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust, its mission is "to inspire a sense of national pride . . . ." However, the visit both inflated and deflated my Jamaican pride.

The tour guide at Seville Heritage Park, undoubtedly well-qualified and passionate about the history of New Seville, delivered a presentation that was not just informative, but also emotionally engaging. His narrative of Jamaica's history, from the Tainos to the Spanish Conquerors, to the Middle Passage, plantation slavery, and Emancipation, was informative and emotional, not just a recitation of facts. The exhibits housed in the Great House were well-maintained and visually appealing, and the graves of the enslaved Africans were respectfully maintained, provoking an emotional response.

However, my disappointment was about the stark contrast between the maintenance of the Great House and the housing for the Tainos and the enslaved Africans. The latter areas were poorly maintained and marred by litter and debris, a sight that made me both angry and saddened. To compound my disappointment, certain historical relics, such as the water wheel used to operate the old sugar mill, the overseer's house, and a barbecue, were not adequately

[1] Editor's note: This was first published in the *The Gleaner* as "Letter of the Day," by Father Donald Chambers, Thursday 15 August 2024 https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/letters/20240815/letter-day-honour-memory-our-ancestors; reprinted here with permission. We likewise reprint *The Gleaner*'s response to Fr Don following his letter. *The Gleaner* is a newspaper published in Kingston, Jamaica.

[2] Father Donald Chambers, S.T.D. (Doctor of Sacred Theology), a Catholic priest and theological educator, was a participant in the TWP. Father Don is a Diocesan Priest from the Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica and currently is the General Secretary for the Antilles Episcopal Conference.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/syaw1563
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

highlighted and lacked informative labelling.

Reflecting on this experience, I couldn't help but draw parallels to other former plantation sites, where the history of the enslaved is often commercialized, as in Devon House, Kingston, or even sanitized, erasing the harsh realities of the past. I couldn't help but wonder if this site is emblematic of the theory of Plantation Economy, which is a throwback to stratified governance of the sugar plantation, with a preference for glorifying the achievements of the privileged while neglecting the stories and concerns of the marginalized.

Is the management of the Seville Heritage Park a reflection of broader governance and societal issues? Does it symbolize the persistent underdevelopment that plagues Jamaica, where the narrative is controlled by the modern inheritors of wealth and power, neglecting the painful history of those who were oppressed?

JNHT National [Jamaica National Heritage Trust] must ensure that all aspects of our history are preserved and presented with equal respect and attention. This honours the memory of those who journeyed before us and fosters a more complete and honest understanding of Jamaica's rich and complex past. A correction of the above is sure to give meaning to Emancipation Jubilee.[3]

Restoring Seville Heritage Park:

A Response to Donald Chambers from the Jamaica National Heritage Trust [4]

The Jamaica National Heritage Trust (JNHT) would like to offer a response to letter of the editor, "Honour the memory of our ancestors," published in *Jamaica Gleaner* on 15 August 2024.

---

[3] Editor's note: In reflecting upon the diverse writing outputs from this project, we are encouraged that Fr Don has continued to write pieces like this for wide public engagement. In recent conversation, he shared the following with a project leader: "Thanks to you who have journeyed with me and continue to encourage me. Certainly, the experience of the Transatlantic Writing Project was a watershed moment. I remember one of the presenters encouraging us to keep writing and to find our niche that varies according to different persons, especially those who are not in full academia." One goal of the TWP was, and remains, to support clergy-scholars in making their theological insights more widely available to diverse audiences.

[4] Editor's note: This was first published in Jamaica's *The Gleaner* as "Restoring Seville Heritage Park" on 7 October 2024, https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/art-leisure/20241007/ restoring-seville-heritage-park; text and pictures are reprinted here with permission.

Donald Chambers

Honour the Memory of Our Ancestors

This insightful letter regarding Seville Heritage Park and presents the experience of a recent tour group. The JNHT appreciates the feedback of the author and wants to address the concerns raised.

Seville Heritage Park is indeed a cherished site, deeply connected to Jamaica's rich and complex history. We are grateful for the recognition of our guide's passionate and informative presentation, as well as the commendation of the great house and the respectful maintenance of the graves of the enslaved Africans. Such feedback highlights the heart of what we strive to achieve, fostering a profound connection to our history.

Seville Great House

A rear view of the planter's house-cum-interpretive-museum at Seville Heritage Park in St Ann

However, we understand the disappointment regarding the maintenance and presentation of other areas of the park. The contrast observed between the great house and the housing for the Taino and enslaved Africans is a concern we take seriously. We recognize the importance of presenting all aspects of our history with equal respect and care, and the comments have illuminated areas where we need to improve.

The remains of a waterwheel on the grounds of Seville Heritage Park.

Recent Challenges

We acknowledge that recent challenges, including the impact of Hurricane Beryl, have affected the overall condition of the park. The storm's aftermath has understandably posed significant challenges for our maintenance efforts. Nonetheless, we are committed to addressing these issues as swiftly and effectively as possible. To this end the CHASE Fund has donated $2.8m to address the damages caused by Hurricane Beryl. The JNHT's enterprise committee is actively proposing improvements, and we are engaging in discussions about restoring and enhancing the park's various sections. Our goal is to ensure that every aspect of Seville Heritage Park reflects the dignity and respect our history deserves.

The hurricane struck just days before Emancipation Jubilee which is the principal event on the organisation's calendar. This prompted a swift response to ensure major areas were cleared and ready in time. Prior to the hurricane, the JNHT had already begun the important work of replacing two termite-infested Taino houses and installing life size representations of a male and female Taino, which would enhance the educational experience for our visitors. Our commitment to this project remains strong and we are dedicated to restoring and enriching the cultural landscape for everyone.

Interpretative Signage

In addition to physical restoration, we are also focusing on enhancing our interpretive signage and exhibits. Ensuring that historical relics, such as the water wheel and overseer's house, are adequately highlighted and labelled is a

priority. We are dedicated to providing a narrative that is both accurate and respectful, honouring the full spectrum of Jamaica's history.

The feedback of the public we serve is invaluable, and we appreciate suggestions for constructive improvements. We are committed to making Seville Heritage Park a place where every visitor can deeply connect with and honour our shared heritage. We invite all to continue sharing observations, as they are crucial to our ongoing efforts to celebrate and preserve our history with the respect and integrity it merits.

We thank your readers for their continued understanding and support.

— Jamaica National Heritage Trust

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 84–88

Reflections

(Re)connections, Relationships, and Spiritual Expressions:
Gleanings from a Transatlantic Writing Project

Jessie Ini FUBARA-MANUEL[1]

ORCID: 0000-0001-8131-6055
Edinburgh Northwest Kirk, Church of Scotland, Edinburgh;
Essien Ukpabio Presbyterian Theological College, Itu, Nigeria
jessiebenebo@gmail.com

Introduction

My task here today is simple; it is reflecting on the project as an active, grateful participant. I would like to start with a short story. When I told my 90-year-old retired dad that I was going to Jamaica (August 2024) to participate in an academic writing workshop, he wondered why? I had successfully completed my PhD a few years ago, he said, and wondered what further academic writing skills I would need. I told him this was serious business and I read out the title of the project to him: "Religion, Faith, and Development in Ghana and Jamaica: Connecting Transatlantic Theological Voices and Enhancing Leadership through Academic Writing Workshops' (what we more manageably refer to as the 'Transatlantic Writing Project,' or TWP). He said it certainly sounded very serious.

"How Are the People There?"

But then, his concern turned to the people. On the third day of my time in Jamaica for the in-person workshop, on one of my dad's repeated calls to me, he asked an unusual question that changed everything. "How are the people there?" he asked. "Which people?" I asked back, puzzled about whether he might mean other participants, leaders, our hosts, or what. "The Jamaicans," he answered. "How are they?"

[1] The Reverend Dr Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel, a Presbyterian minister and participant in the TWP, is currently the Pastoral Assistant, Edinburgh Northwest Kirk Church of Scotland, Edinburgh. She also serves as Adjunct Lecturer, Essien Ukpabio Presbyterian Theological College, Itu, Nigeria.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/kv7rjh63
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

I stumbled over a response, because his questions sounded strange to me. What did this have to with me, or with my family? We are Nigerians, and my dad had never mentioned anything about Jamaica. Why would he? What would we have to do with one another? As I had mentioned to the project leaders, while I was very interested and supportive of the transatlantic focus of the project, it did not resonate personally for me. And then my dad's life-changing words: "Tell them sorry." My dad knew what I had not taken the time to learn: that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Ibibios were among the over 15% of trafficked Nigerians sent to Jamaica.[2] My dad is Ibibio, an ethnic group found in Akwa Ibom State, south-south region of Nigeria. In an instant, everything changed for me. I was not just a tourist or conference participant; I was visiting the home of my ancestors. And while I had come by air as a free person, they had travelled by ships, involuntarily, across the Atlantic. My dad saw beyond the academic aspirations of this project to the potential for transatlantic reconnection, relationships, repair, and spiritual expressions. It was sobering, a day later, to observe the Ibibio presence recorded on the informational graphics at Seville Great House.

I found gains that the project organizers could not have fully anticipated; what we might refer to as the 'serendipitous moments' of academic endeavour. And that is what my reflection is about: (re)connections, relationships, and spiritual expressions; reflecting on what this project has come to mean to me, and might I add, other participants as well, though I am focusing on my experience.

Make no mistake: the project has been intense — regular team presentation sessions, meetings with mentors, receiving peer reviews, being reassigned new peer reviewers and having a commitment to being what Professor Emerita and project senior mentor Susan Felch termed "the writer who actually writes!" And there have been encouraging progress reports from many. I myself have submitted a book chapter for review and am currently exploring avenues for the publication of my monograph, a revision of my PhD thesis, and am using the tools I have gained to begin leading writing workshops for clergy-scholars in Nigeria and more widely across West Africa. I know other colleagues who are at a similar publishing stage. But I think this personal reflection is necessary because as we have come to know, the process of any academic endeavour is as important as the product. In fact, research has shown that the process authenticates the output and forms part of the call to accountability.[3]

---

[2] See G. Ugo Nwokeji, *The Slave Trade and Culture in the Bight of Biafra: An African Society in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1–21.

[3] See Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 3rd edition (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), 54.

Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel

(Re)connections, Relationships, and Spiritual Expressions: Gleanings from a Transatlantic Writing Project

Transatlantic and Academic (Re)Connections

First, let me talk about connections. My area of research is primarily disability studies, with an added focus on gender, women, and healing, specifically related to HIV and associated issues. Disability studies is still quite an isolated terrain. It is not uncommon for me to attend a conference and to be the only person or just one of a few speaking on disability. So, imagine my delight to meet an amazing Jamaican participant and colleague in this project who is also engaged in disability studies. Louise has become a friend and sister; we are kindred spirits. Louise's research examines the diasporic perceptions of disability as one living and studying in the United States. Louise is writing on the perceptions of diasporic Christian African Caribbean Parents towards Autism and parental stress. My work has been primarily based on the Christian woman in south-south Nigeria, exploring how faith enables or does not enable the engagement and struggle with sociological, psychological, stigmatic, and spiritual challenges related to disability and gender.

When Louise and I communicated, we were intrigued about how transatlantic understandings and expressions of faith inform the way that people affected and impacted by disability respond to life. We had other things in common: we are both clergywomen married to clergymen. We have both lived in our homes of birth and are now diasporic Christians managing the complexities of living actively in both worlds; I in the UK; she in the US. For both of us, disability research and writing are not just academic pursuits but a lifetime of passion and commitment to disability response by all agents of society. Our work is research advocacy with the intent to produce change. This is much like the works of the mentors of this project who advocate that our scholarship must have transformative impact in our societies.

Louise and I are both of African descent and to us, our indigenous systems, rituals, and culture cannot be removed from who we are, who we are becoming, and what we are doing as scholars. We believe that they are complimentary and we desire to see the similarities and/or differences between African and Caribbean spiritualities with a particular focus on disability inclusion or exclusion. Would it be possible to uncover or (re)discover positive indigenous responses to disability that might have been lost through colonial influence, distance, and time? You will not be surprised to know that during our time in Jamaica, we visited the Bookshop of the University of West Indies (Mona Campus) and got valuable books on Caribbean spiritualities. Ghanaian theologian Mercy Oduyoye has noted something many of us may already know: that women do great things when they work together and support one another.[4]

[4] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 29.

I do hope Louise and I will go on to do great things together, contributing to disability discourse from transatlantic, African-Caribbean perspectives; and we will have this unique project to thank for that.

Relationships

In the life of the project, we have built new relationships and strengthened existing ones. I have just mentioned my new friendship and academic collaboration with Louise. But beyond the attention to research and writing, we have enjoyed sharing of our lives with one another. We have workshop pictures to show what fun we have had. Workshop hosts and hostesses in both Ghana and Jamaica generously gave of themselves, going above and beyond, and in so doing offered us a model of hospitality that is based on Christ-like friendship. Jesus would say to his disciples, "I no longer call you servants . . . I call you friends" (John 15:15, NIV). John Swinton has popularized the idea of radical friendship that Jesus modelled with the disciples — the kind that broke the glass ceiling of hierarchies, differences, and distinctions and offered so much without expecting anything in return but friendship.[5]

We came together as women and men, mentors and mentees, retired professors and early career academics, younger and older in age, clergy and lay people, Black and White and other colours in between, and from a number of different communities and contexts. But over meals around a table, early morning coffees, dancing at Jamaican Independence Village, soaking, swimming, or learning to swim on an outing at Dunn's River Falls, we built relationships that were healing and invigorating. And, in between the conversations and sharing, there was the soft, patient, kind, and persistent challenge to write — to be "the writer that writes," to see writing as a calling, as a vocation, a spiritual response, a bold and vulnerable step of activism, and the giving of ourselves to the world.

