THE AASR EXECUTIVE
2005-2010

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Continued on rear inside cover
We welcome members to the 4th International Conference of the African Association for the Study of Religions holding in the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria from 17 to 21 January 2010. This issue has produced to coincide with the conference.

This issue opens with an obituary on Professor Kwame Bediako by Cephas Omenyo of the University of Ghana. You will also find the usual section on Persons and Posts informing you of appointments taken up by some members of the AASR. Although some of the appointments have come to an end, it is important for us to be aware of appointments and opportunities available for taking by members of the association. The Persons and Posts section is followed by important information on websites and literature on sustainable development. A report on workshops on Sharia conducted in Kenya and Sudan in 2006 and 2007 respectively follows this section. You will also find recently published literature on Sharia. Another report is on the summer school held at Bayreuth University in 2008.

This issue also carries a number of book reviews. Most of the reviews are by members of the association and interestingly the books reviewed are generally those that have been recently published by members of the AASR. You will also find notices of other recently published books on the religions of Africa and the African diaspora. As usual we welcome new members to the AASR family and we provide some personal and professional details of these new members. And again as usual, the last section of the issue contains a long list of recently published works on the religions of Africa and the African diaspora.

Of particular interest in this issue, is a review of the financial past of the AASR written by Dr. Jan Platvoet, which should be read by all members. It is time to improve on the finances of the association.

The editors would like to end by encouraging members to send us news of the AASR activities, events, posts and appointments for publishing in this bulletin. Let us inform other members of the exciting things happening in our institutions, countries and regions.
IN MEMORY OF
PROFESSOR KWAME BEDIAKO:
A DEEPLY CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

The passing away of Professor Kwame Bediako is a great loss for Africa, the Christian churches, and the academy. Indeed a giant oak tree has fallen. This loss brings to mind the Akan proverb: Nea onipa pe na owu nso pe, ‘what man likes, death also likes’. We mourn a truly famous man, whose life and work will be celebrated and recounted for a long time to come.

Born on 7 July 1945, Kwame Bediako had his basic education in Ghana. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in French at the University of Ghana, Legon. He pursued Masters and Doctoral degrees in French and African Literature in French at the University of Bordeaux, France, in the late 1960s. While in France he had a dramatic experience of Christ, by which he was converted from atheism to a fervent Christian life. He became convinced that an intellectual life without Christ was futile and that he should spend his life as a scholar in the Christian ministry. He therefore pursued theological studies at the London School of Theology (then London Bible College) from 1973 to 1976.

He offered to enter the ordained ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in 1978. He set off at once, with the permission of the church, to Aberdeen, Scotland, to pursue doctoral studies in Theology with Professor Andrew Walls. Upon graduating in 1983 he taught for a year in the Dept. of Religious Studies, University of Aberdeen.

On his return to Ghana, Kwame served for three years as the Resident Chaplain at Accra Ridge Church. From this base the Presbyterian Church of Ghana appointed him as part time founding Director of the Akrofi-Christaller Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology (now Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture) in 1985. It seeks to promote a Christian scholarship that is rooted in the immediate context of African religious, cultural, social and linguistic realities and to focus on the history and life and thought of African Christians. In 1987 the Bediako family moved to Akropong Akuapem in order to nurture the young Centre full-time. By dint of hard work and with the co-operation of the Board of Trustees and staff the Centre has been transformed since then into a full-fledged postgraduate degree-awarding institute with both national and international recognition.

Kwame wrote and lectured extensively in his field. From 1986 to 1998 he was a visiting lecturer in African Theology in the University of Edinburgh, Scotland; and from 1997 he was Honorary Professor in the School of Theology, University of Natal.
Kwame was widely traveled man, whose expertise was sought by reputable organizations and institutions, both locally and internationally, the world over. He brought his quality work and knowledge to bear on international networks, agencies and institutions such as the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT, of which he was Vice Chairman & Chairman), and its daughter institution, the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, UK; the International Association of Mission Studies; the African Theological Initiative (ATI, of which he was Chairman and Director); the Board of the Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA; the Anglophone West African Council of Langham Partnership International; and the National Accreditation Board of the Ministry of Education, Ghana.

Professor Bediako was a formidable ecumenical Christian scholar with keen interest in developments in African, Asian and Latin American as well as Western Christianity. Indeed he was committed to world Christianity. He was clearly one of the most outstanding Christian theologians Africa has given to the world. He was well sought-after by Western institutions. In spite of countless invitations to come and teach in prestigious institutions of higher learning in the West it was his resolve to live and do his theology from Africa as the mark of an authentic African theologian. He had a profound interest in, and passion for theological education in Africa, and for the development of African Christianity.

Kwame was deeply convinced that the Divine Word was at work in Africa. He therefore worked strenuously towards a vision: that of empowering African theologians to be bold enough to turn a new page in their ways of theologizing by taking the interface between African primal religion and African culture and Christianity seriously, and also to be committed to mother tongue hermeneutics. Pushing ahead the idea of the ‘infinite translatability of the Gospel’, he saw that on that basis one could be an advocate of making African theology truly African and independent of Euro-American theology. At the same time he has able to have a conversation with Euro-American theologies.

The foremost Ghanaian theologian, the late Professor G.A. Baëta, bore the following testimony about Kwame:

He applied his considerable expertise as a thinker and a scholar in French literature to his latter found vocation as Pastor and Theologian in his very thorough analysis of the central problem of the African Christian, namely his or her cultural identification with biblical theology. His in-depth studies showed that there was no basis for cultural or philosophical incompatibility between the traditional values of the African and his Christian beliefs and precepts.¹

Professor Bediako’s passing away has deprived Ghana and indeed Africa of a towering intellect who made a profound impact on several institutions worldwide, both temporal

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¹ Late Professor G.A. Baëta’s assessment of the works of late Professor Bediako for membership of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences.
and spiritual. Reflecting on his legacy, his teacher, friend and colleague, Professor Andrew F. Walls, among other things has the following to say:  

He did perhaps more than anyone else to persuade mainstream Western theologians and mainstream Western theological institutions that African theology was not an exotic minority specialization but an essential component in a developing global Christian discourse … much of his finest work has been written in the lives and thinking of his students, colleagues, and friends, in the concept of the institution he founded, and in the networks he helped to establish, enhance, and maintain. It is a rich legacy much of it prudently invested for future use. 

He is survived by his wife Professor Mrs. Gillian Mary Bediako, and two sons, Yaw and Kwabena.

PERSONS & POSTS

Dr. Eunice Kamaara (Moi University) is visiting associate professor in anthropology, religious studies and at the Institute for Research in Social Issues at Indiana University-Purdue-Indianapolis University. She will work during the 2008-2009 academic year with Jeanette Dickerson-Putman (Anthropology) on various initiatives, including the editing and preparation for publication of papers from the 2007 Indiana University/Moi University International Symposium on Social Science Perspectives on HIV/AIDS in East Africa. Dr. Kamaara presented a lecture on ‘Jesus Christ in a Bottle: Parallelism between Christianity and Traditional Medicine in Africa’ on 13 October 2008, and another on ‘Gender, Youth Sexuality and HIV/AIDS Issues Raised in Youth Initiation Programs in Kenya’ on 27 October 2008 at Purdue-Indianapolis University. (see http://irsi.iupui.edu/IRSI-Main.html)

Rev. Dr. Andrew Igenoza, Professor of Biblical Studies and Theology at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, author of Polygamy and the African Churches: A Biblical Appraisal of an African Marriage System (Ibadan: AASR Nigerian Publications Bureau, 2003, 314 pp.), has retired. His current address: 17 Northmoor Road, Manchester, M12 4NF, UK. His e-mail address is: olugenoza2002@yahoo.co.uk. For his further particulars, visit his online AASR registration at http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=343

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Simeon Ilesanmi Appointed to an Endowed Wake Forest University Professorship

Professor of Religion, Simeon Ilesanmi, has been appointed to a Wake Forest Endowed Professorship as the Washington M. Wingate Professor of Religion. He is a wonderful example of the teacher-scholar model. He brings a unique background in ethics and law and an international perspective that has served his students and our academic community well. The announcement was made by the Wake Forest University Winston-Salem, NC, USA on 9 September 2009.

Professor Ilesanmi came to Wake Forest in 1993 and has directed the religion department’s graduate studies since 2006. He is highly regarded for his research in international human rights and the ethics of war. He is the author of *Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997) and numerous journal articles and book chapters on religion, ethics, politics and war in Africa, among other subjects.

A native of Nigeria, he earned his B.A. in Religious Studies from the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University,) Ile-Ife, in Nigeria, and then received a fellowship to Southern Methodist University, where he earned his Ph.D. in Religious Ethics in 1993. Since joining our faculty, he has earned his J.D. from the Wake Forest School of Law in 2005. He held a three-year appointment as the Zachary T. Smith Professor from 2000 to 2003. He was a visiting fellow at Princeton University in 1999-2000 and a visiting scholar in the War Studies Department at King’s College, University of London, in 1996.

Professor Ilesanmi has served as an advisor to undergraduate students, graduate students and international students. I am especially grateful to him for his invaluable assistance in helping start the new African Studies minor and for helping to lay the groundwork for a new student study-abroad experience in Nigeria. He is currently leading a group of faculty who have been awarded a planning grant for a Center of Ethics, Religion and Law.

AASR congratulates Professor Ilesanmi on this honour and wishes the best in this new post.
Central Treasury

Account opened 30 November 2006.

Opening balance  £161.43 (Carried over from African Christianity Project Account)

**Receipts 2007**

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<td>Donations</td>
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**Expenditures 2007**

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<td>Charges</td>
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<td>30 October</td>
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Balance in account  31 December 2007  £329.92

**Receipts 2008**

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**Expenditures 2008**

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**Balance in Account 31 December 2008**  £482.40

**Receipts 2009**

North American Branch of AASR  259.70  
Interest  1.13  
**TOTAL**  260.83

**Expenditures 2009**  £370.00

(AASR News Bulletin)

**Balance as of 30 June 2009**  £373.23

James L Cox  
AASR Treasurer  
30 June 2009

**Accounts Relating to Botswana Conference July 2007**

**Received as gifts into Central Account for Special Appeal fund**

David Westerlund  £65.99  
Jan Platvoet  29.76  
Frieder Ludwig  240.59  
Gerrie ter Haar  50.00  
James Cox  50.00  
IAHR  238.14  
Jacob Olupona  232.42  
**Total**  £906.90

**Bursaries Awarded**

Sussy Gumo-Kurgat  $500  
Susan Mbula Kilonjo  $500  
Damaris Parsitau  $500  
Musa Adeniyi  $500  
Gladys Ogedegbe  $500  
Lateef Oladimeji  euros 300 plus $100  
Laguda Danoye  euros 300 plus $100  
Caleb Ogunkunle  euros 400  
David Ogungbile  $500
Received in Botswana for conference expenses and bursaries
AASR Europe euros 1000
Teresia Hinga $200 ($100 registration)
AASR Nigeria $ 80

James L Cox
AASR General Treasurer
31 December 2007

AASR FINANCES:
ITS PAST ITS FUTURE?

