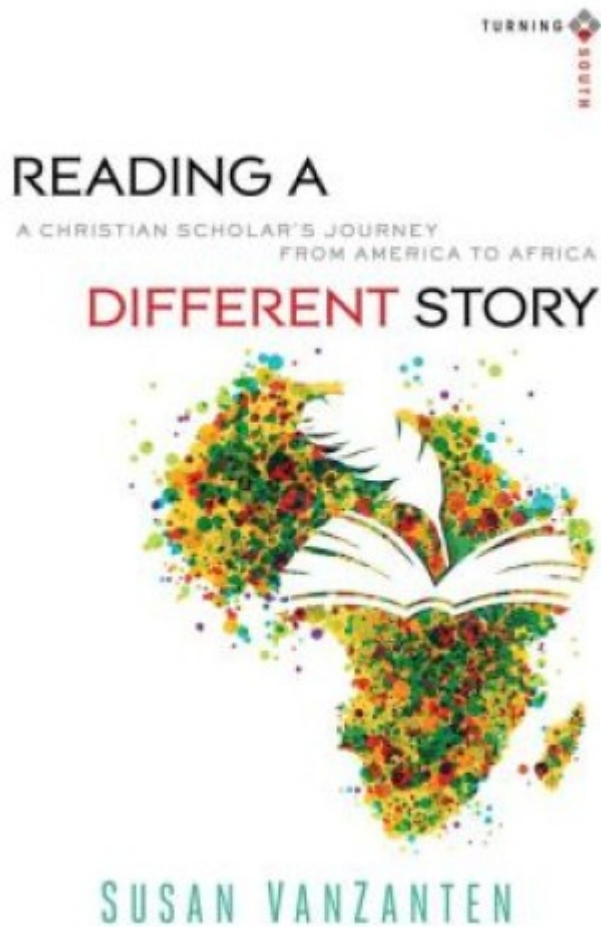


Reading a Different Story, by Susan VanZanten

Books in the [February 19, 2014](#) issue

In Review



Reading a Different Story

By Susan VanZanten
Baker Academic

VanZanten grew up in a Dutch Reformed context, and much of her life has been steeped in the Reformed tradition, though some of the schools where she's taught English are more evangelical than Reformed. What is compelling about her story is

her discovery of postcolonial African literature, especially South African literature. Reading literature beyond the bounds of our own culture, she contends, is mandatory for Christians. She stakes out a position for “Christian cosmopolitanism,” based on the premise that “all human beings share an identity as special creations of God.” Billed as an academic memoir, VanZanten’s account may not appeal to readers outside academia, but her suggestions of books by African authors will appeal to fiction readers.