Spiritual Expressions

And this brings me to the last point of my reflection: the surprising aspect of a faith-based academic writing endeavour that was actually faith-focused, giving space to our shared, though diverse, Christian faith. Questions that hovered over us include things like, *in what ways or to what extent does our Christian faith propel us to write? How is writing integral to our call as people of faith? How do we use writing as an act of 'proclamation,' of offering information, and signposting readers to existential issues?* When we gathered at Seville Great House Heritage Park (St Ann, Jamaica), we were led through a ritual of

[5] John Swinton, *Resurrecting the Person: Friendship and the Care of People with Mental Health Problems* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 44–45.

remembrance using the liturgy reconnecting the living-death of our ancestors with the living-living of the present. The organizers of the project adapted the "Tears in a Bottle Liturgy for Trauma Transformation" originally written by my good friend, Reverend Nicole Ashwood.[6] We made it our own and expressed our responses in ways unique to us — in songs, in tears, in silence, in movement, and by symbolically placing our pens on the 'African Tomb' as an act of commitment to telling the stories of our ancestors. Together, we formed a bond that holds us accountable to this gift, this motivation, this encouragement, this mentoring, to *write*.

Where to Next? Writing, Relationships, and Reconciliation

So, what do we do with the knowledge that this transatlantic collaboration has unearthed? Perhaps the first thing is to pay attention to our understanding of the task and vocation of writing. In a very spiritual sense, we owned the art of writing and identified and claimed it as being as much of a religious or spiritual call as an academic or professional one. The pen is transformative. The Reformed tradition, of which I am a part, notes that all of life is a worship space. This writing project was, and remains, a worship space and calls us to transform our lives and those of our readers with our writing.

And the second thing: in the midst of all of these connections, relationships, and spirituality, we formed and experienced something bigger than ourselves and bigger than our expectations. In coming together in community in all our glorious diversities and shared Christian faith, gathering in these places of historic and ongoing pain and trauma, we experienced a taste of healing and reconciliation — and found ancestors and family — and glimpsed the power of writing and community to open the doors to such transformation. It is something that calls me to commit to writing, to publishing, to making a difference with my voice and the voices of those whom I represent.

On my return from Jamaica, I called my dad and thanked him for challenging me to see beyond the 'letters' of this project and to appreciate its wider spirit and life.[7] And I thank the organizers, the project leaders, mentors, the funders and collaborating institutions for the privilege of being part of this unique project. And I thank you for listening, and now for reading; affirming that indeed, words matter.

---

[6] *Editorial Note:* See "Tears in a Bottle Liturgy: Jamaica," pp. 129–134 in this issue.

[7] A reference to the concept of the 'letter of the law versus the spirit of the law,' from Paul's words to the Corinthians: "He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant — not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor 3:6, NIV).

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 89–90

Reflections

Pens, Grandmothers, and Friendship:
A Jamaica Reflection

Susan FELCH [1]
Calvin University, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA
susan.felch@calvin.edu

The verandah was wide and shaded, edging a house settled comfortably atop a sloping hill. The benches creaked gently. The breeze sighed up from the ocean bay. The warm, humid air invited quiet reflection, somnolence . . . and memories.

Seville Great House, in the parish of St. Ann, Jamaica, today offers visitors a quiet retreat.

Seville Great House, for over 150 years, offered enslaved Africans a brutal portal into the killing fields of New World sugarcane plantations. After the terrifying Middle Passage, they stumbled off ship decks, only to find themselves in another house of horrors.

The dizzying juxtaposition of tropical beauty, not unlike the island of Papua New Guinea where I grew up, and historical holocaust, a "hell without fire" as one enslaved Christian called her northern servitude,[2] induces spiritual vertigo. The sheer magnitude and duration of New World enslavement beggars imagination: it drains our capacity to muster sustained attention to this violent deformation of human community, too often propped up by religious language.

It would be easy for a white woman sitting on the white veranda on a drowsy afternoon at Seville to feel outrage and guilt — outrage that a beautiful place could be the site of such suffering, guilt at the white greed that perpetuated that suffering. Neither emotion is inappropriate. But neither emotion helps me pay

[1] Susan Felch is Professor Emerita of English at Calvin University (Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA) and served as a senior project mentor throughout the TWP, regularly guest speaking in the webinars, advising project leaders, and joining us for the Jamaica workshop as a keynote speaker.

[2] "Autobiography VI: Slavery Was Hell without Fires," in *God Struck Me Dead: Voices of Ex-Slaves*, edited by Clifton H. Johnson, 153–163, Introduction by Albert J. Raboteau (Cleveland, Ohio, USA: Pilgrim Press, 1993), 161.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/d874qv92

attention to history or to where and with whom I am sitting right now. My beloved friend Barbara Omolade[3] once told me, "Your white guilt doesn't do me any good, and it doesn't do you any good." Guilt without attentiveness corrupts, shuts us down, separates us even further from one another. What Barbara taught me is that goodness comes from a friendship sustained over many years, a friendship that doesn't flinch from differences, difficult histories, and straightforward conversations, held together by our love for God and for each other.

Barbara also told me: "Susan, all grandmothers are alike." In one sense, of course, this isn't true. Barbara's grandmother's grandmother was an enslaved woman. My grandmother's grandmother spent her life in a small German-speaking Russian village. But grandmothers are alike in more important ways. Grandmothers give birth, they feed us special family foods and family stories. The first and perhaps most enduring memories of lavish love we carry with us come from our grandmothers' kitchens, hugs, and goodnight kisses. The recipes may vary, but their graciousness flows from generation to generation.

Grandmothers model resilience. That we have memories of our grandmothers — that they existed and survived to birth and nourish not just one but two generations — is a testament to their resilience and a promise for ours.

I, with roots that stretch back to Russia, walk down the hill to the rediscovered African cemetery with friends whose roots are sunk in African soil. We stand in a circle holding hands, linking grandmothers' grandmothers who had been enslaved with grandmothers' grandmothers who may have enslaved. They welcome me and forgive. We sing. We pray. We cry. We listen to scripture. We remember. We lay our pens on the ancestors' gravestone. We take them up again and vow to all our grandmothers that their now silenced tongues will speak again.[4] We write.

---

[3] *Editorial Note:* Barbara Omolade (1942–2023), an African American, was a professor, scholar, and author of such books as *The Rising Song of African American Women* (1994) and *Faith Confronts Evil: From Birthmothers to Holy Women: African American Christian Women, 1619–1865* (Eugene, Oregon, USA: Cascade Books, 2024).

[4] *Editorial Note:* For additional perspectives on this event at Seville Great House shared in this issue, please see Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel, "(Re)connections, Relationships, and Spiritual Expressions: Reflections on the Transatlantic Writing Project," pp. 84–89 in this issue, and "Tears in a Bottle Liturgy: Jamaica," adapted by Daniel Justice Eshun, Janice Mclean-Farrell, and Anna Kasafi Perkins, pp. 129–134 in this issue.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 91–92

Reflections

A Ghanaian Anglican Reflection on Transatlantic Engagement

Frank Entsi WILLIAMS [1]
St Nicholas Theological Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana
ekow.williams@gmail.com

The Transatlantic Writing Project offered me great insight into academic writing. As an Anglican priest and novice scholar who needed coaching, the webinars and especially the in-person gathering in Cape Coast provided essential and free training. Though I could not participate fully in all of the webinars due to my workload in school, I continued to receive great mentorship from several project leaders. I acquired effective training in writing habits and practices, helpful research and publishing sources, literature review, and methodology, and time management. My greatest takeaway from the online training was from the presentation titled, "Writing as a Spiritual Discipline," led by Prof Susan Felch. I was encouraged that as a priest and a scholar, I can approach the task of academic writing as part of my Christian vocation and service.

The in-person conference at St Nicholas Seminary, Ghana (July 2024), where we gathered with our mentors, other participants, and several Caribbean colleagues, helped shape my perspective on revisiting the transatlantic slave trade to seek answers to contemporary questions that keep knocking at our doors. My interest is to focus on probing the contributions of West Africans to the Trade. I feel that there is a strong need for natives of West Africa to reassess their varied participation in the Trade as well as their willingness to contribute to the clarion calls for transatlantic reconciliation. I see this as the gap to fill in the slave trade discourse.

My interest in the slave castles and slavery has a history. As a first-year student at the University of Cape Coast some 20 years ago, I took a course that required students to visit the castles and become familiar with the institution of

[1] The Reverend Frank Entsi Williams, a participant in the TWP and a student aide for the Ghana workshop at St Nicholas Theological Seminary, is an Anglican priest and is currently completing an MPhil at the University of Cape Coast.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/79q31056
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

slavery, and particularly the transatlantic slave trade. That encounter with the slave castles and the story told about slavery raised this fundamental question for me, which is as relevant then as now: what was our role as West Africans in the building of such a monstrous institution that deracinated some 12 million African brothers and sisters from their homes, families, and socio-cultural setting, creating unending intergenerational trauma to these Africans in the diaspora? I appreciated this trauma afresh during the conference when we gathered for a Service of Reconciliation at Christ Church (Anglican) Cathedral, together with our brothers and sisters from Jamaica and other Caribbean countries, some of whom were visiting Ghana for the first time.[2] The trauma was telling in all faces. For this reason, I have titled my MPhil thesis, "Reconciling the Past from the Present: The Role of the Anglican Church in Ghana in Repairing the Legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade."

It is my uppermost hope that such writing projects will continue, and identify and support African and Caribbean Christian scholars, whether students or established scholars, to sharpen their skills to write African stories echoing from the shadows.

To the organizers, funders, mentors, and other mentees, and especially those who were able to see their publications through, I say *Ayekoo* (well done)!

[2] *Editorial note:* For further details of this service, please see "Ecumenical Service of Reconciliation (Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, Cape Coast, July 2024)," pp. 121–128 in this issue, and "Tears in a Bottle Liturgy: Ghana," adapted by Janice Mclean-Farrell and Anna Kasafi Perkins, pp. 115–120 in this issue.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 93–97

Reflections

A Dutchwoman in Ghana

Tessel JONQUIÈRE [1]
Brill, The Netherlands
Tessel.Jonquiere@degruyterbrill.com

In July 2023 the Dutch king formally apologized, on behalf of himself as king and on behalf of the Dutch government, for the Dutch involvement in slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. This was 160 years after slavery was abolished in Suriname and the Dutch colonies in the Caribbean. To me it sounded far away and near at the same time. Near, as it was only 160 years ago: 1863 was just a few decades before my grandparents were born. But it was also far away. In school in the eighties, I never learned the full story of slavery and, especially, of the Dutch involvement in it: it just was not a topic in our history books at the time. When the protests against '*zwarte piet*' arose, at first, I did not really understand why people bothered so much. Why this resistance and opposition against these funny, cheerful black (wo)men who helped *Sinterklaas* with Christmas festivities? What could be wrong with that?[2] But with time I listened better to the people raising the issue and understood that it was (and is) a problem for them as it reminds them of an ugly page in history that they still feel every day.

When I was asked to come to Ghana for the Transatlantic Writing workshop, I saw it as a nice distraction from regular workdays behind my computer and conferences. I had been to East and Southern Africa before and looked forward to visiting West Africa as well. It felt like a junket. But a few

[1] Dr Tessel Jonquière is the Senior Acquisitions Editor for Religious Studies, Theology & World Christianity with Brill, and joined the TWP as a guest speaker in Ghana, as well as a Brill publishing representative for the project.

[2] Sinterklaas is the Dutch name of Saint Nicholas, whose birthday is celebrated each year at the beginning of December. Sinterklaas is a friend of children, and he has assistants that walk with him and his white horse on the roofs to bring presents to the children by going through the chimney. These assistants are, of old, black and used to be called '*zwarte piet*' or 'black Pete'. Nowadays, the chimney (and its soot) aspect is highlighted as a cause for the blackness, which is severely reduced when compared to the old days: in my youth the Petes's faces were fully covered in black make-up, with big red lips and jingly earrings (a commonly racist way of depicting African people in those times).

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/az7bsz68
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

months before the workshop was going to take place an extremely stressful period at work left me with a burn-out. I spent a few months at home, sorting Legos, doing jigsaw puzzles, and caring for my daughters. I had to cancel work trip after work trip to get back on my feet and people suggested to cancel the Ghana trip as well. But I didn't. And it was the best decision I made.

I arrived in Accra a few days before the workshop. I am aware that 'Africa' is not a country — it is a continent with as much diversity as anywhere else. Accra is not Johannesburg is not Harare is not Maputo is not Kampala. But the sounds, the smells, the red earth, the houses painted bright with advertisements, the sellers at traffic lights carrying bowls with water bottles on their heads, the neat stacks of fruit in stalls along the road, the motorcycle taxis and the potholes in the roads — even though I had never been to West Africa, it all felt so familiar.

From Accra we traveled to Cape Coast, where the workshop was going to take place. In my guidebook I saw some interesting places to visit, and together with one of my fellow travelers we planned a trip west, to walk the top of the rainforest in Kakum National Park and to visit the castle in Elmina. Even though I had read the guidebook and had heard people say, "if you're Dutch, you have to go to Elmina," I was not prepared for what kind of 'castle' this was, and how its history was linked to my country.