Introduction
It seems opportune, for several reasons, to present a survey of the history of AASR finances. One reason is a letter Frans Wijsen, AASR Representative for Europe since July 2007, sent me. During the AASR conference in Gaborone he volunteered to serve in that office after Gerrie ter Haar had reported that Henk van Rinsum had requested to be relieved from that office. Frans wrote to me (in Dutch): ‘In Botswana, I was jolted into the office of AASR Representative for Europe in a chaotic meeting. I have a feeling that I have not really found my bearings as yet in this office’.

Another reason is a happy new phenomenon: the intense, at times heated spate of electronic exchanges about AASR finances among members of the AASR Executive since I raised the question whether the editors of AASR Bulletin might go ahead and print AASR Bulletin 31, preferably from Gaborone.\(^3\) A third reason is that a factual report of the past will allow us to see where we have come from, how far we have progressed, and how we should proceed towards an AASR which is financially healthy and transparent. E.g. whom should we elect to serve as AASR Treasurer and as AASR Regional or National Representatives in charge of the systematic collection of annual membership fees? By presenting the facts of the past I hope to temper the passion of the present debate and build consensus on how we should lay the foundation of an AASR that is financially strong in at least a basic manner. A fourth reason is the nagging question: Will the financial past of the AASR also be its future?

I present the history below in three parts: from 1992 to 2000; from 2000 to 2005; and from 2005 to now. In my conclusion I return to the nagging question.

\(^3\) In an e-mail message to the members of the AASR Executive of 5 October 2009
I responded to Frans Wijsen as follows: ‘The AASR-Europe account was administered very effectively by Gerrie [ter Haar] from 1993 to 2006. It was the main, and usually the only operational source of money of, and for, the AASR till 2005. The production of AASR Bulletins was paid from it, as well as the development and maintenance of the AASR website. The remainder was used for other general AASR purposes, such as supporting AASR members from Africa to attend conferences (e.g. at Nairobi in 1999, and Legon, Ghana, in 2004) and congresses (e.g. the IAHR congresses at Durban in 2000 and at Tokyo in 2005); and AASR-related publications’.

This does not do full justice to history, for it overlooks that Rosalind Hackett, who served as Representative for North America from 1993 till 1998, did also collect annual dues in that period, as did Abdulkader Tayob as AASR Representative for Southern Africa from 1993 to 2000 in South (and Southern?) Africa. For in 1995 it is mentioned in AASR Newsletter 4 (November 1995) that the North American account stood at US$ 1719.46, that the European account held approximately US$ 5000 (through a donation of US$ 300), and that the South African account contained US$ 180. In addition, Rosalind, Gerrie and Simeon Ilesanmi regularly appealed to members in the newsletter to pay their annual dues (US$ 50). However, no annual financial reports were published in 1996 and 1997, to the dismay of some AASR members. They raised this issue at the meeting of the AASR Executive in May 1998 in Hildesheim, Germany. There it was resolved ‘that a financial report [will] be published in every issue of the newsletter’.

In consequence of that decision, the first a bit more detailed financial report was published in 2001 in AASR Newsletter 15/16. It reported the income from annual dues collected: US$ 2336 in the European account, and US$ 1227 in the North American account – US$ 575 being collected in annual dues from AASR-NA members in 1999-2000. It also mentioned the items on which money had been spent: US$ 800 was contributed from the European account towards the publication of the proceedings of the IAHR conference in Harare in September 1992 at which the AASR was founded. And it reported that US$ 300 had been spent from the American account for [mailing out?] the ‘AASR Newsletter’; another US$ 300 as a subsidy to Florida Press for an AASR

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4 Not their shipment. They were sent through Utrecht University.
5 In 1998, Simeon Ilesanmi took over from her till 2000.
6 AASR Newsletter 4 (November 1995): 3
7 Simeon stood in for Rosalind Hackett as AASR Representative for North America from 1998 to 2000.
publication; and US$ 600 as a subsidy for the IAHR Congress in Durban in 2000. The report also showed that the European account held a balance of US$ 1326.15, and the North American of US$ 526.82.\(^\text{11}\)

The AASR had a Treasurer only from 2000 onwards, when Jim Cox was elected to the dual office of General Secretary and Treasurer.\(^\text{12}\) In their meeting at Thurnau Castle, near Bayreuth, Germany,\(^\text{13}\) in October 2001, AASR members insisted again on the need for regular financial reports from all AASR regions, and required that the Treasurer take care of their coordination and publication.\(^\text{14}\) In response, the Treasurer acknowledged in 2002 that ‘central co-ordination is vital for communication to flow smoothly’. But he also insisted that despite electronic communication the gathering in of information from ‘a vast continent’ poses ‘a formidable challenge’ and ‘creates particular challenges to [the] central financial reporting’. He added:

I have not included a financial report. I have decided to wait until the end of the year to compile statistics from the various regions. I will be asking therefore all regional representatives to provide me with their financial statements early in January, so that I can make a full financial statement in the next issue of the AASR Newsletter. Thereafter, a financial report can be expected to appear in the first issue of the newsletter in each year.\(^\text{15}\)

In 2003, however, the Treasurer had to report that he had received no financial reports apart from that of the AASR Representative for Europe.\(^\text{16}\) He expressed the hope that the financial issue could be discussed ‘face to face’ during the AASR conference in Ghana in 2004. He expected that as a result by 2005, when the AASR would meet in Tokyo, ‘a clear system for membership, reporting and financial accountability should be operating’.\(^\text{17}\)

The financial issue, however, remained unresolved at Legon, Ghana, where the Treasurer had to report that he ‘had received just one financial report during the past year, that from Professor ter Haar, the European Representative’.\(^\text{18}\)

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\(^\text{11}\) AASR Newsletter 15/16 (May- November 2000): 11-12. No figures were reported for South Africa.

\(^\text{12}\) Teresia Hinga was elected as AASR Representative for North America. Isabel Phiri, elected as Representative for Southern Africa, soon resigned, which threw co-ordination of that region into confusion till 2007. See AASR Newsletter 14 (November 2000): 17-18 for all the officers elected to serve in the period 2000-2005.

\(^\text{13}\) For a conference organised by Bayreuth University.

\(^\text{14}\) AASR Newsletter 15/16 (May/November 2001), 5-12

\(^\text{15}\) Jim Cox 2001, ‘The AASR Aims & Finances’, AASR Newsletter 15/16 (May/November 2001), 2-4


\(^\text{17}\) AASR Newsletter 18 (November 2002), 2-3.

\(^\text{18}\) AASR Bulletin 21 (May 2004): 7. He also reported that he had been working on establishing ‘national representatives’ in Southern African countries to remedy the vacuum created by the resignation of Isabel Phiri. Jannie Smit (University of KwaZulu/Natal at Durban) had accepted the role of overall southern African representative, but ‘because countries in the region were organising their own membership and had committed to raising local funds for meetings and distribution of the newsletter, it seemed reasonable to contact individudal [national] representatives’, to wit Ezra Chitando for Zimbabwe, Marja Hinfelaar for Zambia, and Seratwa Kuswani for Botswana (AASR Bulletin 21 (May 2004): 7).
And in March 2005, in the AASR Business Meeting during the IAHR congress at Tokyo, the Treasurer reported again, that he ‘had received a [financial] report from the European Regional Representative, Prof. Gerrie ter Haar, but that he had received no other reports’.19 The European financial account for 2003 was added. It showed a balance of € 3,456,70 on 31st December 2003, had spent € 777,75 in 2003 on the production of AASR Newsletter 18 and 19, and had gathered in € 1,706,13 as membership fees for 2003.20 As was the European financial account for 2004. It reported that € 1,740 had been gathered in as annual membership fees in 2004; that € 681 had been spent on the production of AASR Bulletins 20 and 21; and that the balance amounted to € 4,496 on 31.12.2004.21 Gerrie ter Haar also reported that ‘a number of bursaries for Africans to attend the IAHR Congress in Tokyo’ had been paid from the European account.22

The Representative for North America, Teresia Hinga, reported that ‘the North American Region had received funds but had been limited by not having a proper bank account for the transmission of funds. She indicated that this problem was being addressed’.23 Adam Chepkwony, Representative for East Africa, reported that ‘although he had hoped to introduce the payment of membership fees, this had not occurred yet’.24 The Representatives for West Africa and Southern Africa did not attend and had not sent in reports.25

In conclusion, from 1998 to 2005, the European account seems to have been the sole source of income of the AASR. There was no 40/60% division: all AASR expenses were paid from that account. I have not found evidence that AASR-NA contributed to AASR finances. There were only weak attempts to impress upon the AASR regions in Africa that they too should set a local annual membership fee, to be used for local purposes, such as the distribution of the AASR Newsletter (renamed AASR Bulletin in 2004). However, no membership dues were collected in Africa till 2005, with one exception: from 2004, the 10 AASR members in Zambia paid an annual fee,26 for a number of years. There was no ‘central treasury’ in the period 1993-2005. AASR had appointed a Treasurer in 2000 but he had no bank account and an empty purse.

2005-now

In his report to the AASR General Meeting in Tokyo on 26 March 2005, the Treasurer announced that the incoming AASR Representative for North America, Prof. Kathleen O’Brien Wicker, had informed him that she would reform the AASR-NA collection of membership fees and redress its failure to contribute to the financial needs of the

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19 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 4
20 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 5
21 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 21
22 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 5-6, 16, 28
23 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 7
24 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 6
25 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 5
Prof. Wicker outlined an ambitious program on behalf of AASR-NA. Its first goal was ‘to regularise the status of AASR-NA as a tax-exempt organisation under the US Tax Code’, for that would ‘enable the AASR in North America to be more effective in fund raising’. Its second goal would be a membership drive, not only in the USA but also in Canada. That would bring in more membership fees, which would ‘allow the AASR in North America to contribute more to the general projects sponsored by the AASR and increase the vitality of its activities and programs’. Thirdly, she intended to ‘regularize and hopefully increase North American contributions to the AASR at large, in addition to undertaking fundraising for the organization’.  