The first time we tried to visit the place in Elmina we could not enter. Five minutes before we arrived, all museums in Ghana had called for a strike and no visitors were allowed. Standing there at the entrance my eyes fell on a sign

suspended above the entrance where the Dutch Embassy invited people to an exhibition to commemorate *Keti Koti* (a Surinam annual celebration marking the abolition of slavery there in 1863). I realized that until then I had not really

known how closely connected the Netherlands was to the place where I was standing: how West-Africa, Ghana, and Elmina were linked to this Dutch colony. The little tourist shops on the castle square were open, so we spent some money on bracelets for my daughters and talked to the women working there, but all the time I was resolved to come back the next day and see what was inside.

The next day the strike was over, and we were guided around the castle in a group of people. We saw the places where atrocities were performed, felt the greasy floors of the horrible dungeons where slaves were inhumanely kept like goods, heard the stories about the governor picking girls from a gathering in a courtyard, smelled the thick, dusty air of the prison cells for slaves and guards, and could almost taste the fear of the men and women waiting to pass through the Door of No Return, on their way to the ships that took them away.

When the guide approached me at the end of the tour, he asked how I had experienced it and I told him that I was Dutch. It felt like a confession. It was not that I felt responsible for what had happened, but whereas usually I would be proud to be Dutch when I encounter a Dutch presence abroad, it was the opposite here. I was ashamed.

The guide assured me that was not necessary at all. He said that people of Ghana at the time were also guilty; that without the participation of the chiefs in the country, the Dutch would never have accomplished what they did, would

never have gotten so many people to the castle and to the ships, selling them like cargo. But shared guilt is not encouraging. I was glad to hear the Dutch today are very much working on helping Ghanaian communities to develop through financial aid and project support. A small kind of reparations, if such 'payback' is even possible.

Nevertheless, my trip to Elmina, and also to Cape Coast Castle a few days later, was an eyeopener for me. It seemed like a beginning: when I came back to the Netherlands, I suddenly saw transatlantic, colonial history all around me. I saw books referring to the era, documentaries on TV relating to Dutch history — now luckily no longer ignorant of our role in the transatlantic slave trade. And a few months after I came back, there was an exhibition at a museum in Utrecht, the city where I live. It was about Christianity and Slavery. It showed the link between slavery and religion, about the role of the Dutch Reformed Church, and also the hypocrisy of Christianity, which promoted the idea that 'a Christian cannot be a slave, because that is not what God wants. So, as long as we do not convert them, they are not Christians and we are allowed to keep them as slaves . . . .' It brought me back to the castles in Elmina and Cape Coast, where the Christians were celebrating their Sunday services *literally* on top of the dungeons where slaves were kept. How can such complexities be resolved?

As we visited Cape Coast Castle with the TWP group, a couple of days after me and my friend went to Elmina, I somehow felt a bit relieved. Unlike Elmina Castle, this castle had not been inhabited or used by the Dutch, but by the British. It made me feel less responsible, in a way, though seeing and hearing about the horror that took place there of course did not make things better.

Exiting Cape Coast Castle I noticed another Dutch sign. This time it was not about slavery, or the Dutch involvement in it. Unexpectedly, in the midst of the tourist shops, the sign read: *In dit huis krijg je de beste koffie van de hele wereld*, 'in this house you get the best coffee in the whole world'. It was a café

owned by a Dutchman and, obviously, we had to go in to try the coffee. Sitting in the nice atmosphere, adorned with local art and Dutch coffee grinders, I was sipping the coffee that was indeed, by my 'coffee snob' standards, quite good. And I wondered: is this a way of paying back to the community, or simply a(nother) opportunistic business opportunity by the Dutch in Ghana? As a real coffee lover, I like to think the first. But either way, it was an unexpected cultural juxtaposition in castle grounds.

This certainly was not the usual 'work trip,' but as 'a Dutchwoman in Ghana,' it left me with a lot to consider.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 98–99

Reflections

Personal Reflection:
History, Identity, and National Reform

Donald CHAMBERS [1]

Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica; Antilles Episcopal Conference
frdon63@hotmail.com

The recent gathering of the Transatlantic Writing Programme in Jamaica brought together Christian academics from West Africa, Jamaica/Caribbean, and Euro-America to delve into the complexities of writing from an African and Afro-Caribbean perspective. At the start of the workshop, we had a presentation and discussion led by Deacon Ronnie Thwaites,[2] which centred on the importance of reshaping the meaning of the Middle Passage and reclaiming Jamaica's story from a largely Eurocentric theological viewpoint. That reclaiming entails stronger and deeper connections with our African heritage.

One of the thought-provoking presentations was delivered by Anglican priest Fr Garfield Campbell, a doctoral researcher, who shared his poignant experiences of navigating the British and Caribbean historical archives. He likened his archival journey to an "Anamnesis: Wading into Imperial Archives," drawing parallels to the liturgical expression of recalling and re-enacting the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. His emotional and spiritual journey through the imperial archives unearthed the harrowing accounts of three enslaved women subjected to sexual, physical, and emotional abuse by plantation oppressors. One of those abusers was Governor Sligo, from which the name Sligoville originated.[3] However, the accounts of these women, whose names are little known, challenge the prevailing narrative of enslaved women's

[1] Father Donald Chambers, S.T.D. (Doctor of Sacred Theology), a Catholic priest and theological educator, was a participant in the TWP. Father Don is a Diocesan Priest from the Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica and currently is the General Secretary for the Antilles Episcopal Conference.

[2] *Editorial note*: Reverend Deacon Ronald Thwaites is the Principal and Lecturer in Church History at St Michael's College and Seminary, one of the TWP's Jamaican institutional host partners.

[3] Sligoville is a community in the Jamaican Parish of St Catherine, approximately ten miles from Spanish Town.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/bcc4xg26
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

fight against oppression and their resilience.

In subsequent discussion, one of the project mentors, Prof. Anna Kasafi Perkins, echoed the need for Jamaicans to confront our history by re-educating ourselves about the names given to places and streets. She shed light on the origin of the name Sabina Park, which traces back to the tragic sacrifice by Sabina (a woman enslaved by George William Gordon's father[4]) of her child because she refused to allow the child to grow up in slavery. Perkins asked, "Will Fr Campbell's research unearth further details of her story and others like it?"

In light of National Heritage Week, these profound insights raise pertinent questions about Jamaica's approach to constitutional reform and its relationship to stories like these. Should the discourse on constitutional reform not be rooted in a deeper understanding of Jamaica's history? Can meaningful constitutional reform be achieved without addressing the enduring legacy of oppression embedded in the names of streets, civil parishes, and towns?

It is evident that National Heritage Week and constitutional reform can only be truly transformative if accompanied by a deliberate effort to reassess the historical narratives embedded in the names of places and streets and educate Jamaicans about their origins. The act of naming is intrinsically linked to identity. As the nation undergoes a constitutional transformation process, it must be accompanied by acknowledging and reassessing the narratives that shape our identity, which, in turn, shape our behaviour and our notion of God.

In essence, the ongoing conversation about constitutional reform in Jamaica must be complemented by an earnest endeavour to confront the historical implications of names. To do otherwise is to risk trimming the constitutional reform tree. At the same time, its roots remain grounded in ignorance of our history of enslavement and oppression that marks the very landscape we traverse daily.

[4] Jamaican businessman and politician George William Gordon (1820–1865) was born to a white planter and an enslaved mother; he was known as a critic of the colonial government and more latterly seen as a precursor to Jamaican nationalism. For a brief biography, see "George William Gordon," *The British Museum*, n.d., https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG185540. For further discussion, see, for example, "Jamaica Papers, No. 1: Facts and Documents Relating to the Alleged Rebellion in Jamaica and the Measures of Repression (London: Jamaica Committee, 1866), archived at Jamaican Family Search Genealogy Research Library, n.d., https://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Members/brebel05.htm

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 100–101

Reflections

"Writing a Careful Study of What Took Place": *A Reflection from the Transatlantic Writing Workshop in Jamaica*

Stephen USHER [1]

University of the West Indies and the United Theological College of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica; United Church in Jamaica and the Caymen Islands
usher.stephenj@gmail.com

Oral history will die with the one to whom it is known if it is not passed on to the next generation. Therefore, if we do not write about our experiences, our history will die with us, or it will be written on our behalf. If that happens, whoever tells your story will have the power to introduce you to the world in a way that can potentially misrepresent your life experiences and values. The Transatlantic Writing Project workshop, hosted in Jamaica by the United Theological College of the West Indies and St Michael's College and Seminary (August 2024), where I served as a student aide, was an eye-opening and inspirational experience for me. I learned that it is important for us as Caribbean people to record our life experiences and to add our voices to the growing body of theological literature being produced locally and globally.

To begin with, the session that resonated with me most was during a morning devotional exercise, in which Rev. Dr Daniel Eshun discussed the significance of adding our voices to the extensive body of literature that reflects lived transatlantic experiences. He employed the first four verses from the Gospel according to Luke as an illustration:

> Many people have tried to tell the story of what God has done among us. They wrote what we had been told by the ones who were there in the beginning and saw what happened. So I made a careful study of everything and then decided to write and tell you exactly what took place. Honourable Theophilus, I have done this to let you know the truth about what you have heard. (Luke 1:1, CEV)

[1] Stephen Usher, a student aide for the Jamaica TWP workshop, is a third year theological student at the University of the West Indies with the United Theological College of the West Indies (both in Kingston, Jamaica) and third year student minister in the United Church in Jamaica and the Caymen Islands.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/99tjg531
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

With that, we were encouraged, and I was inspired as Luke was in his own era, to carefully record our stories and the stories of others in our communities, whom the world is yet to know, so that others may know the truth of our experiences. As Luke writes, "many have tried to tell these stories," but we need to write our own.

Furthermore, I felt strongly motivated to seize the opportunity to contribute to the rich tapestry of academic literature that I know can be produced in my region and by extension the Transatlantic community. At first when I listened to the presentations on academic research and writing, it all felt daunting and out of reach, but I promised myself that over my next few years of study, I will learn and harness the skills that will allow me to contribute to rigorous research and academic writing and that will educate and inspire others.

In conclusion, I have developed a profound understanding of and appreciation for the process of writing as an academic and spiritual discipline. Additionally, I recognize the importance of articulating the Caribbean lived experience, which serves as a historical record and witness to our tenacity and vitality as people, and a firsthand historical record that will inform and inspire future generations.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 102–103

Reflections

Personal Reflection:
Weaving in the Thread of Head and Heart

Donald CHAMBERS [1]

Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica; Antilles Episcopal Conference
frdon63@hotmail.com

At the end of the Transatlantic Writing Workshop (Jamaica), one of the project mentors, Prof. Janice McLean-Farrell, invited us to reflect on the following question: "What are the threads you take back to weave into the other threads of the fabric you are making through your writing?"

In response, I shared that the Transatlantic Writing Workshop provided an intellectual and emotional safe space to engage in authentic conversations among diverse yet similar realities while building community, giving birth to profound insights, understanding, respect, trust, and effective solidarity, all of which are critical in the arena of academic writing.

When I was embarking on graduate studies in theology, a wise theologian counselled me, saying, "Experience is the raw material for academic studies." Only recently, and with the help of the TWP, did I discover that my interpretation of the notion of "experience" was limited: more precisely, it was devoid of the emotional dimension. The tearful emotional responses of my African colleagues to the visit of the tombs of the enslaved at the Seville Heritage Park, St Ann's, Jamaica, and the infectious ripple effect on me, reinforced the crucial importance of the emotional dimension of experience in shaping academic writing, giving it further relevance and legitimacy.

The inclusion of the emotional dimension in academic writing is contrary to the trend of our inherited British philosophy of education in the Caribbean. In this cultural context, males are socialised to devalue our emotions, and conditioned to believe that negative emotions, such as fear, are undesirable.

[1] Father Donald Chambers, S.T.D. (Doctor of Sacred Theology), a Catholic priest and theological educator, was a participant in the TWP. Father Don is a Diocesan Priest from the Archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica and currently is the General Secretary for the Antilles Episcopal Conference.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/4k5q8h64
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

Thus, the seat of emotions, in an Anglo-Saxon imperialistic mindset, has no contribution to offer to academic research and writing.

However, authentic conversation within the TWP became an unexpected safe space for the marriage of head and heart. This writing project was not for armchair theologians but for women and men actively engaged in the raw historical and contemporary experience of African and Caribbean people rooted in a holistic response to enslavement and colonization, and the mutual desire to engage in repair.

Ritually placing our pens on the graves of our ancestors at the Seville Heritage Park while weeping over the terrible atrocities of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, including the contributions of our West African ancestors,[2] represented our commitment to using our academic skills to access resources to creatively reconstruct and "re-member" the Middle Passage in contemporary times. For me, the marriage of the head and heart in academic research and writing is the thread I take back to weave into the other threads of the fabric of my writing.

[2] *Editor's note*: The complexities of these West African contributions were touched on in different ways in in the project, including an acknowledgement and apology from the Chief of Cape Coast (Osabarimba Dr Kwesi Atta II, the *Omanhene* [Paramount Chief] of Oguaa Traditional Area, Cape Coast) regarding the participation of some local chiefs in facilitating the trafficking of West Africans; to the recognizable Akan names and acknowledged West African heritage and presence through enslaved West Africans in Jamaica.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 104–106

Poetic Reflections

Redeeming Memory, Reclaiming Voice:
A Theological Reflection on Creative Writing in the Post-Transatlantic-Slave-Trade Context

Victor ATTA-BAFFOE [1]

Bishop of Cape Coast, Anglican Church of Ghana
victorattabaffoe@yahoo.com

Introduction

In the long shadow of the Transatlantic slave trade, the Church today stands at a crucial intersection of memory, healing, and hope. For theological students and pastors, particularly those committed to the work of justice and liberation, the practice of writing and creative writing is not simply an aesthetic endeavour but a sacred vocation — one that invites us to engage history not as detached observers but as wounded healers and prophetic witnesses.

Theological Imagination in the Shadow of Empire

The legacy of the Transatlantic trade is not merely historical — it is spiritual. It has shaped theological paradigms, ecclesial structures, and even the way Christian scripture has been interpreted and weaponized. In the light of that, creative writing and reflecting becomes a tool for decolonizing the imagination. It offers a way to re-narrate the gospel through the lens of the oppressed, to interrogate inherited theological frameworks, and to reframe scripture in the language of liberation.

Creative writing offers a unique space for the theological imagination to confront historical trauma with redemptive possibility. The legacy of the slave trade is not only etched in economic and political systems; it lives in the ruptured narratives of identity, land, language, and faith. Yet in the aftermath of such dehumanizing horror, the act of writing becomes an act of resistance —

[1] The Most Reverend Dr Victor Atta-Baffoe is the Anglican Bishop of Cape Coast, and former Dean of St Nicholas Seminary. He graciously facilitated the TWP partnership in Ghana with St Nicholas Theological Seminary.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/ytarhc32
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

an act of remembering rightly, of reclaiming dignity, and of re-articulating God's liberative presence among oppressed peoples.

Memory as a Sacred Mandate

As pastoral leaders and students of theology, we are called to tell the truth. But truth-telling is not merely about factual recounting; it is about *faithful remembering.* It is about lamenting the silences and distortions of history, while also lifting up the voices that were once buried beneath colonial violence and racial oppression. In this sense, creative writing becomes a liturgical act; a way of naming the sacred in the everyday lives of those whose stories were stolen or silenced.

Pastoral ministry in a post-slavery world cannot be disconnected from the work of memory. Creative writing enables us to hold space for lament: not as an end in itself, but as a bridge to justice. Lament, in the biblical tradition, is an act of faith. It acknowledges both the reality of suffering and the hope of divine intervention. When pastors and theologians engage in writing that draws from the deep well of historical pain, they are not re-traumatizing the present; they are redeeming the past.

Creativity as Pastoral Care and Prophetic Witness

To write creatively in a post-slavery context is also to engage in theological reconstruction. We must ask: what does it mean to preach a gospel of liberation in a world still haunted by the chains of the past? How do we reimagine biblical texts through the lens of the enslaved, the exiled, the dispossessed? What new metaphors of hope might arise when we allow the wounded body of Christ to speak through the suffering bodies of history?

Our calling is not simply to preserve memory but to reanimate it with purpose and possibility. We write to remind the Church that the faith of the enslaved was not passive or peripheral. It was a radical defiance of despair and a courageous proclamation of dignity in the face of dehumanization.[2] For in shaping our creative voice, we sharpen our prophetic edge. We cultivate the capacity to speak truth with beauty, to confront injustice with imagination, and to proclaim the gospel with power rooted in lived experience.

[2] *Editorial Note:* For a helpful resource engaging the Christian faith and voices of enslaved Africans, see Barbara Omolade with Susan M. Felch, *Faith Confronts Evil: From Birthmothers to Holy Women, African American Christian Women, 1619–1865*, Afterword by William James Jennings (Eugene, Oregon, USA: Cascade Books, 2024).

Conclusion

In the spirit of those who endured and resisted, we write. In the memory of our ancestors whose stories were drowned in the middle passage or hidden in plantation fields, we reclaim voice. And in the promise of a God who liberates, restores, and resurrects, we press on — crafting words not only to remember the past but to transform the future.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 107–108

Poetic Reflections

Departure and Return

Emmanuel A. S. EGBUNU [1]

Archbishop of Lokoja, Anglican Church of Nigeria
Emmanuel.lokoja@gmail.com

A billion questions kept him awake
and nightmares choked his burdened repose.

The echoes of the painful cries that tore him
From his cradle
Oscillated with the grim faces
that set him on the journey to an open grave:
Affection and betrayal were the tangled mysteries —
And he wondered: Were the gods in slumber?

In his limbo
The stream of endless nightmares and hallucinations
Poured over his limping soul
As he strained to catch a glimpse of the ancestors.

And then his inconsolable loss:
In whose arms was his betrothed now conquered?
Oh, that love that propelled the wings of his youthful passion
to heroic feats until this captivity
turned him into a living dead.

Overhead, he heard strange songs and prayers
to an unknown God —
All so heavenly and so hellish
Like the routine of day and night

[1] The Most Reverend Dr Emmanuel Egbunu was a TWP participant and joined the Ghana TWP workshop. He is the Diocesan Bishop of Lokoja, Nigeria and the Pioneer Archbishop of the Anglican Province of Lokoja.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/r9jkb410
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

He saw human faces with hearts of dragons.
His taste buds were dead, his appetite numb.
The sounds of night could not drown
the scorching reveries of home;
Moonlight sneaked through the tiny window
mocking him with sad reminiscences
Of wedding songs and dances and poisoned arrows
that still haunted.

If only he knew the language of the ocean —
This final refuge of countless warriors
Whose voices have mastered the language of silence
and aborted dreams
He would confide his wishes to the pulsating tides.

Then the moon frowned
And the stars wept
And the sun wailed
At the murder of humanity by their humans
Where hopes and dreams were smothered
without mourners or requiems.

II
We return to the empty dungeons
With bleeding souls.
We feel the breath of the wandering ghosts
as we seek to trace the buried pathways
To our lost roots.

We return with the touch of heaven's wounded Healer
Caressing our souls
Finding new names
New siblings
New vistas
New pathways
New homes.

This hope conquers loss
As life conquers death.

A new journey beckons on us
To wipe our tears
To smile at a new dawn
To make flutes from dry bones.

Emmanuel A. S. Egbunu
Reflections of the visit to the Cape Coast Castle, Ghana in July 2024

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 109

Poetic Reflections

An Experience to Remember

Jacqueline PORTER [1]

St Joseph's Teachers' College, Kingston, Jamaica
porterjacqueline61@gmail.com

From Cape Coast to Kingston the journey was made,
Across the wide expanse of the Atlantic Ocean travellers arrive.
The Middle Passage crossed not by force nor with bone deep fear,
But by choice, free will exercised to establish connections.

Across the years and down through time the ancestors gazed
Witnessing the various branches of their familial tree being united.
Stories shared, lives intertwined, and the beats of Mother Africa
resounded.
The descendants all responded and the shared joys and sorrows drew
all inside.

Seville — a journey to remember, an experience never to be forgotten.
In that Great House we walked the pages of history and became part
of the story.
Our ancestors reached through time and space to embrace us
as we listen.
We responded with tears which made the years disappear
and forever bound us.

Our journey testified to how remarkable we are as a people.
From different lands, with different stories, different lives are
now united.
The stories heard as children now take on new meaning because
now we know.
The stories of both the slaves and the slave masters are now equally
owned in our flesh.

[1] Jaqueline Porter was a participant in the TWP. A Roman Catholic by birth and by choice, she is a teacher-educator by profession. She is a member of Faculty in the Humanities Department of St Joseph's Teachers' College in Kingston, Jamaica.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/dsx0mf06
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 110

Poetic Reflections

When Trees Talk [1]

Anna Kasafi PERKINS [2]

ORCID: 0000-0001-7370-3661
The University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica;
St Michael's Theological College and Seminary, Kingston, Jamaica
anna.perkins@uwi.edu

Twin/ned saplings citrusy
greet
No navel strings buried
beneath
No wooden girth
to carve words of love's rebirth
heart-shaped.

Early yet for visits from
gossiping insect and avian throngs
Departing laden with golden treasure
Alight later distributing without measure
life-giving.

One Like Jah distant, barred
by fence, foundation, faith scarred
Yet Untied roots run deep intertwined
Arboreal talk enjoined
ever-lasting.

Anna Kasafi Perkins
27 January 2025

[1] *Editorial Note:* As noted in the introductory editorial of this issue (see p. 8), commemorative tree-plantings were part of the in-person TWP conferences. Pictured are the saplings planted at United Theological College of the West Indies (left) and at St Michael's College and Seminary, neighbouring institutions in Kingston, Jamaica.

[2] Professor Anna Kasafi Perkins, a Catholic scholar-activist, is a Senior Programme Officer with the Quality Assurance Unit at The University of the West Indies, Jamaica, and Adjunct Lecturer at St Michael's Theological College and Seminary. Prof. Perkins served as a project leader and writing mentor for the TWP.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/vy9d7047
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 111

Poetic Reflections

I will not stop [1]

Jessie Ini FUBARA-MANUEL[2]

ORCID: 0000-0001-8131-6055
Edinburgh Northwest Kirk, Church of Scotland, Edinburgh;
Essien Ukpabio Presbyterian Theological College, Itu, Nigeria
jessiebenebo@gmail.com

I will investigate
I will write
Weaving must continue
Ideas, theories, principles
I shall not stop

For the world today
For my ancestors
For my future generations
For myself
I will not stop

I have been connected
Surrounded by multiple of witnesses
I have become accountable
I have the resources
I cannot stop

I have divine help
I have human support
This is my mission call
This is now my ministry
I must not stop

[1] *Editorial Note:* This poem was first shared at a feedback session in Jamaica, at the conclusion of our in-person TWP workshop there.

[2] The Reverend Dr Jessie Ini Fubara-Manuel, a Presbyterian minister and participant in the TWP, is currently the Pastoral Assistant, Edinburgh Northwest Kirk Church of Scotland, Edinburgh. She also serves as Adjunct Lecturer, Essien Ukpabio Presbyterian Theological College, Itu, Nigeria.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/m9pck774
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 112

Poetic Reflections

Illmetered

Taniecia McFarlane [1]

United Theological College of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica
taniemacf@outlook.com

I've always thought of myself as the kind of poet
Whose thoughts fit neatly within a particular construct.
And maybe that is just my way indeed.
I do not know for sure that I will or won't stick with it.
But sometimes, I have more to say
Than can be neatly nestled into rhyme and rhythm.
And isn't that the theme of my life?
Have I not always felt like a misfit?
How often have I contorted who I am
To fit where I did not belong?
What about the times . . . . all those times
When I dumbed down to keep my thoughts
Within the cadence of rhythms not created with me in mind,
Or held back my own words when
They found no rhymes in the words of others?
Maybe the time has come for
Me to realise that the poetry of my life
Is far more illmetered than I would prefer.
Perhaps, I would no longer be constrained
By the tentacles of imposter syndrome
If I pursue a more upright sense of the times
When I am truly the whole song and dance
That God created me to be,
And who I now need to become.

[1] The Reverend Taniecia McFarlane is the Baptist Warden and lecturer in Biblical and Pastoral studies at United Theological College of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica. She joined the TWP as a participant.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/qxna9r38
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 113–114

Poetic Reflections

Prayer for a New Day

Emmanuel A. S. EGBUNU [1]

Archbishop of Lokoja, Anglican Church of Nigeria
Emmanuel.lokoja@gmail.com

When the wounds of yesterday
Bleed anew today
Heal again, O Lord, this fragile lump of clay.

When hatred wells up like unrelenting rain
With inconsolable pain
Teach us, O Lord, the path to eternal gain

When the embrace from today's sister or brother
Seems like being smothered by a deranged mother
Enable, O Lord, the liberating love for one another

When the journey to a new world seems so long
And we are imprisoned by the barriers of tribe and tongue
Let us hear, O Lord, the melody of Your new song

When our hearts are weighed down
And what we see everywhere is a frown
Give us, O Lord, a vision of the victor's crown

Let the sun upon our faces
Be the blending of our races

Let the shackles upon our affections
Become the ornaments of our new complexions

Let the love that won from death our new life
Be the love that frees mankind from every strife

[1] The Most Reverend Dr Emmanuel Egbunu was a TWP participant and joined the Ghana TWP workshop. He is the Diocesan Bishop of Lokoja, Nigeria and the Pioneer Archbishop of the Anglican Province of Lokoja.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/70sqwe78
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

Emmanuel A. S. Egbunu

Prayer for a New Day

Hear us, O God the Father
Hear us, O God the Son
Hear us, O God the Spirit

AMEN.

Emmanuel A. S. Egbunu

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 115–120

Liturgical Reflections

Tears in a Bottle — Ghana[1]

For Celebration by the Transatlantic Writing Project at St Nicholas Theological Seminary, Prior to Visiting Cape Coast Castle, July 2024

Nicole ASHWOOD

United Church of Jamaica;
Just Community of Women and Men, World Council of Churches,
Cayman Islands

Janice A. MCLEAN-FARRELL[2]

ORCID: 0000-0001-8498-557x
New Brunswick Theological Seminary,
New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA
jmclean-farrell@nbts.edu

Anna Kasafi PERKINS[3]

ORCID: 0000-0001-7370-3661
The University of the West Indies
Kingston, Jamaica;
St Michael's Theological College
and Seminary, Kingston, Jamaica
anna.perkins@uwi.edu

Drumming — *Calling us to worship*

Processional *with Bible, large ornamental bottle, water container with stones and seeds, and a candle, which are arranged on the altar.*

---

[1] This is Adapted from Nicole Ashwood's unpublished *Tears in a Bottle Liturgy for Trauma Transformation;* used with permission. Reverend Ashwood is the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands *Programme Executive – Just Community of Women and Men, World Council of Churches.* Any quotations should likewise reference Reverend Ashwood's original contribution.