Tax-exempt status for AASR-NA was a costly affair because a law firm had to be hired. In view of this, and other AASR-NA projects, Kathleen O’Brien Wicker proposed a ‘revenue sharing agreement of 60%/40%’ in the maiden meeting of the incoming AASR Executive at Tokyo. AASR-NA would retain 60% of its income from annual membership fees for its own projects, and contribute the remaining 40% to ‘AASR at large’, i.e. to its ‘central treasury’ for AASR ‘general needs’, such as the financing of the AASR Bulletin, the AASR website, AASR publications, sponsoring African scholars for conferences and congresses, etc.

In the same maiden meeting in Tokyo, the new AASR Executive resolved to make ‘all individual […] members, in Africa and beyond, […] financially responsible to the Association […] in compliance with Article 4a of the AASR Constitution’. That is, it decided that all AASR members, also those in Africa, should pay a membership fee once a year. It fixed the rate for AASR members in Africa at US$ 10. It permitted the regions in Africa to retain and use them for their own expenses and projects. But it also required that ‘at the end of every year, regional representatives [should] furnish the AASR Secretariat with financial reports in order that the AASR Treasurer may publish an [overall] annual financial report in the AASR Bulletin’. It encouraged that ‘national representatives [take] up complementary roles to that of regional representatives […] for] the smooth running of regional bodies’. It also devised sanctions against members who failed to pay their annual membership dues. It decided that the Members-Only part of the AASR website would be ‘a forum for sharing privileged information among dues-paying members only’, and that ‘the AASR Bulletin will no longer be distributed freely’.

In the next bulletin, the AASR President again stressed ‘the need for us to have a paid up membership to support the organizational and other expenses of the Associa-

27 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 4
29 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 14
30 The project seems to have been abandoned in 2006 (e-mail message from Kathleen O’Brien Wicker to me, dated 5 May 2006), probably because it proved too expensive.
31 The minutes of the maiden meeting of the incoming AASR Executive (in AASR Bulletin 23 [May 2003]: 16-20) unfortunately do not record that this proposal of revenue sharing was approved. I learned about it only in September 2006 from an e-mail from Kathleen O’Brien Wicker to the AASR Executive, sent on 13.09.2006.
33 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 16-17
34 AASR Bulletin 23 (May 2005): 17-18
The General Secretary reiterated that only fee-paying members would have access to the Members-Only area of the AASR website, and that there would be no more free AASR bulletins. From 2006 onwards, October/November would be the deadline for payment of the membership dues for the upcoming year. If a member had not paid the membership fee for two consecutive years, his or her status was to be ‘reviewed’. The Regional and National Representatives were responsible for the collection and administration of the annual dues. The 40/60%, agreed upon at Tokyo for AASR-NA, was now extended to all AASR regions: ‘all incoming dues shall be allocated to the AASR Treasurer and to each region on the basis of the 40-60% formula’. The General Secretary also announced that more National Representatives had been appointed: Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu for Ghana; for Nigeria: David Ogunbile, Oyeronke Olajubu, and Antonia Essien; John Khamalwa for Uganda; Musa Dube for Botswana; S.T. Kgatla for South Africa; Ibrahim Boutchich for North Africa; and Felix Kaputu for Central Africa.

Despite this firm resolve of the AASR Executive in 2005 to make the AASR a financially viable organization – in however modest a manner – by putting in place a system of annual dues collection and transparency in their administration throughout the AASR, so far little progress towards that goal has been made.

From 2006 to now, only one financial report was published. It reports €2,390 had been gathered in as annual membership dues into the AASR European account in 2005, and US$970 into the AASR North American account. From the European account €2867 had been paid to support the participation in the IAHR congress at Tokyo of two AASR members from Africa, €851 for the production of AASR Bulletins, and €762 for the construction of the AASR website. The North American account mentioned US$200 as expenditure for mailing out AASR Bulletin.

AASR-NA was the only AASR account from which annual 40% transfers have been made to the AASR central account since 2005. The number of fee-paying members of AASR-NA has increased from 17 in 2005 to some 40 now. Apart from 40% transfers, that money was spent on the organisation of annual AASR-NA meetings in November of each year in conjunction with the annual AAR, SBL and other major congresses.

The administration of the European account went through a protracted transfer, first from Gerrie ter Haar to Henk van Rinsum in 2005-2007, and then from Gerrie ter Haar to Frans Wijsen in 2007-2008. This may also have affected the systematic collection of annual dues from AASR members in Europe in those years. It has now been put in order again by Frans Wijsen.

When the valiant attempts of the General Secretary to raise funds for the Third AASR Conference in Africa on ‘Health, Healing and the Study of the Religions of Afri-

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36 Elom Dovlo, ‘From the Chair’, in AASR Bulletin 24 (November 2005): 1
38 He resigned from this office in 2007 (AASR Bulletin 27&28: 11).
40 AASR Bulletin 25 (May 2006): 2
41 Their amounts have not yet been made public, because no financial reports have been published in AASR Bulletins since the one on 2005 published in AASR Bulletin 25.
ca’, planned for July 2007 at the University of Botswana, failed in 2006-2007, an awkward situation arose. The central treasury contained as yet only two tiny AASR-NA 40% transfers. The AASR European account was a bit in disarray. And the Local Organising Committee at the University of Botswana had not been informed of the poor state the AASR was in financially, and was expecting that the AASR would cover the costs of the organisation of the conference. The report of the Treasurer on the costs of this conference, and the IAHR subsidy, has unfortunately not been published yet. It should have been included in AASR Bulletin 29&30 (November 2008/May 2009); it will hopefully be published in the forthcoming AASR Bulletin 31 (November 2009).

Only incidental information is available on whether or not AASR regions and nations in Africa have begun to collect annual membership dues after 2005. It was reported during the AASR General Meeting at the University of Botswana in July 2007 that the membership fees paid by the ten AASR members in Zambia from 2004 to 2007 had been used to support the participation of one of them in that conference.\textsuperscript{42} It was also reported in the same meeting that five members had paid membership dues in Kenya ‘for the current year’ (2007); that Nigeria had ‘a fee-paying membership of twenty’, and Botswana of five.\textsuperscript{43}

Because of lack of response to the pleas of the Treasurer that AASR regions and nations in Africa send him information on whether or not they collect membership fees systematically, the Treasurer has so far not been able to publish a financial report detailing for all AASR regions and nations how much money each has collected and how these have been spent. Nor do we know whether or not accounts are kept of the members who have faithfully paid the membership dues in the past few years, and those who have not. Without such accounts the rule instituted by the AASR Executive in Tokyo in March 2005 – that defaulting AASR members be removed from the AASR Register of Members – cannot be put into practice. Cutting back the AASR membership to fee-paying members only, however, seems a conditio sine qua non for a financially healthy AASR. Likewise, an annual report that accounts for all the membership fees collected, and for all other income such as IAHR subsidies for AASR conferences, and that also details precisely the items on which the money held in the central, regional and national accounts have been spent, is a conditio sine qua non for achieving financial transparency. Such clarity is necessary to forestall unrealistic expectations on the part of AASR members in respect of support for attending conferences and congresses, the organisation of AASR conferences in Africa, and subsidies for AASR publications; and for showing AASR members that the fees they pay are spent exclusively on the AASR aims detailed at the rear cover of each AASR Bulletin; and that it is therefore in their own interest to continue to pay their annual membership fees.

\textit{Its past its future?}

AASR-Europe currently has 43 members. Their €60 annual membership fee should amount to approximately € 2,500, or US$ 3,678,\textsuperscript{44} per annum.\textsuperscript{45} AASR-North America

\textsuperscript{42} AASR Bulletin 27&28 (May/November 2007): 11
\textsuperscript{43} AASR Bulletin 27&28 (May/November 2007): 11
\textsuperscript{44} at the conversion rate of 3 November 2009
has some 40 members. Their US$ 60 annual membership fee should amount to US$ 2,400 per annum. The AASR regions and nations in Africa have a total membership of slightly over 150 at present. Their US$ 10 annual membership fee should total to US$ 1,500 per annum. So, if all current AASR members would pay their annual membership fee faithfully, AASR would have a secure annual income of US$ 7,500.

AASR revenue is likely to be much lower, however, in the years ahead. Two situations may obtain. One is that AASR Representatives in Africa continue the current praxis of no or unsystematic fee collection without financial accountability for what has been collected. In that case, AASR in Africa is likely to grow in number of members but will not only not contribute to the financial vitality of the AASR, but will endanger the very existence of the AASR. AASR in Africa is likely then to become the parasitic outgrowth of the AASR that will soon kill this continental and global association of scholars of the religions of Africa.

The other situation is that AASR Representatives in Africa do institute the systematic collection and annual reporting of membership dues that was decided upon by AASR Executive in Tokyo in March 2005. In that case, the number of AASR members in Africa will probably be reduced significantly because a portion of the current membership will fail to pay the membership fees and be de-registered after two years for failure to pay them. So, whichever of these two situations will obtain, AASR revenue is likely to be much lower than US$ 7,500.

AASR will be financially healthy, however, only when its past is not its future. I appeal therefore to the AASR Nominations Committee 2010-2015 to nominate only those AASR members as candidates for the posts of Regional or National Representatives who explicitly declare that they will gather in systematically the annual membership dues in their region or nation, or will see to it that they are collected. They should also express that they will send in to the AASR Treasurer each year in January an annual account of the revenues and expenditures of the previous year in order that the Treasurer may publish an overall financial account in the May AASR Bulletin.

AASR needs to weed out parasitism by the systematic collection of annual dues and thereby achieve a basic financial health. And it needs annual accounts in order to become financially fully transparent. That is the case when all AASR members know precisely what revenue has been gathered in from dues, subsidies and fund raising, and what money has been spent on which AASR goal. Only after the AASR finances have become fully transparent can AASR members exercise their democratic rights, as fee-paying members, whether through elections or through debate in AASR General Meetings, to contest the particular financial choices that were made by the Treasurer or others in office, if they feel the money should have been spent for a different AASR goal.