[2] Professor Janice A. McLean-Farrell is the Dirck Romeyn Associate Professor of Metro-Urban Ministry and Associate Dean of Doctoral Studies at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA, and served as a TWP project leader and writing mentor.

[3] Professor Anna Kasafi Perkins, a Catholic scholar-activist, is a Senior Programme Officer with the Quality Assurance Unit at The University of the West Indies, Jamaica, and Adjunct Lecturer at St Michael's Theological College and Seminary. Prof. Perkins served as a project leader and writing mentor for the TWP.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/66acab54

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

Opening Praise

Listening to Jo-Ann Faith Richards (a Jamaican music artist), "Klier di Wie" [Jamaican: 'Clear the Way'], *Kom Mek Wi Worship* ['Come Let Us Worship'] (2012).[4]

Prayer of Approach

Leader 1: Holy God, God of Hagar the enslaved, we gather, recognizing that You are God above all others; You are God of the oppressed, whose spirits seek solace and rest and comfort, amidst the ongoing trauma of enslavement, abuse, exploitation and harassment.

We welcome You into this space: transform it as You transform us from pain, and shame, and disappointment, and dis-ease. Open doors of release as we gather in this space of re-membering. We pray, in Jesus's name.

Congregational song — "It's me, It's me, It's me, O Lord
(Standing in the need of prayer)"

It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord,
Standing in need of Prayer (x2)

Not the slaver, not the owner; no, it's me, O Lord,
Standing in need of Prayer (x2)

It's Me, It's Me, It's Me O Lord,
Standing in Need of Prayer (x2)

Responsorial Reading *adapted from Isaiah (based upon chapters 40, 41, 61)*

Leader 1: Peace! Be comforted my people, says your God. Receive my assurance that your enslavement has ended, that I am Your ransom. Because you are my redeemed, you can return with singing, to wholeness, for this is the time of my favour, as I offer to comfort you as you mourn.

Congregational Response:
LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me.

Leader 2: Don't be afraid, for I am with you. I have taken you from the ends of the earth and called you from its most distant places. I said to you, 'You are my servant.' I've chosen you; I haven't rejected you. So don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.

[4] An audio recording is available at https://youtu.be/wtdYxuww4mQ?si=2cBcdiinfBSl3lUj&t=1756

Congregational Response:
LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me.

Leader 3: Be at Peace! The Sovereign Lord is here, and God's Spirit is with us. This day God will anoint us to receive the good news. Today, God is binding up the broken hearts and has proclaimed freedom to the thousandth generation of those held captive by enslavement and will release all who desire God from the chains of trauma. This is the year of the Lord's favour and comfort for all who mourn. Let us receive God's crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

Congregational Response:
LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me.

Ritual of Healing

Meditation Song

Listen to Jimmy Cliff, "Many Rivers to Cross" (1969).[5]

Leader 1: O Lord, we lament the dehumanizing nature of enslavement and the enduring trauma the transatlantic slave trade has caused. We confess that we carry the scars of generational trauma, from the deep wounds that seem to have taken over our hearts and minds.

Leader 2: Our foreparents were carried across many waters from the life they knew, loved and cherished to a new life that signified betrayal, enslavement. From across the African and Asian continents they came, forced into degradation and squalor. Denied dignity, agency or autonomy, generations later, many still carry the shame of servitude.

Raped

Shackled

Brutalized

Forced to stay in cramped spaces,

Not fit for one person to live . . .

Brought to the castles by raiders who might not have imagined the horrors – 200 people packed like animals in each room; with no light nor air but for a one-foot square hole barred with a wooden beam.

Leader 3: Nearby villagers knew that the castles were points of no return. They were haunted by ghastly, ghostly sounds echoing through the forests

[5] Jimmy Cliff (1944–2025) was a Jamaican musician and singer who popularized reggae internationally. Numerous recordings of "Many Rivers to Cross" are available.

— by the cries and despair of the inhabitants, testimony to the worst of which humankind is capable. The stench of human suffering in the dungeons is palpable: a combination of urine, faeces, death fill the air in the dungeons. And in the not-so-still sea breezes one hears/imagines the sound of worshippers . . .

Listen to Greg Gilpin, "Over My Head, I Hear Music in the Air" (2023).[6]

Over my head; I hear music in the air (x3)
There must be a God somewhere

Leader 2: The contradiction of a loving God preached in Christianity and the reality of a Chapel sitting on top of dungeons where enslaved men and women were kept under conditions not even pigs deserve, by persons who claimed superiority by virtue of their Christian belief. It is an experience that does not end with the end of the tour; it stays with us.

Over my head; I hear music in the air (x3)
There must be a God somewhere

Leader 1: The door of no return still traumatizes even now when people can walk through it and return. Yet we must return. To tell others, to safeguard against continued heresies/atrocities; to ensure the restoration of dignity for those millions of lives lost; to secure reparation for those who survived.

Leader 2: In many religions, water carries spiritual significance representing purification, cleansing and life. And Eden, the biblical cradle of humanity, was framed around four rivers. The very same river that provided supernatural healing for Naaman, became the baptismal font for Jesus. He also presented Himself as Living Water that quenches every thirst.

Leader 3: But water, recognized as healing and spiritually refreshing, has also been a source of pain and suffering. For the waters of the Atlantic, like the waters of the Nile, were the graveyard for innocent Africans. Some threw themselves overboard, some were discarded as waste stock, some made it across physically. The malaise and dis-ease of the filthy berths, rare access to sunlight, water, or healthy food, combined with the de-humanizing attitudes of the enslavers has wrought trauma from which we are still recovering. Yet, there is Hope.

Leader 1: Come. Come to the water of restoration, and receive a healing balm for your soul. Come to the water and pour your tears in a bottle. Come to the water, and secure strength for the journey. (Participants invited to come forward to engage the elements on the altar).

[6] An audio recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdvPt6B90cU

As you come forward, dip your finger in the water and use it as you feel comfortable to mark yourself.

Leader 2: Take a stone/pebble from the waters to carry with you and to anchor you as you visit the Castle, when the experience gets overwhelming.

Leader 3: Take some seeds — symbolizing the transformation you offer by rejecting the vestiges of mental and physical slavery in both lands.

Leader 1: I take a moment to light a candle, symbolizing the light of hope and healing that we seek.

Leader 2: We will take the bottle with us to the Castle, to hold our tears and remind ourselves that God sees our tears, and suffers alongside of us, as God did with our ancestors beginning five centuries ago.

Prayer for Healing

Leader 1: Holy God, they were allowed to place whips on our backs, they justified their actions by presenting us as nonhuman and villains in Your name.

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 2: When we feel their pain anew and face their trauma, their resilience, the strength to overcome

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 3: When the urge to retaliate in kind rises up, help us to leave vengeance to You.

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 1: For the transformation of our trauma into a commitment to justice,

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 2: As we prepare to visit these sites of historical significance, immeasurable pain, and trauma, let us invoke God's intervention to transform our grief into understanding, action, and the relentless pursuit of justice for the marginalized and oppressed.

Congregational Response:
We commit ourselves to healing, transformation, and justice.

Leader 3: Close your eyes, hold your stones and take a deep breath. As you breathe in, imagine the names of those whose history must be written and

rewritten; breathing in the strength and resilience of those who endured. Now breathe out, taking care to exhume the past, letting it inform the present and rewrite the future.

Closing Prayer

All:
Healing God, as we journey to these sites, trouble the waters of reparatory justice; fill us with Your peace and strength to move past the anger and trauma. Let Your power fall on us to be Your agents of reconciliation between the past and present; we pray, in Jesus's name. Amen.

Closing Hymn

Max Romeo, "Let the Power Fall (on Me)," (1971).[7]

[7] Max Romeo (1944–2025) was a Jamaican reggae and roots reggae musician and singer. An audio recording of "Let the Power Fall" is available at https://youtu.be/yAYGlyH113o?si=r3rB_7RZuzp-28mH

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 121–128

Liturgical Reflections

Ecumenical Service of Reflection and Reconciliation[1]

Daniel Justice ESHUN[2]
ORCID: 0009-0008-3398-0507
Whitelands College, Roehampton University, London, England
D.Eshun@roehampton.ac.uk

Sara J. FRETHEIM[3]
ORCID: 0000-0002-6377-587x
Lincoln Bishop University
Lincoln, England
editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

At Christ Church Anglican Cathedral
Cape Coast, Ghana
July 2024

A moment of silent reflection

Lighting of the Candles *to dispel all darkness and shine into the future*

Poem: "All my friends are exiles" by Ghanaian poet Abena Busia,[4] read by Miss

[1] This ecumenical service was collaboratively designed and compiled for the occasion with input from select TWP leaders/participants, St Nicholas Seminary students/staff, and clergy from Christ Church Anglican Cathedral, Cape Coast, Ghana. The prayers of intercession were co-written for the occasion by Daniel Justice Eshun and Sara J. Fretheim. Should this liturgy be used or adapted in part or in whole, please include the following attribution: *Title:* "Ecumenical Service of Reflection and Reconciliation," *Author:* TransAtlantic Writing Project (TWP), Cape Coast, Ghana, 2024. "Prayers of Intercession" by Daniel Justice Eshun and Sara J. Fretheim.

[2] The Reverend Dr Daniel Justice Eshun is the Anglican Dean of Chapel and Senior Lecturer, Whitelands College, Roehampton University, London. He was a project leader and writing mentor with the TWP.

[3] Dr Sara Fretheim, TWP coordinator, project leader, and writing mentor, is a Research Fellow, World Religions and Education Research Unit, Lincoln Bishop University, Lincoln, England.

[4] Previously published in "Poems from *Testimonies of Exile*," in "FonTomFrom: Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film," ed. Kofi Anyidoho and James

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/sabwev36

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

Felicity Abbey (Head Girl, Quaque Girls' School, Cape Coast, Ghana).

All my friends are exiles

All my friends are exiles,
born in one place, we live in another
and with true sophistication,
rendezvous
in most surprising places –
where you would never expect to find us.

Between us we people the world.

With aplomb and a command of languages,
we stride across continents
with the self-assurance of those who know
with absolute certainty
where they come from.

With the globe at our command,[5]
we have everywhere to go,
but home.

Hymn: "Psalm 23: The Lord's My Shepherd"[6]

1. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
   He makes me down to lie
   In pastures green: he leadeth me
   the quiet waters by.

2. My soul he doth restore again;
   and me to walk doth make

Gibbs, special issue, *Matatu: Journal for African Literary and Cultural Studies* 21–22 (2000): 261–262, https://doi.org/10.1163/18757421-90000327, 261. Used with permission. See also Abena P. A. Busia, *Testimonies of Exile* (Trenton, New Jersey, USA: Africa World Press, 1990), 11. This volume of poetry is still in print, and available from the publisher at https://africaworldpressbooks.com/testimonies-of-exile-by-abena-p-a-busia/

Abena Busia is a Ghanaian diplomat, poet, and professor of Literature and Women's Studies. Her family fled Ghana for the Netherlands as a child in the late 1950s due to political instability and her father's role as the leader of the opposition against Kwame Nkrumah. She has subsequently divided her time between the US and the UK.

[5] The issue of *Matatu* introduced a typographical error, repeating the word "our" in this line, which we have corrected.

[6] Source: "Hymns and Devotions for Daily Worship #150b," Hymnary.org, n.d., https://hymnary.org/hymn/HDDW2024/150b; originally from *Psalms of David in Meeter* (1650), also known as the *Scottish Psalter*.

Within the paths of righteousness,
ev'n for his own name's sake.

3. Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear none ill:
For thou art with me; and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.

4. My table thou hast furnishèd
In presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

5. Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me,
And in God's house forever more
My dwelling place shall be.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:1–12 (NIV)

[1] Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, [2] and he began to teach them.

He said:

[3] "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[4] Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

[5] Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

[6] Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

[7] Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

[8] Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

[9] Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

[10] Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[11] "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. [12] Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Poem: "We have come home," by Lenrie Peters.[7]

Note:
Lenrie Peters (1932–2009) was born in Gambia to a Sierra Leonean Creole father of Caribbean or Black American origin and a Gambian Creole mother of Sierra Leonean Creole origins.

Hymn: "I Need Thee Every Hour" [8]

1 I need Thee ev'ry hour,
most gracious Lord;
no tender voice like Thine
can peace afford.

Refrain:
I need Thee, O I need Thee;
ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to Thee.

2 I need Thee ev'ry hour,
stay Thou nearby;
temptations lose their pow'r
when Thou art nigh.

[Refrain]

3 I need Thee ev'ry hour,
in joy or pain;
come quickly and abide,
or life is vain.

[Refrain]

[7] Editorial note: we do not have permission to reprint this poem, but would encourage readers to take the opportunity to look it up and reflect upon Peters's powerful words and how they resonate in this liturgy.

[8] Refrain lyrics and music by Robert Lowry (1872); verse lyrics by Annie S. Hawks (1872).

4 I need Thee ev'ry hour,
teach me Thy will;
and Thy rich promises
in me fulfill.

[Refrain]

5 I need Thee ev'ry hour,
most Holy One;
O make me Thine indeed,
Thou blessed Son.

[Refrain]

Prayers of Intercession:[9]

Read by Sara Fretheim, Daniel Eshun, Anna Kasafi Perkins, Joshua Barron, Janice McLean-Farrell, and Confidence Bansah (TWP Co-Leaders)

1) WE lay a stone of faith. God of **FAITH**,
nurture our faith in ways that enable us to reflect critically on our own faith,
And respect one another's faith,
Moving forward together in harmony.
God of Faith,
Hear our prayers.