I am disregarding the reduced fees for the non-salaried for the moment, and the subscriptions to AASR Bulletin by libraries, publishers, etc. They latter bring in more or less what is ‘lost’ in the former.

Nigeria has currently 51 members; East Africa has 40; Ghana has 23; South Africa has 18; Zimbabwe has 10; Zambia has 8; Botswana has 5; and Namibia has 2.
Franz Kogelmann, director of project on ‘Sharia Debates and Their Perception by Christians and Muslims in Selected African Countries’, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, recently conducted three workshops in Africa. Two workshops took place in October 2006 at St. Paul’s United Theological College, Limuru, Kenya, and in February 2007 at Shendi University, Khartoum, Sudan. They were supported and organised by the local country-coordinators, John Chesworth, St. Paul’s United Theological College Limuru, Kenya, and Osman Mohamed Osman Ali, University of Khartoum, Sudan. The project director, backed up by country experts, carries out these workshops on a regular basis in order to guarantee high standards of research.

Whereas the Kenyan meeting was restricted to the East-African members, its Sudanese counterpart comprised all members of the project. In Kenya the junior scholars reported on their research progress since they left Bayreuth at the end of summer term 2006 and problems of different natures were discussed.

In Sudan the first mid-term evaluation of the field research took place. The junior scholars seized the opportunity to present and to discuss their preliminary findings in front of all project members. National and international senior scholars attended this workshop to ensure that the self imposed high standards are achieved. Beside the presentations of the junior scholars another important part of this meeting was to discuss the development of suitable instruments of quality control and measures to refine the structure of the project as such. The University of Bayreuth was represented by Ulrich Berner and Asonzeh Ukah, both members of the Chair of Religious Studies I of Bayreuth University, by Kurt Beck, member of the Chair of Anthropology, and the sociologist Gabriele Cappai.

Bayreuth University and the University of Jos jointly organized a third workshop, with international participation, in Jos, Nigeria, from 5th to 10th April 2008, in which ten African junior scholars presented their latest findings and results.

For information on the multidisciplinary Bayreuth research project ‘Sharia Debates in Africa’, visit http://www.sharia-in-africa.net/
Bayreuth University welcomed ten African students in July 2008. These African junior scholars participated for the first time in the four week Summer Academy 2008 on ‘Religion and Order in Africa’. In four weeks’ time, the ten African junior scholars were introduced to courses in the departments of religious studies, social-anthropology and sociology. Besides academic training, the participants took part in academic life in Bayreuth University and participated in excursions to Berlin and Munich.


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FORTHCOMING CONGRESS

IAHR
xxth QUINQUENNIAL WORLD CONGRESS
August 15 – 21, 2010
Toronto, Canada

The World Congresses constitute the primary public event sponsored by the International Association of the History of Religions. It brings together scholars interested in the academic and scientific study of religions to share the results of their research and to engage in discussion and debate of the major issues and concerns in the field. Workshops, panels, and symposia, as well as the presentation of individual papers, will provide ample opportunity for this kind of engagement of various new developments in the study of religion in diverse venues around the world.

For more information on registration and participation, please visit the IAHR website http://www.religion.utoronto.ca/resources/iahr.htm and/or http://www.iahr.dk/newsletter/congress.html
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: WEBLINKS & LITERATURE

Important weblinks
http://www.religionandnature.com/society/newsletters
http://www.religionandnature.com/society/
http://www.religionandnature.com/bron/
http://www.religionandnature.com/journal/index.htm


Recent literature

[Man, as a being with the unique capacity to think and reason, has always been curious about his end as well as the end of the known universe. Perhaps, that is the ultimate thing he can think about beyond which nothing exists. Not only in the religions, in science also, there are lots of queries and theories about the END, the total extinction beyond which it is the unimaginable ‘nothingness’. It is not at all surprising that, there are almost similar mentions about the final extinction in various religions that were established and developed in different parts of the world. Wherever the humans lived, these thoughts persisted with them. He wondered, if he could know the beginning of life as well as the beginning of the known universe, he would know at least something about the end. For that matter, the end is the same as the beginning. What was there before the beginning and what will be there after the end? Philosophy says it is ‘nothingness’. Science does not have a concrete answer to that as on today. Humans always looked at the stars and to the universe to get some clue about the beginning and the end.] Chakeredza, S., A.B. Temu, J.D.K. Saka, D.C. Munthali, K. Muir-Leresche, F.K. Akinmifiesi, O.C. Ajayi & G. Sileshi 2008, ‘Tailoring Tertiary Agricultural Education for Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Opportunities and Challenges’, in *Scientific Research and Essays* 3, 8 (August 2008): 326–332. Full text at: http://www.academicjournals.org/SRE/PDF/pdf-2008/Aug/Chakeredza%20et%20al%20Pdf.pdf

[Sub-Saharan Africa’s economic growth hinges on the development and promotion of a vibrant and sustainable agricultural production base. The prime movers for sustainable agricultural production include: availability of improved technologies, human capital, sustainable growth of biological and natural resource capital, improvement in performance of supporting}
institutions and favourable economic policy environment. Central to making these components operational is the production of suitable graduates, who are (i) technologically competent and relevant, ii) equipped with the necessary “soft skills” and business skills and (iii) able to work with local and especially rural communities. In this paper we review the current weaknesses in the tertiary agricultural education system and propose the necessary changes to be instituted. It is projected that the number of hungry people in Africa will continue to increase further in the 2020s. To turn the continent around, tertiary agricultural education must be transformed. Issues of faculty retention, institutional management, curricula content and education delivery, urgently require review and re-designing. We demonstrate the “best practices” which if replicated on a wide scale can move the continent in the desired direction.


[The cultural meanings of harvested plants have for the most part been ignored in academic research on non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in southern Africa. Historically scientists have tended to ignore the complex relationships between nature and culture. Given the country’s unique political and economic past and the current search for sustainable use of natural resources, a focus on the convergence of natural science and cultural diversity is important at this time. Empirical data on cultural practices is being collected in order to develop fresh and relevant insights into the complex relationships between culture and biodiversity. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that the concept of culture needs to be brought into our understanding of the role of NTFPs. We document the use and value of a specific tree, Olea europaea L. subsp. africana (Mill.) P.S. Green, called Umquma in the Xhosa language, for cultural purposes, by both rural and urban households.]


[This contribution explores the relationship between gender, religion and the environment in terms of the perceptions of a group of first-year students registered for a course on Environmental Awareness Techniques and Training at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. The empirical investigation indicates that there is a surprisingly high level of environmental awareness amongst this group, possibly reflecting their different living conditions, but that they were unable to recognize connections between their environmental commitment, their religious affiliation and gender consciousness.]


[In this paper I discuss the environmental, cultural, and political significance of the palace forests of the indigenous rulers in the Grassfields region of north-western Cameroon. All true chiefs in the Grassfields have palaces, and the possession of an impressive palace with a sacred forest adds much to the status and legitimacy of a ruler. The forests, which may be as large as 200 acres, lie close to the palace buildings and are homes for a variety of social institutions. They are the shrines where the palace and state gods reside; they are burial sites for young children from the palace community; they are the sites of sacrifices of appeasement; and, in several regions, they are the venue for meetings of secret societies. The forests are also the venue for the royal dances known as lefem, carried out by members of dance groups. The lefem events involve rituals, dancing, and feasting within the forest, and are occasions where individuals display their social status. In this paper I explain why the ecological condition of many of these forests is still good, despite lack of specific support for their conservation from the central government of Cameroon. There is a wide range of local stakeholders with inter-
In Mozambique, food shortages caused by years of civil war, an insatiable need for cheap sources of energy and a burgeoning human population have placed considerable pressure on the environment through unsustainable harvesting of natural resources. Many threatened forests lie within the development zone of Maputo. The Licuáti Forest Reserve (LFR) is one such area, originally established to ensure sustainable harvesting of valuable timber trees. The LFR is also of great cultural significance to the Ronga people, as it contains a sacred forest. In recent years, deforestation in and around the LFR has been taking place at 1.1% per annum because the enforcement of laws to counter illegal extraction has been weak, resulting in changes in forest structure and a decline in the diversity of large tree species. Urbanisation has resulted in the breakdown of cultural taboos and threatens not only the loss of plant resources in the LFR, but also the indigenous knowledge systems of the Ronga. The conservation status of the sacred area under threat was evaluated by use of a questionnaire, and the needs of the community determined to highlight important issues. This study revealed that traditional values and cultural rites of sacred groves could be incorporated into national sustainable development plans. This study also recognizes how local elites have particular interests in the conservation of sites that legitimize their status. Preservation of the cultural significance of sacred forests can therefore not stand apart from local politics, sustainable harvesting and conservation management.

In southern Benin and Togo, sacred forests are often the only remaining patches of forest vegetation, but are threatened with destruction because of the growing demand for arable land and the effects of cultural change. In this paper, I outline broad historical and cultural changes since Europeans first arrived in this area and identify the different stakeholders involved directly or indirectly in the management of these forests. In recent years, new policies for the conservation of sacred sites have been drawn up at international meetings, and these have stimulated scientific research into the conservation potential of sacred forests in Benin and Togo. These, in turn, have influenced the actions of non-government organizations in the area and led to the establishment of national environmental and cultural policies. On the local level, these events have contributed to changes in the management of sacred sites and in the cultural practices of the local political and religious leaders who control them. Problems of succession and decreasing respect for religious sanctions have reduced the power of the traditional leaders, with negative impacts on the status of the sacred forests. One solution proposed by the national forest authorities is to ‘restore’ these forest patches by tree planting. Ecotourism is also seen as a new way to conserve their biodiversity. Policies such as officially sponsored tree planting, the clarification of the legal status of the forests, and the expansion of local economic opportunities will necessarily strengthen the role of the state in these rural areas, and at the same time cause traditional leaders to renegotiate both their status and their forest management practices.

This paper reports on strategies for sustainable agriculture that improve socio-economic conditions of a community whilst also promoting nature conservation in a World Heritage site. Local communities can play a key role in developing such strategies, particularly if their immediate needs are met in ways that do not compromise the ecological carrying capacity. It dis-
cusses agriculture as a sustainable development option for the Mabibi area, on the northeast coast of South Africa. Results show that composting and mulching can significantly improve yields and reduce environmental impacts.]