2) WE lay a stone of hope. God of **HOPE,**
as we can only see through a glass darkly,
may we never lose our hope
in your transformative and resurrecting power.
May all traumatized by conflict, war, poverty, generational pain, and environmental disasters,
See beyond the present with transcendent hope.
God of Hope,
Hear our prayers.

[9] Written for the occasion by Daniel Justice Eshun and Sara J. Fretheim.

3) WE lay a stone of love. God of **LOVE,**

love is your essence, and You have created us in Your image of love.

As we gaze on the face of the Other, may we see Your love reflected there,

Even as we seek to reflect it in our own lives.

Where we have devalued Your image of Love in ourselves and in others,

we humbly repent.

God of Love,

Hear our prayers.

4) WE lay a stone of justice. God of Love and Hope:

JUSTICE is Your love in action, seeking the dignity and welfare of all.

May we consistently strive to act justly ourselves,

And passionately pursue justice for all who are denied it.

And may Your Spirit always remind us

That Justice is love in public.

God of JUSTICE,

Hear our prayers.

5) WE lay a stone of mercy. God of Justice, You call us to act justly and to love **MERCY**.

May we always remember the daily mercies we receive from You,

Our Creator and Redeemer,

And seek to generously extend the same to all we encounter in our daily lives.

Let the concepts of MERCY and JUSTICE never be reduced to mere words, but actions;

and neither to law but to love.

Where there is need for law,

Open our eyes always to see the Spirit and Law together.

God of MERCY,

Hear our prayers.

6) WE lay a stone of reconciliation. Sovereign Lord of history, in You all things hold together. Through Your love and mercy, you **RECONCILE** all of creation to Yourself.

As inheritors of this gift,

May Your example lead and enable us to seek healing and reconciliation

For ourselves and for the Other,

Where brokenness, trauma, and division have been perpetuated.

Our world is like a mosaic:

Full of brokenness and beauty.

May we never stop to admire where there is beauty,

And never stop seeking reconciliation where there is brokenness.

Sovereign Lord of History,

God of Faith, Hope, Love, Justice, Mercy, and Reconcilation:

Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Short Silence, followed by **The Lord's Prayer**.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: "O God Our Help in Ages Past"[10]

1. Our God, our help in ages past,
   Our hope for years to come,
   Our shelter from the stormy blast,
   And our eternal home:

2. Under the shadow of your throne
   Your saints have dwelt secure;
   Sufficient is your arm alone,
   And our defense is sure.

3. Before the hills in order stood
   Or Earth received her frame,
   From everlasting you are God,
   To endless years the same.

4. A thousand ages in your sight
   Are like an evening gone,
   Short as the watch that ends the night
   Before the rising sun.

5. Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
   Bears all its sons away;
   They fly, forgotten, as a dream
   Dies at the op'ning day.

6. Like flow'ry fields the nations stand,
   Pleased with the morning light;
   The flow'rs beneath the mower's hand
   Lie with'ring ere 'tis night.

7. Our God, our help in ages past,
   Our hope for years to come,
   Be thou our guard while troubles last
   And our eternal home.

Closing Prayers and Benediction: Very Rev. Peter Amoako-Gyampah

[10] Adopted from Psalm 90:1–5 by Isaac Watts (1674–1748) in 1719.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 129–134

Liturgical Reflections

Tears in a Bottle — Jamaica [1]

For Celebration by the Transatlantic Writing Project at the Tomb of the African Ancestors, Seville Great House, St. Ann's, Jamaica, August 2024

Nicole ASHWOOD

ORCID: 0000-0001-8498-557x
United Church of Jamaica;,
Just Community of Women and Men,
World Council of Churches,
Cayman Islands

Daniel Justice ESHUN [2]

ORCID: 0009-0008-3398-0507
Whitelands College, Roehampton University, London, England
D.Eshun@roehampton.ac.uk

Janice A. MCCLEAN-FARRELL [3]

ORCID: 0000-0001-8498-557x
New Brunswick Theological Seminary,
New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA
jmclean-farrell@nbts.edu

Anna Kasafi PERKINS [4]

ORCID: 0000-0001-7370-3661
The University of the West Indies
Kingston, Jamaica;
St Michael's Theological College and Seminary, Kingston, Jamaica
anna.perkins@uwi.edu

[1] This is Adapted from Nicole Ashwood's unpublished *Tears in a Bottle Liturgy for Trauma Transformation;* used with permission. Reverend Ashwood is the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands *Programme Executive – Just Community of Women and Men, World Council of Churches.* Any quotations should likewise reference Reverend Ashwood's original contribution.

[2] The Reverend Dr Daniel Justice Eshun is the Anglican Dean of Chapel and Senior Lecturer, Whitelands College, Roehampton University, London. He was a project leader and writing mentor with the TWP.

[3] Professor Janice A. Mclean-Farrell is the Dirck Romeyn Associate Professor of Metro-Urban Ministry and Associate Dean of Doctoral Studies at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA, and served as a TWP project leader and writing mentor.

[4] Professor Anna Kasafi Perkins, a Catholic scholar-activist, is a Senior Programme Officer with the Quality Assurance Unit at The University of the West Indies, Jamaica, and Adjunct Lecturer at St Michael's Theological College and Seminary. Prof. Perkins served as a project leader and writing mentor for the TWP.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/8w7rhr54

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

Procession

A silent procession is made to the graves of the enslaved with the Bible, a large container with water, a candle, and individual stones and our pens used at morning prayer, where we had heard a reflection from Daniel Justice Eshun on Luke 1:1 on "taking up our pens to write an orderly account."

Opening Praise

"Goodness of God" by Cece Winans[5]

Prayer of Approach:
Responsorial Reading adapted from Isaiah chapters 40, 41, and 61

Leader 1: Holy God, God of Hagar the enslaved, we gather, recognizing that You are God above all others, You are the God of the oppressed, whose spirits seek solace and rest and comfort, amidst the ongoing trauma of enslavement, abuse, exploitation, and harassment.

We welcome You into this space: transform it as You transform us from pain, and shame, and disappointment, and dis-ease. Open doors of release as we gather in this space of re-membering, we pray, in Jesus's name. Help us to name, tame, and reclaim our painful and traumatic history and transform it into a salvation history.

Congregational Response:
LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me.

Leader 1: Peace! Be comforted my people, says your God. Receive my assurance that your enslavement has ended, that I am Your ransom. Because you are my redeemed, you can return with singing, to wholeness, for this is the time of my favour, as I offer to comfort you as you mourn.

Congregational Response:
LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me.

Leader 2: Don't be afraid, for I am with you. I have taken you from the ends of the earth and called you from its most distant places. I said to you, 'You are my servant.' I've chosen you; I haven't rejected you. So don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.

Congregational Response:
LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me.

[5] An audio recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sE5kEnitqE

Leader 3: Be at Peace! The Sovereign Lord is here and God's Spirit is with us.

This day God will anoint us to receive the good news. Today, God is binding up the broken hearts, and has proclaimed freedom to the thousandth generation of those held captive by enslavement, and will release all who desire God from the chains of trauma. This is the year of the Lord's favour and comfort all who mourn. Let us receive God's crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

Congregational Response:
LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me.

Prayer of Thansgiving for the Ancestors

Each person names and says aloud an action or word describing the ancestors, whose faith and courage testifies to the liberating power of the God of their ancestors manifested in Jesus.

Ritual of Healing

Meditation Song

Listen to Jimmy Cliff, "Many Rivers to Cross" (1969).[6]

Leader 1: O Lord, we lament the dehumanizing nature of enslavement and the enduring trauma the transatlantic slave trade has caused. We confess that we carry the scars of generational trauma, from the deep wounds that seem to have taken over our hearts and minds.

Leader 2: Our foreparents were carried across many waters from the life they knew, loved and cherished to a new life that signified betrayal, enslavement. From across the African and Asian continents they came, forced into degradation and squalor. Denied dignity, agency, or autonomy, generations later, many still carry the shame of servitude.

Raped

Shackled

Brutalized

Forced to stay in cramped spaces,

Not fit for one person to live . . .

[6] Jimmy Cliff (1944–2025) was a Jamaican musician and singer who popularized reggae internationally. Numerous recordings of "Many Rivers to Cross" are available.

Brought to the castles by raiders who might not have imagined the horrors — 200 people packed like animals in each room; with no light nor air but for a one-foot square hole barred with a wooden beam.

Leader 3: Nearby villagers knew that the castles were points of no return. They were haunted by ghastly, ghostly sounds echoing through the forests — by the cries and despair of the inhabitants, testimony to the worst of which humankind is capable. The stench of human suffering in the dungeons is palpable: a combination of urine, faeces, death fill the air in the dungeons. And in the not-so-still sea breezes one hears/imagines the sound of worshippers . . .

Leader 2: The contradiction of a loving God preached in Christianity and the reality of a Chapel sitting on top of dungeons where enslaved men and women were kept under conditions not even pigs deserve, by persons who claimed superiority by virtue of their Christian belief, is an experience that does not end with the end of the tour; it stays with us.

Leader 1: The door of no return (and the dungeons of the ships) still traumatizes even now when people can walk through it and return or come by the shores of revival. Yet we must return. To tell others, to safeguard against continued heresies/atrocities; to ensure the restoration of dignity for those millions of lives lost; to secure reparation for those who survived.

Leader 2: In many religions, water carries spiritual significance representing purification, cleansing and life for adherents . . . And the Garden of Eden, the biblical cradle of humanity, was framed around four rivers. The very same river that provided supernatural healing for Naaman, became the baptismal font for Jesus. He also presented Himself as Living Water that quenches every thirst.

Leader 3: But water, recognized as healing and spiritually refreshing has also been a source of pain and suffering. For the waters of the Atlantic, like the Nile, were the graveyard for innocent Africans. Some threw themselves overboard, some were discarded as waste stock, some made it across physically. The malaise and dis-ease of the filthy berths, rare access to sunlight, water, or healthy food, combined with the de-humanizing attitudes of the enslavers has wrought trauma from which we are still recovering. Yet there is Hope.

Leader 1: Come. Come to the water of restoration, and receive a healing balm for your soul. Come to the water and pour your tears in a bottle. Come to the water, and secure strength for the journey.

[Participants invited to come forward to engage the elements on the altar.]

As you come forward, dip your finger in the water and use it to mark yourself. Let the water remind you of the turbulent pain of the Transatlantic journey and the healing power of God's grace.

Leader 2: Take a stone/pebble from the waters to anchor you when the experience gets overwhelming. Feel the pebble's roughness and its strength and be reminded of Jesus's exhortation to build our houses, including our African and Caribbean academic houses, on the solid rock of Jesus Christ.

Leader 3: Take your pen — symbolizing the power of transformation, placing it on the tombs of the ancestors, and listen to the divine call to "rewrite the Middle Passage with our academic writing."

Leader 1: I take a moment to light a candle, symbolizing the light of hope and healing that we seek.

Leader 2: We will take the water of container with us, to hold our tears and remind ourselves that God sees our tears and suffers alongside us as God did with our ancestors five centuries ago.

Prayer for Healing

Leader 1: Holy God, they were allowed to place whips on our backs, they justified their actions by presenting us as nonhuman and villains in Your name.

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 2: When we feel their pain anew and face their trauma, their resilience, the strength to overcome —

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 3: When the urge to retaliate in kind rises up, help us to leave vengeance to You.

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 1: For the transformation of our trauma into a commitment to justice,

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 2: As we prepare to visit these sites of historical significance and immeasurable pain and trauma, let us invoke God's intervention to transform our grief into understanding, action, and the relentless pursuit of justice for the marginalized and oppressed.

Congregational Response:
We commit ourselves to healing, transformation, and justice.

Leader 3: For the grace of forgiveness for the residents of this Seville and other so-called Great Houses who traumatised our ancestors through oppressive and repressive words and actions.

Congregational Response:
Lord, bring healing.

Leader 1: Close your eyes, hold your stones and take a deep breath. As you breathe in, imagine the names of those whose history must be written and rewritten; breathing in the strength and resilience of those who endured. Now breathe out, taking care to exhale the past, while letting it inform the present and rewrite the future.

Closing Prayer

All:
Healing God, as we have journeyed to this site, trouble the waters of reparatory justice; fill us with Your peace and strength to move past the anger and trauma. Let Your power fall on us to be Your agents of reconciliation between the past and present, we pray, in Jesus's name. Amen.

Closing Hymn

Max Romeo, "Let the Power Fall (on Me)," (1971).[7]

[7] Max Romeo (1944–2025) was a Jamaican reggae and roots reggae musician and singer. An audio recording of "Let the Power Fall" is available at https://youtu.be/yAYGlyH113o?si=r3rB_7RZuzp-28mH

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 135–142

Liturgical Reflections

Words, Weaving, and Reconciliation

Out of Many, One People [1]

Sara J. FRETHEIM [2]
Guest Editor
ORCID: 0000-0002-8960-8762
Lincoln Bishop University, Lincoln, England
editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

Strand One: Words

I have prepared this short reflection in the format of a few different strands, which I hope I can weave together in a way that will leave us with something meaningful by the end.[3]

So, the first strand: words. John's Gospel reminds us that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . and the Word became flesh and dwelled among us" (John 1:1–14, NIV). In fact, if we believe that Jesus is the Word of God; and if we believe that Jesus's life, death, and resurrection have effected transformational and reconciling change in the world, then we should agree that *words matter*. They have salvific power!