[Concerns about climate change are global and real. As all communities try to get adapted to the challenges of their local climate, they are today sensitive to its variations. Third World countries, particularly Africa are threatened by the predicted effects of climate change because of their economic dependence on climate for development whose backbone is agriculture. There is strong evidence from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) that the observed increases in greenhouse gases particularly Carbon dioxide (CO2) may lead to global warming, sea level rise and space-time changes in climatic zones and seasons on the globe. To come up with climate change associated impacts on agriculture in Africa, the study evaluated climate related researches conducted on snow capped mountains in Africa (Mt Kilimanjaro), fishing in inland lakes (Lake Victoria, Baringo), Agriculture in the semi-arid lands of East Africa and irrigation projects in Africa (Gezira in Egypt) It was established that Africa is already experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change as seen in frequent floods and droughts and shift in marginal agricultural systems. If the predicted temperature increase of 4.5 degrees centigread is realized by the year 2030, then agricultural systems in Africa will be seriously affected particularly the food security section. There will be reduced land for agriculture because the high agricultural potential areas will become arid, Coastal areas will be submerged, affecting fishing and human settlement, there will be increased desertification and disappearance of ice and snow on the mountains. The effects of climate change may include: reduced agricultural land use due to submergence of coastal regions and increased aridity in the tropical high agricultural potential regions, there will be increased incidences of farm pests and diseases, over cultivation, food insecurity and poverty especially in Tropical regions. Africa will face serious challenges in her endeavor to adapt to new mechanisms of food production for sustainable development.]


[The paper evaluates the effectiveness of sacred forests, taboos, and totems associated with various animal species in Ghana for biodiversity conservation. The *Nkodurom* and *Pinkwae* Sacred Groves have been preserved by local communities through beliefs enforced by a range of restrictions and taboos. In both cases, the groves are the only relatively intact forest in severely degraded landscapes and farmlands. The mollusc *Tympanotonus fuscatus*, three species of turtles (Green, Olive Ridley, Leatherback), and the Black heron are exploited by many coastal communities in Ghana, but in all cases, the species are protected by some communities through traditional beliefs and taboos. An analysis of the distribution and abundance of these species along the Ghana coast showed much higher numbers in the areas where the species are protected by traditional belief systems. The densities of *Tympanotonus fuscatus* ranged from 172.3 to 326.2 m-2 at the site where they were protected, compared to 46.7 m-2 where they were exploited, while over 80% of all turtle nest records and 54% of Black Herons sightings occurred at the sites where the species are traditionally protected. The paper discusses the value of traditional strategies as a tool for species and habitat conservation and calls for a global assessment of indigenous conservation systems, and promotion of those systems that have potential to augment biodiversity conservation efforts in Africa.]

The sacred kaya forests of coastal Kenya are sites of biological and cultural significance currently threatened with degradation and destruction. Conservation efforts over the last fifteen years have had some positive results but the prospects for survival of these forests in areas of acute rural poverty and rapid cultural change remain doubtful. Appropriate cultural tourism and ecotourism projects can generate income for the local communities and thus enhance the forests’ chances of survival. One such project was initiated in 2001 at Kaya Kinondo, a sacred forest of the Digo sub-group of the Mijikenda people on the south Kenya coast. The context of this project is outlined, and a discussion of its history is given with particular attention to environmental, socio-cultural, and economic issues. Information drawn from the experiences of the authors and from interviews with local people and visitors is used to evaluate consequences of the project. After seven years of operation, the Kaya Kinondo Ecotourism Project can be seen as a qualified success, and provides some guidelines for the successful implementation of ecotourism projects to enhance the conservation of threatened, natural, sacred sites in other parts of the world.


These six articles present case studies of the complex relationship between culture, religion and nature across a broad arc of sub-Saharan Africa, including Ghana, Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Kenya, Mozambique, and South Africa. The authors are scholars who are either native to, or long-term residents of these countries, and each presents the results of recent fieldwork on the intersections of belief and conservation. Collectively, they demonstrate that sacredness does not simply equal conservation. They show instead that social, political, and economic arrangements mediate cosmology and ecology, and it is in these institutional arenas that Africans negotiate both spiritual values and pragmatic material goals.


Leaving behind rural, land and sea-dependent, and strongly place-based existences, many Blacks immigrated to Miami, Florida from the rural United States south and from the Bahamas during the first half of the twentieth century. This Black diaspora retains contacts, from sister-church relationships to family ties, to the deep power of memory that connect these Miami settlers to their ‘homelands’. This research was ethnographically based and took place among churchgoing Blacks in Miami. Research included participant observation at various churches in addition to over fifty interviews with congregants framed by three in-depth case studies. The findings revealed connections to the natural environment among churchgoing Blacks influenced by these place-centered memories of their youth. From their love of plants to knowledge of agriculture, fishing and land-use patterns to the concept of sharing food and self-sufficiency, their rural and/or island roots had profound impacts on how these subjects perceived the interaction between people and nature. The interpretations of nature that sprang from the diasporic experience were manifested in environmental attitudes, concerns and select activism that demonstrated the potential to positively affect urban and suburban neighborhoods and nature.


African American intellectual thought has long provided a touchstone for national politics and civil rights, but, as Kimberly Smith reveals, it also has much to say about our relationship to nature. In this first single-authored book to link African American and environmental studies, Smith uncovers a rich tradition stretching from the abolition movement through the Harlem Renaissance, demonstrating that black Americans have been far from indifferent to environmental concerns. Beginning with environmental critiques of slave agriculture in the early nineteenth century and evolving through critical engagements with scientific racism, artistic primitivism, pragmatism, and twentieth-century urban reform, Smith highlights the continuity of twentieth-century black politics with earlier efforts by slaves and freedmen to possess the
land. She examines the works of such canonical figures as Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Alain Locke, all of who wrote forcefully about how slavery and racial oppression affected black Americans' relationship to the environment. Smith's analysis focuses on the importance of freedom in humans' relationship with nature. According to black theorists, the denial of freedom can distort one's relationship to the natural world, impairing stewardship and alienating one from the land. Her pathbreaking study offers the first linkage of the early conservation movement to black history, the first detailed description of black agrarianism, and the first analysis of scientific racism as an environmental theory. It also offers a new way to conceptualize black politics by bringing into view its environmental dimension, as well as a normative environmental theory grounded in pragmatism and aimed at identifying the social conditions for environmental virtue.


**RECENT LITERATURE ON SHARIA IN AFRICA**


[Vigilantism is a term often used to describe any form of policing and ordering that is non-state, and under analysis ‘vigilantism’ has often emerged as negative, associated with violence and violation of individual rights. However, a closer examination of the origin, practice, function and structure of some of the groups often referred to as vigilantes in Nigeria has revealed that not all of them fit into our understanding of vigilantes as gangs of youths that mete out violence and jungle justice to their victims. Some of these vigilantes have their roots in the community and are a preferred form of policing in Nigeria. Many such groups exist across the shari’a states of northern Nigeria, drawing their legitimacy from different and sometimes competing sources: the Yan’banga from the Hausa traditional and communal establishment, the hisba from the religious establishment, and the Yan’achaba from the political establishment. This article has two aims. One is to question the over-generalization associated with vigilantism in Nigeria by analysing one form of vigilantism – hisba – within the context of informal policing in Zamfara and Kano states. The other is to situate the issue of vigilantes within the northern Nigerian political context rather than within a simple moral framework that casts vigilantes as violent criminals.]


[This article is based on a comparative case study of Common Law jurisdiction involving case law in Kenya and Tanzania where both or either of the parties are Muslims. The status of Muslim Personal Law and its applicability in both jurisdictions raises various issues of conflict. The article analyzes contentious matters arising from such conflicts and suggests possible ways to reconcile between the two judicial trends, taking into consideration the contributions made by modern Muslim scholars such as Rashid Ridha and Imam Muhammad Abu Zahra. The article further points to the influence of Common Law principles on cases that involve Muslim disputants that has led to conflicts in areas such as presumption of Common Law marriage which cannot be accommodated in the Shari’ah. The article attempts to argue that in issues that Muslim scholars are silent or have divergent opinions, reconciliation between the Shari’ah and Common Law principles can be effected.]


[???? welfare principle. Contemporary Muslim legal scholars need to accommodate these notions without sacrificing their religious values.]


[The government of Kano State in Muslim northern Nigeria reintroduced shari’a in December 2000 and established a new board for film and video censorship charged with the responsibility to ‘sanitize’ the video industry and enforce the compliance of video films with the moral standards of Islam. Stakeholders of the industry responded by inserting religious issues into their narratives. They also added a new feature genre: conversion to Islam. It is characterized by violent Muslim/pagan encounters, usually set in a mythical past, which culminate in the conversion of the pagans. After outlining northern Nigerian video culture, the article explores local debates about the religious legitimacy of film and video and their influence upon recent developments within the video industry.]


[The article puts forwards the argument that there is a pervasive anxiety among Muslims over their security, both physical and spiritual, in today’s northern Nigeria. It is an anxiety partly millenarian, partly political, that seeks to recreate a stronger sense of the ‘core North’ as dar al-Islam, with notionally ‘closed’ boundaries, just as it was in the pre-colonial Sokoto Caliphate. This has led first to the re-establishment, within twelve of Nigeria’s 36 states, of full shari’ah law and then to the formation of a sometimes large corps of hisba (wrongly called ‘vigilantes’) despite Nigeria having a constitution that both is secular and reserves institutions like police and prisons to the federal government. The article also explores the problem of ‘dual citizenship’ where pious Muslims see themselves at the same time both as Nigerians and as members of the wider Islamic umma.]


[Since Nigeria has regained credibility by its transition to democracy in 1999, the steps taken to implement the Islamic Criminal Law in some Northern states are watched with anxiety and have given rise to a great deal of discussion. There has been a tendency to perceive the situation as a conflict between two clearly defined antagonistic camps. However, interactions between Christians and Muslims in Northern Nigeria took many different forms since 1999. Apart from the widely reported clashes (which did not always run along clear-cut religious lines), there were also new efforts towards Muslim–Christian cooperation—both at the grassroots’ as well as the states’ level. Muslims and Christians are redefining their positions and adapting them in different ways to local circumstances, thereby developing some creative responses to the tensions of religious co-existence.]