The late Ghanaian oral theologian and poet, Madam Afua Kuma (1908–1987), put it this way: "Jesus! You say it once and the matter is settled; in all the world, you have the final say."[4]

---

[1] This is adapted from material first presented as a talk for TWP morning chapel at St Michael's Seminary Chapel, Kingston, Jamaica, August 2024.

[2] Dr Sara Fretheim, TWP coordinator, project leader, and writing mentor, is a Research Fellow, World Religions and Education Research Unit, Lincoln Bishop University, Lincoln, England.

[3] During the talk, I shared a strip of woven Ghanaian *kente* cloth and invited listeners to pass it around, taking a look at it, feeling it, considering the colours, texture, patterns, and its beauty; and to pull it and consider its strength.

[4] Afua Kuma, in *Jesus of the Deep Forest: The Prayers and Praises of Afua Kuma*, ed. and trans. by Jon Kirby, (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1980), 32. See https://dacb.org/resources/bio-pdfs/ghana/afua-text.pdf for a PDF copy.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/ftvxp479

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

Strand One: Two

I have been interested to learn that the etymology of the words *text*, *textile*, and *texture* all come from the same Latin verb, *texere*, which means "to weave." It makes me think of this Ghanaian *kente* cloth we are looking at — all of these different colours and strands are woven together to create a pattern that, if you have the right code, conveys meaning, like text. As we have learned, *kente* patterns are not just artistic arrangements of colours but are a form of communication.[5]

Likewise, the words that I am speaking right now are a weaving together of vowels and consonants, in a way that your ears can meaningfully decode. Words as meaningful weavings of sound — it's an interesting thought.

Coming back to the *kente*, we further see that diverse strands and colours are needed for the overall pattern to make sense. An interesting thought to ponder: diversity as a necessary component of meaningful communication.

Finally, as you hold the *kente,* notice how it feels. As you are doing so, we might also think about its texture, and the texture of our words: are they rough, smooth, soft, frayed? It is clear that *kente* is not silk. It is not perfectly smooth but has some knotted, bobbly sections, and – if we are not careful — some fraying edges. But again, this is part of its intended texture.

Strand Three: Reconciliation

We perhaps more often think of "reconciliation" in the context of having been preceded by a negative rupture and then a coming back together, but etymologically, it comes from two parts, *re-* (back or again) and *conciliare* (to bring together). There may or may not be a negative rupture; but reconciliation is a bringing together of separated elements in a new way.

Looking at this *kente*, we might say — if you will allow me a bit of a stretch — that a weaver has *reconciled* these disparate threads, which were perhaps once together on a spool, into a new and meaningful whole.

[5] For further explanation, see "Kente Cloth: History, Meaning, and Symbolism," https://www.adinkrasymbols.org/pages/kente-cloth/

Three strands: *Words. Weaving. Reconciliation.*

Now, for story time.

While our focus in coming together here with this group in Ghana and Jamaica is on improving our scholarly writing, and producing more publications, we have been intentional with this transatlantic focus and partnership, and in thinking about historical legacies of the transatlantic trade in human beings, and of the traumatic legacies and lasting impacts of these events; and thinking about how we approach all of this today, as Christians.

Some of us have taken time to reflect more personally on the impact within our own family lineages. My own background is not directly part of this particular story. My father's side of the family is Scandinavian, and my mother's side, Prussian Mennonites. My siblings and I have often joked about being set up for lots of internal conflict, with Vikings and Pacifists jockeying for position!

But more recently, out of curiosity, we did a DNA test and were intrigued to discover that we are over 80% Viking. And we realised that like many, our existence is a historical result of the combination of those who were conquerors, and those who were conquered. Victors and victims. Those who, out of love and intention, contributed to our family tree; but likely, also those who did not have a say in their contribution.

And it reminded me of all the genealogies in the Bible, and of Jesus's own in particular: a seemingly impossible tapestry of heroes, villains, insiders, outsiders, kings and queens, prostitutes and peasants. In the person of Christ, we encounter this tapestry where this incongruous diversity somehow, in God's cosmic creativity, was woven together into a salvific Word. A seemingly *irreconcilable reconciliation*, if you will.

As we have engaged in this transatlantic initiative, and for years before that with my scholarly engagement with Christianity in West Africa, I am keenly aware of being an outsider. And I sometimes wonder, should I be here? Do I have a role? Is my voice welcome? But then I think of two African proverbs that speak to our diverse roles as scholars, and more broadly, as children of God, members of the same human family:

The first says,

Only the one wearing the shoe can tell you where it pinches.

The second says,

It is the guest who will most quickly spot where your roof is leaking.[6]

[6] I remain indebted to producers Theran Knighton-Fitt and Melanie Brown in their 2015 film *Between a Shoe and the Roof*, for drawing attention to how these proverbs provide helpful counterpoints in considering the role of insiders and outsiders within contextual

In our scholarship, we need to listen attentively to those wearing pinching shoes, and we need to take seriously the guests who point out gaps that familiarity may have obscured, in order to collaboratively discern a clearer picture. And in the tapestry of Christ's own genealogy, we see the very surprising mix of diverse textures woven in. Diversity is clearly important to God!

But more troublingly, as we reflect on extremely painful parts of human history, including the transatlantic trade in trafficked Africans, I am likewise haunted by the question, what makes me, or indeed any of us, very different from those who dehumanized and commodified their brothers and sisters to the point of selling them for a string of beads or a bolt of cloth, or of meting out violence and sexual harm beyond measure?

Text. Texture. Textile. Weaving. Christ as the Word is like this *kente*, woven together with diverse patterns that, put together, convey meaning. But this *kente*, and Christ's lineage, and yours and mine, includes some strands and rough and scratchy textures that we wish were not there. In my own Anglican tradition, in our prayers of confession, we confess: *we have sinned by what we have done, and by what we have left undone, and we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.* It is an acknowledgment that, whether through action or inaction, I fall short, harming myself and my neighbour. And these shameful parts of ourselves and our societies — these ugly, bobbled, scratchy strands — are somehow likewise woven into the larger tapestry. We cannot remove or hide them, and they call out for our attention.

Hold onto that thought; I have another story for you.

Last Friday afternoon,[7] just prior to leaving for this workshop on Saturday morning on a planned flight from London to Kingston, I had an urgent message from Jessie [Fubara-Manuel]. She was in Scotland and was booked to fly down to London very early Saturday morning in order for her to join those of us as the "UK contingent," to continue on a flight to Kingston. Jessie had alerted us earlier in the week that there was a problem with her Jamaican visa. When the expected couriered package did not show up with her as scheduled, she investigated and was told that the Jamaican Embassy in London had misplaced her passport with the visa. But I had not heard any further updates from her

theological engagement. See https://www.regent-college.edu/about-us/events/event-details?event_id=388

[7] I.e., 2 August 2024.

about this. I was not sure if that meant she would have to reschedule her flight or cancel entirely — I had not received any further information.

So, Friday afternoon, I was just finishing some errands in preparation for the following day's trip to Kingston, with my cell phone nearly dead, when Jessie sent me a message saying the Embassy had just informed her that they had found her passport and visa, and that she could collect it in person immediately in order to keep her ticket and travel as planned the following morning. But she was up in Scotland, and this was already about 3pm Friday afternoon! What if she did not get her passport in time? Could I collect it for her instead? Could she even board her morning flight to London without her passport? Panic all around!

I said I would jump in a taxi and head straight to the Embassy to try to get there before their 4:30 pm closing, if she would liaise with the Embassy to give permission for me to collect her passport; and then liaise with both our Jamaican host and our travel coordinator for the three of them to decide together whether or not they would need to cancel her ticket, or pay to change it to another day, or if we would be able to swing it in time for me to collect her passport and visa and keep the original ticket and travel plan. The hope was, if I could collect her passport, she could fly down as planned and we would all meet in Heathrow airport, hand over her passport and visa, and carry on to Jamaica together as planned. The travel coordinator said that 5:30 pm was the cutoff to make any flight changes, and we were urgently trying to avoid losing the ticket or having to pay wildly high charges to change it. No exaggeration — the prices were rising every few minutes at that point. But remember, my phone was nearly dead, so I could not participate in these discussions. I told Jessie I would switch it back on when I had any update.

Dying phone, clock ticking, London afternoon traffic, exorbitantly high flight prices for changes. One more fun detail: it was the day before Jamaican Independence, so I knew the chances of anyone keeping the Embassy open past closing time were slim. I hope you get a sense of *my* sense of panic and urgency! I got to the Embassy with only a few minutes to spare, and most everyone was already off duty.

The young man at reception, literally packing up his bag, heard my panicked story, recalled someone having phoned about it, and promised to go and check on it. He invited me to sit down in the large but empty beautiful reception area. Think: colonial great house style.

He left, and I was totally alone. As the clock ticked on, one after another, a lone staff person would wander through, see me sitting there alone, pause and ask if everything was okay and if I had been helped, promise to go look into the situation, and then leave me alone again —and not come back! At a point I got up to check if the front door was still unlocked so that I could get out if needed. I was not sure if I might have been locked in and forgotten!

I sat there with the clock anxiously ticking on towards the 5:30 pm travel agent's deadline, and my dying phone switched off, still uncertain about whether Jessie's passport could be collected, when finally, a staff member came at 5:27 pm and said that Jessie's passport had been located and that we would definitely receive the visa that evening, *but* that it would still take time to process. My phone had just enough juice for me to convey the all-clear to Jessie, the travel agent, and our Jamaican host — to their loud cheers and relief! — before going dead.

So, then I sat there totally alone in silence for a good while, no book, no phone, and found myself staring across at the large Jamaican coat of arms on the wall opposite me, and I saw the motto, *"Out of many, one people."* And as I continued reflecting, I experienced something of what I can only describe as a 'transcendent moment.'

For those of you who, like me, are Anglican, this Jamaican motto might immediately call to mind, as it did for me, the familiar words that we say in every eucharistic service: *"Though we are many, we are one body; for we all share in the one bread."*

My thoughts turned back to weaving, and the weaving together of one people, and of reconciliation. And with our project in mind, and having just been to Cape Coast and anticipating Kingston, I was struck by how that 'weaving together' can be so bittersweet. There is such pain and suffering and trauma alongside of beauty, resilience, and pride in the individuals, communities, and nations into which we have been woven. Yet, through Christ: *out of many, one people*.

I must confess, I have never really grasped what Paul was getting at in 2 Corinthians 5:18 when he says, "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (NIV). To be very honest, I find 'reconciliation' a loaded and in some ways triggering word, one which all too often seems to place blame or responsibility on those parties who have been harmed or victimised to need to somehow 'make things right' with those who have harmed them.

But in that moment, having just come from Ghana and our times of reflection on traumatic transatlantic history and legacies, of broken and painful genealogies, of wondering about my own role here as an outsider to both West Africa and the Caribbean, and also pondering the power of writing, and of Christ as the Word that heals, I had a moment of clarity as I thought: *Text. Textile. Weaving. Reconciliation* – bringing together. In Christ, God wove a transformative and redemptive Word; and in Christ's death and resurrection, we, in our broken and beautiful states, are likewise *reconciled:* brought in, woven into a beautiful new tapestry. Every one of us, and all parts of ourselves. The beautiful, shimmering golden threads and the bobbled-up strands, which we fear ruin the whole thing. But it is precisely this combination that gives this

tapestry interesting texture and creates a meaningful pattern.

*

I began by saying that words matter; and it is something we have emphasized regularly throughout this project. "In the beginning was the word; and the word was with God; and the word was God . . . The Word became flesh and dwelt among us!" And in Matthew's words, "the centurion said, 'Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only *say the word*, and my servant shall be healed'" (Matt 8:8, ESV; emphasis added).

And again, we include this in our Anglican eucharistic liturgy: the celebrant says, "Blessed are those who are called to his supper." And we respond, "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but *only say the word*, and I shall be healed."

In gathering here, both in this workshop, and specifically at this moment around this eucharistic table (or rather, circle) and considering the painful realities, past and present, of the commodification and abuse of humans, we acknowledge that our capacity for sin and harm against the other is real, and it is perpetual. It is an appetite that is never fully satisfied or tamed, but needs to continually be named and brought, kneeling in confession, contrition, and submission, to the foot of the cross. And our gathering is equally a reminder that where our wounds need tending, there is one whose *word* will heal us.

Text and *textile:* How we weave our words together matters, and more importantly, how we, personally and corporately, are being woven together — an 'irreconcilable reconciliation' within ourselves, with Christ, and with one another — matters. *Out of many, one people*. Amen.

Editorial Note 1:

This time of worship was held in the chapel at St Michael's Seminary, the Catholic neighbour and project-hosting partner to the United Theological College of the West Indies for our workshop in Kingston, Jamaica. We wanted to conclude this final session by sharing a eucharistic service together, but we immediately realised this would present a flurry of irreconcilable challenges to our ecumenical group: in which chapel should we meet, who could preside, and who partake? Any arrangement we considered meant an unavoidable hierarchy of power and control, and points of inclusion and exclusion.

The most appropriate solution, we decided, was to remove all barriers and to informally serve one another. Our Catholic hosts graciously welcomed us into their sacred space; our Anglican hosts provided the elements; Baptist and Methodist hosts helped with music; and as a gathered, *reconciled* priesthood of believers, replete with our broken and beautiful parts and diverse histories, we formed a circle and served one another in turn. It turns out that in a circle, there is room at the table for all.