Ostien, Philip, Jamila M. Nashir & Franz Kogelmann (eds.) 2003, Comparative Perspectives on Shari’ah in Nigeria. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 448 pp., ISBN 9789780295479 (pbk) [The papers in this book are the result of an international conference entitled ‘the Shari’ah debate and the shaping of Muslim and Christian identities in Northern Nigeria’. The conference was convened by the University of Jos in northern Nigeria in the wake of the religious/civil strife in the area in 2001 and 2002. The conference considered recent developments in law and religion, and shari’ah from local and global perspectives. The publication is intended to serve as an example of constructive dialogue in an academic setting between Muslims, Christians and those of neither religion, and as a permanent contribution to the literature on law and religion in Nigeria.]


[An outstanding issue in contemporary Islamist revivalism in sub-Saharan Africa is constitutional reform, which will ensure the re-entrenchment of the shari’ah as a main, if not the main, legal system in countries with Muslim majority or where Muslims constitute a sizeable minority. Although shari’ah had always had a restricted sphere of operation, especially in Islamic societies where colonialism had often deprived it of jurisdiction on areas other than family law and religious endowments, agitations for its full entrenchment have always surfaced under new political dispensations. Until 1999, the penal aspect of the shari’ah was all but suspended]
in Nigeria. But on 21 January 2000, the governor of Zamfara State (North Eastern Nigeria) reintroduced this aspect, and since then, most of the northern Nigerian states, and to a certain extent, some areas in Yorubaland (south-west Nigeria), have equally tried their hands at it. This paper examines the history of the Islamic legal system in Nigeria and the efforts of the Nigerian youth in promoting or opposing its application as a veritable tool for solving contemporary political, social, and economic problems bedevilling the nation.


[Among Muslims across the African continent, there is a noticeable turn towards greater compliance with globalizing norms of Islamic behaviour. Beginning from this widespread observation, this article interrogates the changes that lie concealed under the veil of homogeneity. It identifies a complex pattern of identity formation and power politics, cultural conservativism, marginalized syncretism and symbolic exchange. The emergence of a public sphere has propelled the production of Muslim identity formation in the service of established elites and youth searching for an authentic approach towards Islam. But a turn to Islam also takes a conservative and isolationist turn that thrives in the context of the failure of modern schooling and economy, and provides a haven of dignified marginalization around the great cultures of the past. A syncretist approach to Islam and African cultures is pushed to the background. But there is reason to believe that such an approach thrives on the margins of the society. A global politics of identity and globalization provide the context for a continued exchange of Islamic symbols among Africans in general. The politics of resistance is accompanied by the politics of identity and global conflicts.]


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**GENDER & ORDINATION IN THREE NIGERIAN AICs**


This book supplies valuable analysis of gender practices as integral to Aladura Church rituals in Yoruba land. It is a fresh insight into the complexities attending the role of culture in diversifying religious practices. According to this book traditional Yoruba culture is a source of both liberating and constraining features of Aladura gender practices. A silent strength of this book is the presentation of three different situations with respect to gender practices in the Christ Apostolic Church, Church of the Lord Aladura and the Celestial Church of Christ, at once. It comes to fore eventually that in all three churches women’s bodies are controlled to varying degrees and their activities constrained, but in ways that do not preclude women from empowering the respective churches, spiritually and materially.

The book is divided into three sections, which are preceded by an introduction and prologue and followed by a conclusion, notes, references and an index. Section one explores the historical contexts and the place of gender in the institutional narratives of the three churches that constitute the focus of the work; whereas section two analyses the exchange between ritual symbol and gender in the worship sessions of the three Aladura Churches under consideration. Also, section three, evaluates gender and power within and without church structures in the three churches concerned.

Section one of the book identifies the colonial-missionary era in Nigeria as the context in which these three churches emerged as essentially a religious response to the desire of the people for well-being. The significant roles of women in the founding years of the Christ Apostolic Church are highlighted. These include the contributions of Sophie Odulami and Mrs. O.A. Pearce. The Christ Apostolic Church provided education for women but this was highly gendered. The contributions of women in the foundation years of the Church of the Lord Aladura are also documented. These include Julie Ositelu, a wife of the founder, and Beatrice Talabi of Iperu. Others are Mama Fanny Aina, Mama Comfort Solanke and Nana Akua Afriyie of Ghana. Worthy of mention is a ‘Women Ministry’ in the Church of the Lord Aladura wherein women are ordained into ministry beginning from 1959. The accounts of the founding years of the Celestial Church of Christ present women as recipients of miracles but also as conducts of spirit-
ual power as prophetesses. The role of women in the founding years of the Celestial Church of Christ has been rightly described as proactive, especially in the contributions of Yaman, the first wife of the founder, Samuel Bilehou Joseph Oshoffa. An important observation by the book in this section is that historical memory of women’s contribution to the establishment of a church affects its gender practices, symbols and rituals.

Section two of this book submits that worship experience in the three churches differ for men and women. In addition, to varying degrees, the female body elicits attention in worship experiences in the three churches. This hinges on the ambivalence of the Aladura concerning menstrual blood and this is rooted in African rituals. Compliance and obedience to these prohibitive regulations for the female body, keeping women away from the altar in Aladura Churches, is premised on the claim to divine instruction as its base. The influence of the Yoruba culture on worship experiences in these churches also comes to fore. These include fasting, prayer, women’s leading roles in rituals, and the belief in malevolent forces and their influences on humanity. Worthy of mention here is the correct understanding that menstrual blood among the Yoruba should not be presented as contamination but as the source of life that should be respected and requires a certain physical distance in awe. I must commend the cultural sensitivity of the author on the Yoruba understanding of soup as correlating with comfort and as constituting a level of sacrifice in ‘white fasting’, i.e. the fasting period during which the individual avoids any type of dark-coloured food such as oil, pepper or soup (see p. 73).

Section three of the book explicates the negotiation mechanism between gender and power by women within and outside of the Aladura Churches under investigation. In the Christ Apostolic Church for instance, women are not ordained but they may preach, found churches and head evangelical ministries. Examples of CAC women leaders are Mrs. M.B. Odeleke, Mama Dorcas Siyanbola Olaniyi and Mama J.O. Ogunranti. The ordination of women in the Church of the Lord Aladura is a divine injunction and as long as the church exists it shall not cease. Yet until postmenopausal age, ordained CLA women have limited duties ascribed to them. In the Celestial Church of Christ, women are excluded from ordination and holy space. Consequently, the bible is utilized both to sacralize and to prohibit women from holy space and holy office. Thus revelation can be used both for and against women’s ordination depending on whether its human conduit is predisposed for or against the policy.

The book concludes with the observation that the Aladura experience is now international and church leaders perceive this as integral to worldwide evangelism. The implication of this however is the trans-location of gender practices rooted in Yoruba cultural milieu into another culture. The book identifies the need for Aladura adherents in the diaspora to avoid equating menstrual avoidance rituals with female powerlessness. I am persuaded that this notion is premised on the different axis of understanding of power in the African perception, i.e. power may not be visible or formal, yet it remains potent. The author confirms this when she submits that ‘Women count in the day-to-day life of these Aladura Churches whether [they are] ordained or not, …’ (see page 137).

This book is a must for anyone interested in church history, feminism, religion, gender studies and/or anthropology.

As John Peel observes in the foreword to this work, Matthew Ojo pioneered the study of charismatic movements and early Pentecostalism when most scholars still focused on aspects of Atadura/ African Instituted Churches. Inspired by the works of Harold Turner and John Peel in the 1960s, and responding to the undisguised consternation of mainline churches at the rapid growth of the indigenous churches, scholars missed the flowering of charismatic movements among the youth. Deploying an encapsulation strategy, the former Archbishop of Onitsha, Cardinal Francis Arinze, sought to counter the Atadura influence by posting one of his priests, Father Ikeobi, to hold charismatic-like prayers on Tuesdays. Little did he know that there was a powerful Tuesday Group in the University of Ibadan that was radicalizing the Inter-Varsity Christian Union which had broken away from the Student Christian Movement. The group promoted the Baptism of the Spirit which became a cardinal feature of the new movement.

When scholars caught up with the movement, its character – which changed in every decade – was responding to the surging American electronic mass media in the 1980s. The late Benson Idahosa and a new class of professionally and highly educated leadership reshaped the face of Nigerian Pentecostalism. But this period was near what Francis Fukuyama termed the end of history – the victory of capitalism and liberal democracy. In the midst of globalization, sociologists dominated the analysis, pushed historians aside, and deployed various shades of instrumentalist analysis to privilege the appropriation of the ‘resources of externality’. The religious dimension became mooted in the welter of rational choice theories and market economy perspectives. Nigerian Pentecostalism was imaged as an extension of the American electronic church - a crossless Christianity that was fascinated with a ‘prosperity gospel’.

Ojo’s work is important as a detailed historical reconstruction of the early beginnings, showing that neither the Student Christian Movement nor the Scripture Union catalyzed the charismatic movement. He recovers the religious discourse to explain how the radicalized youth first supplanted the SCM and formed the Inter-Varsity Christian Union and then started a fight within the IVCU to privilege the born-again experience. He does not ignore how external evangelists came to minister and share their literature among speaking-in-tongues, spirit-filled believers. Ojo meticulously traces the development of the movement in both urban and rural contexts; he attends to its doc-

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49 Reprinted from http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4106/is_/ai_n27997174/tag=artBody;col1 (copyright African Studies Association April 2008)
trines, liturgy, practices, political stance, passion for evangelism, and puritan ethics – including the socioeconomic backdrop to the rise and development of the movement.

This book concentrates on the charismatic movement in western Nigeria among the author’s own people, the Yoruba, and within the institutions of higher learning located in that region of Nigeria. Occasionally he mentions the evangelistic excursion of some of the charismatic youth from eastern Nigeria, but he does not write the story of this revival movement that started in the 1960s. Elaborating on a chapter in my book, *The Embattled Gods: The Christianization of Igboland, 1841-1991* (Africa World Press, 1996), Richard Burgess recovered the story of the revival in a doctoral dissertation (‘The Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny: A Religious Movement among the Igbo People of Eastern Nigeria’, University of Birmingham, 2001); since then a number of doctoral dissertations have followed from the University of Nigeria-Nsukka on a variety of themes: on the Idahoasa factor; on the role of Pa Ezeigbo (one of five young men who spoke in tongues in 1934 and invited the Assemblies of God into Nigeria in 1939); and on the Catholic Renewal Movement. Ojo himself has broadened his research on the expansion of the early charismatic movement into Muslim northern Nigeria, its missionary spread throughout Francophone West Africa, and its links with the Ghanaian charismatic movement.

This book is foundational. It is lucid with good illustrations.

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Christopher Smith

MILD MANNERED MUSINGS


Ogbu Kalu’s grasp of the English language is not perfect, and apparently the editors at Oxford University Press edit while drunk. I can’t think of any other way to explain the glaring typos, misspellings, sentence fragments, and other grammatical issues in Kalu’s latest book, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. After about the fifth time the word ‘implode’ was used to mean ‘explode’, I had to restrain myself from writing a nasty letter to the people at Oxford revoking their English language privileges. Once I got over that, however, I was able to appreciate the extraordinary amount of research and thought that Kalu clearly put into this book. It was a monumental effort, and one that Kalu executed flawlessly from start to finish. While the entire book was interesting, two things in particular stood out to me. The first was the tension between Kalu’s African Pentecostal faith commitments and his effort to maintain a detached perspective

suitable for academic publishing. The second was his discussion of the tension between Pentecostal Christianity as a foreign import and Pentecostal Christianity as an indigenous phenomenon.

Kalu’s charismatic faith occasionally intrudes into the book in fairly significant ways. In arguing for Pentecostal polygenesis, for example, he asserts that ‘the same Holy Spirit started the process by manifesting itself to believers all over the whole inhabited earth without deference to any single geographical source’ (14). Similarly, in a swipe at secularization theory he notes that ‘There appears to be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in large measures in these times’ (68). Kalu’s faith leads him, among other things, to vigorously reject Western researchers’ pluralist assumptions (71, 81) and to deny the label ‘Christian’ to African Indigenous Churches (AICs) that reject the centrality of the Scriptures and/or fail to sufficiently appreciate the Lordship of Christ (77). Curiously, after insisting that sociology cannot adequately deal with religious experience and that church history must be confessional, he complains that Pentecostals do not have a viable theology of dialogue and recommends that they let God be the judge of who is or is not a Christian (82-3)!

Despite the ostensible strength of his Pentecostal faith, Kalu seems to have a healthy sense of the historically conditioned nature of all Christian experience and of the viability of deliberately crafting contextually relevant theologies. He also acknowledges the validity of sociological explanations for Pentecostal growth in conjunction with his own supernaturalist explanation (cf. 287-9).

Perhaps because he is not interested in the debate over whether missions constitute cultural imperialism, Kalu avoids polemic and manages to paint a subtle portrait of the tensions between externality and internality in African Pentecostalism. On the one hand, Kalu can affirm that Africans have lost their story and adopted another people’s story (4) and that American influence played a significant formative role in Pentecostalism, especially in the 1980’s (18). On the other hand, Kalu sees the African Pentecostal movement as a ‘quest for power and identity through religion’ (3). The interesting thing about this argument is that it does not hinge upon indigenization. He is uninterested in AICs that have adapted Christianity to fit African belief and ritual. Rather, he seeks to demonstrate that when Pentecostalism arrived in Africa it already had within it powerful resonances with ‘the African map of the universe’. In Kalu’s words, Pentecostals offer ‘new realities’ that, ‘though seemingly from outside, come in to fulfill aspirations within the tradition and, then, to offer quite significantly the basis of self-understanding within the tradition’ (186). Of course, this does not mean that Kalu entirely neglects indigenization or acquiesces to assertions of the Pentecostal movement’s utter externality (12, 57). To the contrary, his view is that the interplay between internal and external forces has produced a new, emergent culture (16). Along these lines he appeals to the concept of ‘glocalization’, which asserts that local contexts domesticate external, global resources for their own purposes (189). And finally, he notes that the flow of influence is reversing: Africa is now exporting its distinctive spirituality all over the world (271-91).

Drawing on more than twenty years as an observing participant in African independent churches (AICs), Brigid Sackey offers readers an original and important examination of what may very well be a new phase in the history of women in AICs in Ghana. The 1980s and 1990s saw extensive research carried out on AICs; much of this documented women’s initiative, creativity, and relative assertiveness within AICs. Building upon that work, Sackey argues that women’s leadership has reached a new level in the twenty-first century. Rather than enlisting male deputies, or handing the management of their churches over to male successors, many of today’s AIC female founders are striving to ensure that women retain control of their churches. Undergirding Sackey’s analysis is the assertion that ‘the religious or church platform is first and foremost a strong forum for social change’ (vii). By taking charge of their congregations in a more definitive manner than their predecessors, today’s women prophets, pastors, and ministers are not so much mirroring larger social trends as setting new precedents. Their example, Sackey contends, is bound to precipitate similar changes in gender roles in other parts of society.

As a Ghanaian anthropologist exposed to AICs since she was a child in the late 1950s, Sackey is well positioned to reflect upon developments that have taken place in African Christianity over the last half century. Her ongoing exposure to, and varied kinds of involvement with, AICs over many years gives her work a vantage point that many studies lack. Sackey posits a fundamental continuity between the older AICs (such as the sunsumasore and the aladura) and today’s large, neo-Pentecostal or charismatic mega-churches. For her, these two represent phases along a continuum of African Christian women’s agency, such that today’s women leaders build upon models and initiatives of their forbears. Indeed, Sackey calls for ‘relaxing’ classificatory categories, as most churches in Ghana – mission churches included – are moving toward ‘a convergence in aspects of worship’ (26).

Chapters 3 to 6, which concentrate on religious experience and healing, are particularly illuminating. Sackey offers vivid glimpses into the lives of a variety of compelling women ministers and the diverse challenges faced by members of their congregations –

including HIV/AIDS, infertility, financial difficulties, and spiritual affliction such as demonic possession. Sackey suggests that the assertiveness that many Ghanaian Christian women exhibit is rooted in the ‘traditional cultural foundations’ of the matrilineal Akan – foundations that have become ‘an integral part of new systems of belief, consciously or otherwise’ (179). This important thesis bears fuller elaboration because it brings into focus the question as to what extent Sackey’s observations about gender in contemporary Ghanaian AICs hold true in African societies with very different cultural foundations. It is hoped that other scholars, following Sackey’s lead, might take up this issue.

The volume would have been enhanced by a map locating the many towns and cities mentioned in the text, as well as a few photos of the impressive women we meet within the pages of the study. Nevertheless, Sackey’s book is a fine resource for scholars and students interested in Christianity in Africa, and in gender and religion more generally.

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INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS:
A REVIEW ESSAY

James L. Cox is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Edinburgh. He is a well-known scholar in the field of study of African religions, focusing on African Christianity, especially in Zimbabwe. He has also pursued research on the religions of native Arctic peoples in Alaska. He has actively worked closely with indigenous scholars to develop academic networks for conferences, student and staff exchange, and publications in Africa.

From Primitive to Indigenous, which is published in the Vitality of Indigenous Religions series edited by Graham Harvey, addresses a problem faced by all scholars of indigenous religions. By what name do we categorize the cultures and religions of indigenous peoples? Most university departments of religion have courses on the major world religions. But courses on Indigenous Religions are squeezed into the category of ‘primal religions’, ‘nature religions’, ‘piliterature religions’, and even, at some universities, ‘primitive religions’ (not only in the West but also in India and Asian countries). Research publications and theoretical discussions in the comparative study of religion also use such terms. These terms are, however, burdened with the ideological baggage

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of ‘primitivism’. Even though we as scholars traffic in such categories all the time, the
crux of the matter with this particular classificatory exercise is that it is quite often the
romping place for colonial stereotypes, racism, and civilizational preening. A recent
volume on primitivism edited by Jacob K. Olupona has addressed this issue from vari-
ous perspectives, and Cox refers to several of the contributions in that volume. A

growing number of publications on primitivism in the study of different cultural areas
have also appeared during the past decade.

At the same time, however, there is a justified need to maintain the legitimacy and
necessity of working with a category of non-Western peoples and cultures who do not
subscribe to the major world religions. Why? Because 1) their cultures and religions
have for better or worse played an exceptionally central role in the development of
methodologies and theories in a wide variety of academic disciplines, 2) their cultures
and religions deserve study and comparative reflection in their own right, and 3) they
are constantly under dangerous pressure from dominant societies, industries, and inter-
est groups who do not care about multicultural heritage, and thus the importance of sus-
tained intellectual interest in them.

Against this backdrop, faced as I say by all of us, James Cox wishes to radically re-
think the category in question. The term ‘indigenous religions’, which he subscribes to,
is relatively neutral and is also used by indigenous scholars themselves. But what kinds
of problems need to be resolved and revised? The short answer was formulated by Ja-
cob Olupona in the above-mentioned book: ‘while the “world” religious traditions of
Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity are amply studied and represent-
ed in the academy, the study of “indigenous” religions is speciously cut off from religi-
ous studies’ (2004: xiv). Cox uses this observation as a starting point for critically anal-
izing the history of studying and teaching ‘indigenous religions’ as distinct from ‘world
religions’. He argues that the term ‘indigenous religions’, although acceptable, is still
highly problematic because it attempts to classify widely different religions, cultures,
and worldviews into one category. The case study approach which most scholars use is
one way of dealing with the problem, but there is a continual tension between the cate-
gory and the people being studied. This is of course not unusual. This is the way con-
ceptualization works. It is simultaneously revealing and restricting. What, for instance,
is Christianity? Or Buddhism? Recent theoretical discussions have clearly pointed to
the inadequacy of our conceptions. But what is the alternative? The alternative is a
complete disintegration into disparate disciplines with no common reference at all. That
alternative leads to particularism and ideographic research resulting quite often, as our
research histories have unequivocally shown, in the proliferation of naive and absurd
theories about religion, and a whole series of other topics. Another alternative is the cel-
boration of religious ideologies and worldviews in dialogical methodology. This alter-
native, however, leads to religious reproduction. It further confuses or obliterates the
difference between studying religion and practicing religion. Furthermore, this ap-
proach is not necessarily true to its sources.

This book (Cox 2007) analyzes the underlying assumptions and development of re-
search on indigenous religions in chapter 1 (9-31) and the essentialist assumptions be-
hind the category ‘world religions’ (chapter 2; 33-52). Then Cox focuses exclusively on

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two concepts: ‘indigenous’ (chapter 3; 53-74) and ‘religion’ (chapter 4; 75-93). The resulting clarified concept ‘indigenous religions’ is then tested on two cases: the Yupiit of Alaska (chapter 5; 95-117) and the Korekore in Zimbabwe (chapter 6; 119-139). Cox argues that the term survived the tests and moves on (chapter 7; 141-167) to a detailed discussion of the term in relation to the debate on primitivism between myself, the Dutch scholar of African religions Jan Platvoet, and the editor of the series in which the book under review is published, the British scholar Graham Harvey. Harvey has written on a wide range of topics from Judaism to paganism, Satanism, animism, shamanism, and indigenous religions. The book ends with a brief ‘Afterword’ (169-171) that sketches out undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Indigenous Religions.