Editorial Note 2:

It is worth adding a note to readers to emphasise that this devotional was presented at the very end of our second workshop, following our first in Ghana. For all of us as leaders, and for a few participants who had previously spent time in Ghana, this reflection, and particularly the use of a strip of kente cloth, held particular significance, as we were freshly attuned to the realities of the traumatic transatlantic historical links between Ghana and Jamaica.[8] And, coming at the end of our time in Jamaica, these reflections had had the chance to marinate more fully with flavours from both Ghana and Jamaica, which would not have been the same had this material been prepared for presentation in Ghana; I wish to thank my colleague Janice McLean-Farrell for highlighting this point.

Of further significance to our group that day was the fact that in the chapel of St Michael's Seminary, where we happened to be gathered that day for the first time, there was a framed piece of *kente* on the wall directly adjacent to the lectern where I was standing, which we noticed as we set up. We noted that the colours — green, yellow, black — seemed obviously representative of the Jamaican flag, while the *kente* itself of course pointed to Ghana.[9] But no one knew the story behind this weaving adorning St Michael's sacred space, or of a previous Ghanaian-Jamaican connection; but for our gathered group that day, it held profound significance. What were the chances, we wondered, of this being our only time meeting in St Michael's Chapel, and the only *kente* which we observed on either campus, coinciding with a prepared talk involving *kente*?

It reminded us yet again of the intricately woven but sometimes forgotten or obscured historical ties between Ghana and Jamaica, and more widely, of the transatlantic history and ties to which we were, and are, seeking to attend. And, on a personal note, having prepared this talk in advance but having only spotted this framed *kente* as we walked into the chapel that morning, it seemed like another 'transcendent moment,' a divine nudge that this new-to-us idea was not, in fact, new; that others had previously made these connections and left behind evidence of their passage. We were simply given the gifts of having our eyes and minds opened in a new way, tuned to discern these signposts of past pilgrims and ancestors, encouraging us that we were on the right path, being woven into something much larger than ourselves, and to press on.

[8] Such as the strip of *kente*, belonging to the author, pictured on p. 138.

[9] This piece of *kente* is as large as door; the edge of it is pictured on p. 136.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 143–148

Liturgical Reflections

Transatlantic Writing Project Closing Liturgy

Daniel Justice ESHUN[1]
ORCID: 0009-0008-3398-0507
Whitelands College, Roehampton University, London, England
D.Eshun@roehampton.ac.uk

Janice A. MCLEAN-FARRELL[2]
ORCID: 0000-0001-8498-557x
New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA
jmclean-farrell@nbts.edu

Final Online TWP Webinar
May 2025

Welcome

Introduction

Lord Jesus, you promised your disciples that "many will come from the east and the west, north and south and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 8:11). Give each one of us a place at your table to read, to research, to write, to publish, to heal, to feast, and to rejoice at your table with Christ, in Christ, and through Christ. ***Amen***

As we bring our Transatlantic Writing Project to a close, we want to use this compass-guided ritual to mark our time together. Given the nature of our project, the complex histories and realities, the metaphor of a compass aligns with our group. And so, we begin with the WEST.

[1] The Reverend Dr Daniel Justice Eshun is the Anglican Dean of Chapel and Senior Lecturer, Whitelands College, Roehampton University, London. He was a project leader and writing mentor with the TWP.

[2] Professor Janice A. McLean-Farrell is the Dirck Romeyn Associate Professor of Metro-Urban Ministry and Associate Dean of Doctoral Studies at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA, and served as a TWP project leader and writing mentor.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/jn7g6q73

ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

Meditative Reading for the WEST

The Westerly direction is that of the setting sun and is associated with leaving and endings. For many of our foreparents, these westerly journeys marked both the leaving of their homeland and the loss of loved ones. For us, it signifies the ending of our time in its present format.

Let us pray:
Sovereign Lord, giver of the gift of speech, words, imagination, and creativity to humans to turn words into different genres and art forms: As we gather to mark the ending of our journey together may we remember the joy, the truth, and the contestations that that brings.

> Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man *claimed* to be king of the Jews." Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."
> (John 19:19–22, NIV)

Amen.

Psalm 118:1–10 (NIV) ***(read responsively)***

> Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let Israel say: "His love endures forever."
>
> *Let the house of Aaron say: "His love endures forever." Let those who fear the Lord say: "His love endures forever."*
>
> When hard pressed, I cried to the Lord; he brought me into a spacious place. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?

The Lord is with me; he is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in humans.

It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes. All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the Lord, I cut them down.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen

Silent Meditation on Reading

Followed by group sharing on some of the struggles and times of feeling hard pressed that you have experienced during our project.

Meditative Reading for the EAST

As we turn our attention to the EAST, the direction of the rising sun, we are reminded that God is the God of resurrection, and it is in dying that life comes to us. As we meditate on this scriptures and responsive phrases in this section, let us call to mind the goodness of the Lord during the project.

Reading: Luke 1:1–4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled a among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. (NIV)

Group sharing on objects collected from Ghana and Jamaica and the fruits of your involvement in the project.

Meditative Reading for the NORTH

In orienting ourselves to the NORTH, the true north — we recall that it is a fixed point in our lives that guides us and directs us in the way we should go. We acknowledge the God who gives us this calling to write and to be scholars who offer our gifts to God's Church.

Reading: Isaiah 49:13–16

Sing for joy, O heavens!
Rejoice, O earth!
Burst into song, O mountains!
For the LORD has comforted his people
and will have compassion on them in their suffering.
Yet Jerusalem says, "The LORD has deserted us;

the Lord has forgotten us."
"Never! Can a mother forget her nursing child?
Can she feel no love for the child she has borne?
But even if that were possible,
I would not forget you!
See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands. (NIV)

Responsive Reading:

O God make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust.

I am giving you worship with all my life, I am giving you obedience with all my power,

I am giving you praise with all my strength; I am giving you honour with all my speech.

I am giving you love with all my heart; I am giving you affection with all my sense,

I am giving you my being with all my mind, I am giving you my soul, O most high and holy God.

Praise to the Father, Praise to the Son, Praise to the Spirit, the Three in One.

Let us share the commitments we have made to ourselves and the Lord to live out our vocation as writers. As we share, we recommit ourselves to this work to which we have been called.

As we turn our attention to the last direction, the SOUTH, we acknowledge that staying true to our commitments is hard, we require support from others and things that give us life to encourage us to hold the course.

Meditative Reading for the SOUTH

Reading: Habakkuk 2:1–3

I will stand at my watch
and station myself on the ramparts.
I will look to see what he will say to me,
and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

Then the Lord replied:
"Write down the revelation
and make it plain on tablets
so that a herald may run with it.
For the revelation awaits an appointed time;
it speaks of the end

and will not prove false.
Though it linger, wait for it.
it will certainly come
and will not delay. (NIV)

Sharing Stories and Experiences from Ghana and Jamaica that continue to provide encouragement and support as you live into your calling as writer, during the project and going forward.

Intercession

The LORD upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. (Psalm 145:14, NIV)

What is written is written: God of love hear the cry of those who yearn for love; use our writings to heal fractured families, broken and neglected homes, those who feel unwanted and are alone.

God of love, hear our prayer.

What is written is written: God of justice hear the cry of those who yearn for justice; use our writings to bring freedom to persecuted and oppressed, exploited, ill-treated, broken.

God of justice, hear our prayer.

What is written is written: God of peace hear the cry of those who yearn for peace; use our writings to heal historical trauma and ongoing trauma in battle zones and broken states, and for those who are frightened, fearful, anxious.

God of peace, hear our prayer.

Collect

Eternal God, the light of the minds that know you, the joy of the hearts that love you, and the strength of the wills that serve you: grant us so to know you that we may truly love you, so to love you that we may truly serve you, whose service is perfect freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

As Our Saviour has taught us so we pray . . .

Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed by thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever.
Amen

May Christ our redeemer bring to us enthusiasm for learning, writing research, healing and wholeness. **Amen**

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
vol. 3, nº 1 (2026) 149–151

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TransAtlantic Writing Project: Select Publications to Date[1–4]

Sara J. FRETHEIM

Guest Editor
ORCID: 0000-0002-8960-8762
Lincoln Bishop University, Lincoln, England
editors@AfricanChristianTheology.org

AMWE, Ruth Vida. "Bethel: Constructing African Christian Theologies and Identities in the Diaspora." Chapter 14 in *Faith, Spirituality, and Praxis: Exploring Dynamics in African Grassroots Theologies and Churches*, edited by Peter White, 205–221. London: Routledge, 2025.

BARRON, Joshua Robert. "Ethiopian Eunuch, The." *Dictionary of African Bibliography*, https://dacb.org/, 2026 (forthcoming).

BARRON, Joshua Robert, and Anna Kasafi PERKINS. "The Unreality and Reification of Race: Two Perspectives on Ethnocultural Identity in World Christianity." *Black Theology* (2026, forthcoming).

[1] Another four articles are currently in the peer review and revision process; and six are still in progress.

[2] Note that some of the co-authors listed here were not part of the project. Also note that these publications are by TWP participants as well as leaders and writing mentors.

[3] While some have published materials specifically relevant to African-Caribbean and/or transatlantic themes, others have published in their diverse areas of expertise within the Humanities and Social Sciences. It was not a TWP requirement that participants engage explicitly in transatlantic research/writing.

[4] Finally, in addition to these publications, there have been several conference papers presented by TWP participants and leaders, and two participants have used the training and begun hosting academic writing workshops for students and clergy in their contexts.

Published with license by ACTEA | DOI: https://doi.org/10.69683/heq2he65
 | ISSN: 3006-1768 (print); 3007-1771 (online)

BARRON, Ruth, and Joshua BARRON. "Who are the Lost Sheep, and What is Our Mission? How the Issue of Abuse in the Church is a Missiological Issue." Chapter in *Missiology: The Mission of God and God's Church*, edited by David K. Ngaruiya, Elizabeth W. Mburu, and Nathan H. Chiroma. ASET Series 10. Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Langham Global Library, 2026 (forthcoming).

CHAMBERS, Donald. "Letter of the Day: Honour the Memory of Our Ancestors." *The Gleaner*, 15 August 2024. https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/letters/20240815/letter-day-honour-memory-our-ancestors

DAH, Ini Dorcas. *Gender and Holistic Mission: A Christian Response to the Lobi/Birifor Marriage for an Effective Transformational Development in West Africa (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ghana)*. Self-published, July 2025. ASIN: B0Fgdcrhxy.

EGBUNU, Emmanuel A. S. Review of *Africans in Diaspora and Diasporas in Africa*, edited by Bulus Galadia and Sam George (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Langham, Global Library, 2024). *African Christian Theology* 2, no. 1 (2025): 137–138. https://doi.org/10.69683/tbwfdr49

FRETHEIM, Sara. Review of *Faith Confronts Evil: From Birthmothers to Holy Women, African American Christian Women, 1619–1865*, by Barbara Omolade with Susan M. Felch (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2024). *Studies in World Christianity* 31, no. 3 (2025): 356–358. https://doi.org/10.3366/swc.2025.0529

———. "Quaque, Catherine Blunt." *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*. October 2024. https://dacb.org/stories/ghana/quaque-catherineb/

FRETHEIM, Sara, Daniel Justice ESHUN, Janice MCLEAN-FARRELL, Anna Kasafi PERKINS, and Jo SADGROVE. "Drinking from the Same Well? African and Caribbean Theological Oversights and a Call for Mutual (Re)Connection and a Theology of Repair/Remaking." *Exchange* 53, no. 4 (Dec 2024): 306–335. https://doi.org/10.1163/1572543x-bja10082

FUBARA-MANUEL, Jessie Ini. "Disability and Wholeness: Exploring the Experiences of Women with Disabilities in Uyo, Nigeria." *European Society of Women in Theological Research Journal* 33 (2025): 55–72. https://doi.org/10.2143/ESWTR.33.0.3295039

MCLEAN-FARRELL, Janice A. "Future of Global Christianity." In *Compact Atlas of Global Christianity*, edited by Kenneth R. Ross, Gina A. Zurlo, and Todd M. Johnson, 362–367. Edinburgh Companions to Global Christianity Edinburgh University Press, 2025. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/jj.25700626.31

MNDOLWA, Maimbo W. F., Fergus J. KING, and Joshua Robert BARRON. "Frank Weston of Zanzibar: An Assessment and Appreciation of an 'Apostle to Africans.'" *African Christian Theology* 1, no. 2 (2024): 335–361. https://doi.org/10.69683/dwjqv631

PERKINS, Anna Kasafi. "Not 'Telling Lies on God'." In *Keeping Faith: How Christian Organisations Around the World Can Stay True to the Way of Jesus*, edited by Stephen Judd, John Swinton, and Kara Martin, 47–49. Global Perspectives. Carlisle, Cumbria UK: Langham, 2025.

———. "The *Pericope Adulterae* (John 7:53–8:11): Two Poetic Renderings in *Sunsong Tide Rising*." *Priscilla Papers* 39, no. 1 (2025): 9–13. https://www.cbeinternational.org/resource/the-pericope-adulterae-john8/

TARUS, David and Joshua Robert BARRON. "Home Away from Home: An Outsiders' Reflection on the 2021 Canadian Census." *Post-Christendom Studies* 8 (2023–2024): 75–85. http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/8.PCS_.74-84.TarusAndBarron.pdf

THOMAS, Oral A. W. *Caribbean Socio-Theological Imaginings, Stimulating a Caribbean Resistance Theology* (Anticipated publication: 2026).