After a critical discussion of prior British research, including his home university at Edinburgh, Cox discusses the intrinsic essentialism associated with the term ‘world religions’ used by scholars of comparative religion and theology (e.g., Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Ninian Smart). He then draws on the groundbreaking work of Jonathan Z. Smith conducted during the 1970s and 1980s on this tendency and then, in a more detailed way, on the work of Tomoko Masuzawa. The point of this discussion is, using Masuzawa’s phrase, that the category ‘world religions’ is intended primarily ‘to distinguish the West from the rest’ (2005: 2f.).

Cox writes that ‘the re-configuration of “primitive” religions first into “primal” religions and then into “indigenous” … suffers from the very same political and essentialist errors inherent in the world religions paradigm’ (52). Therefore he critically examines the use of the term in the literature and develops a scientific definition of ‘indigenous’. After discussing definitions and characterizations presented by Jan Platvoet and Graham Harvey, Cox introduces his minimum definition of the term that outlines what he not only regards as the major characteristic of indigenous religions but also as the ‘one central belief found among indigenous societies everywhere’, namely that ‘indigenous’ ‘refers to its being bound to a location; participants in the religion are native to a place. … The single and overriding belief shared amongst Indigenous Religions derives from a kinship-based worldview in which attention is directed towards ancestor spirits as the central figures in religious life and practice’ (69).

One could counter that kinship-based worldviews are also found in other religions (for instance in China and Japan) and that reducing Indigenous Religions to one central belief is hazardous. Cox’s minimum definition, however, does not imply that this is the only common feature of Indigenous Religions. There are a huge variety of other factors, but these, Cox argues, are shared by virtually all other religions.

Cox moves on with a deconstruction of the ‘world religions’ essentialist definition of the term ‘religion’. Drawing on some of the contributions in Platvoet and Molendijk’s anthology The Pragmatics of Defining Religion: Contexts, Concepts, and Contests (1999) and on French sociologist Danièle Hervieu-Léger’s Religion as a Chain of Memory (2000), Cox defines religion as referring ‘to identifiable communities that base their beliefs and experiences of postulated non-falsifiable realities on a tradition that is transmitted authoritatively from generation to generation’ (85). This socio-cultural definition avoids theological essentialist definitions. Whether it breaks new ground, as he

55 The Invention of World Religions or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism. Chicago 2005.
claims, in how we conceive and study religion is another question. My own work on the
definition of religion comes very close to Cox’s definition. I identified similar proper-
ties because, like Cox, I assume religion to be a cultural and social institution (1999:
445-475).

Cox brings his two theoretical discussions to a well-formulated summary: ‘[W]e
will delineate the study of Indigenous Religions as those identifiable communities
whose traditions relate to the place to which they belong and whose authority is derived
from the chain of memory traceable to ancestors. The beliefs and experiences of these
identifiable communities refer to postulated non-falsifiable alternate realities, which are
connected to the locality to which the people belong and are related integrally to ances-
tral traditions. The study of the religions of indigenous societies, unlike other religions,
is restricted by definition to authoritative traditions about non-falsifiable alternate reali-
ties connected specifically to particular locations and kinship lines, but it also includes
the ways such religions have changed under the forces of colonialism and globalization,
which have forced them to accommodate to competing world views’ (89).

Cox concludes the chapter with a programmatic conc lusion: ‘The study of Indigen-
ous Religions on this line of thinking belongs in university departments of religious stu-
dies, as a theoretical problem for the study of religions, as instances of specific, locali-
zed kinship-based religions, as ways in which globalized religions influence and have
been influenced by local religions, and as cases that address and illuminate rationally,
empirically, and specifically pre-formulated research questions’ (92).

These are matters to which I ascribe. The empirical ‘tests’ of his definition in his
two case studies are more descriptions than tests, which illustrate that his definition of
‘indigenous religions’ establishes parameters ‘around the category without positing a
universal content for what fits into the classification’ (117).

By far the most interesting chapter is the final one (chapter 7) in which Cox syste-
matizes the criticisms of implicit primitivist thought in current religious studies raised
by me and Jan Platvoet, and compares these criticisms to the work of Graham Harvey
and Cox’s own work. Briefly, I criticized tendencies in American religious studies (for
instance Mircea Eliade) and in American popular culture (for instance neo-shamanism)
as a new primitivism. I argue that the new primitivism, like the old one, is harmful on
two counts: 1) it provides us with skewed mirror-images of ourselves and not of the
people we claim to describe, and 2) it causes us to meet local indigenes with stereotypi-
cal and romanticized assumptions that real, living indigenes cannot possibly live up to.
Positive primitivism, I argued:

‘… keeps real indigenous peoples out of the picture just as effectively as the scientific racism
of the nineteenth century! The way out of this must surely lie in developing approaches that
are not intrinsically associated with primitivist notions (in the positive sense) of values lost in
some mythical past and/or only found in indigenous or archaic cultures. The answer must also
be found outside the realm of religious doctrine, mainly because most religions, including in-
digenous ones, are implacably primitivistic (about themselves in the positive sense and about
others in the negative sense). I suggest that a way to move beyond primitivism is not along the
path of intuitive empathy, creative hermeneutics, the misunderstood interplay of mutually ab-
solute discourses, or misanthropic ecological ideologies, but rather through a radical revitali-
zation of the Enlightenment project’ (Geertz 2004: 62).
Similar arguments are found in Aidan Campbell’s book on African primitivism, which Cox also discusses (Campbell 1997). Jan Platvoet picked up on my arguments and wrote a vigorous attack in the Bulletin of the African Association for the Study of Religions (Platvoet 2004), in a review of three of Graham Harvey’s collections: Indigenous Religions: A Companion (2000a), Indigenous Religious Musics (2000b), and Readings Indigenous Religions (2002). Platvoet argued that Harvey’s work is partisan and primitivistic. Harvey denied his partisanship in the next issue of the Bulletin (2004) but argued that my call for critical rationality is not the only methodology appropriate to academic research. He argues that the Cartesian version of modernity is nothing more than ‘a Western/European tribal view of and approach to the world’ (2004: 38).

I do not think that ‘Cartesian-phobia’ is a sufficient counter-argument against pursuing rational, theoretically-informed, empirical research on indigenous cultures and religions. There are dualisms and dualistic conceptions throughout world history and in all parts of the world, including many indigenous religions. That science may also have dualistic assumptions is no devastating criticism (many scientists, by the way, are monists). Objectivism is also a human universal. People objectivize all the time. By objectivizing the world, we extend our minds into the material world and use various objects to offload an overburdened working memory and to allow us to objectively view things. We objectivize concepts, relations, illusions, scenarios, and insights so that we can share them with other people, and they can share them with others. All what we do is somehow related to our involvement in social networks that thrive on the objectivation of common values, ideas, and feelings. A further validation of the term ‘objective’ is to be objective in various situations. This is not a particularly Western concept either. People all over the world use various methodologies to check and double-check other people’s claims. Some of these methodologies are clearly objective in a scientific sense, e.g., asking witnesses for their accounts or checking things out first hand. Other methodologies are not objective in a scientific sense, but are so in a symbolic sense, e.g., divination systems, visionary pronouncements, and so on.

What we must keep in mind is to be vigilant and reflective towards our methodologies and to remember that especially scholars pursuing fieldwork must realize that we are a part of the subject/object under study. A holistic methodology, on the other hand, I think is an illusion, even for those scholars who celebrate religious and ethnic worldviews. Life is too complex to be holistically reproduced in oral and written discourse. What scientists (in the humanities and social and natural sciences) attempt to do is to produce accounts of the world that are as close to the mark as humanly possible through the use of diverse methodologies and theoretical clarity which allow others to test their claims.

Cox argues that Platvoet’s criticism of Harvey was too harsh. But he concludes that Harvey’s work is clearly an animist theology even though it is not primitivistic. The animist theological approach is one that privileges the insider point of view and is thus part of the phenomenological tradition in religious studies. And, Cox writes, it is consistent with new trends in religious studies (161). I do not sympathize with such trends, nor does Cox, who writes: ‘Harvey’s approach, however, does raise the persistent problem associated with phenomenology that by giving priority to the perspective of believers, the scholar goes beyond engaging in dialogue for academic purposes and instead becomes an advocate for the beliefs and practices of religious communities. If this is
done unreflectively, it becomes evangelism. If it entails analysis and critical reflection, it is indistinguishable from theology’ (161f.).

Cox concludes that Harvey’s work is fully academic, but that it is undertaken to promote the animist cause ‘in opposition to what he regards as the distortion of reality foisted on the world by dualistic thinking, which severs mind from matter and distinguishes not only organic from inorganic substances, but sees personhood as resident only within humans” (162). Harvey is also an animist social activist, much along the line of theologies of liberation or feminism.

This is an interesting and challenging book. I sympathize with Cox’s approach, and even though he may not have solved the conceptual and methodological problems in the study of Indigenous Religions (who can claim to have done so anyway?), he has nevertheless produced a valuable contribution to our subject by presenting recent discussions and research on these issues. Even though the decades of anthro-bashing are over, and many inspiring and collaborative projects are developing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, we still need to contend with the stereotypes, romantizations, and primitivisms of some scholars in the study of religion and in the anthropology of religion. I concluded pessimistically in 2004 that I do not think we are capable of moving beyond primitivism. I hope to be proven wrong.

References
 SPIRITUAL POWER IN LONDON


This is a remarkable book for two reasons. First, because it was written fully thirty-five years after the initial research started, in 1969, to be resumed only in the 1990s. Second, because the book stands out for its sensitive discussion of an important but often neglected dimension of African religiosity, namely spiritual power. This is discussed through a case study of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church in London, as founded by Nigerian immigrants in the 1960s.

The issue of spiritual power runs as a thread through the book. After an introductory chapter, the study begins with an exposition of the social conditions of young Nigerians who had originally arrived in Britain as students, and who intended to return to join the elite in their home countries. The realities of life in Europe were as little anticipated then, it appears, as they are now. It is against this background that the founding of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church in London is situated in the following chapter. In subsequent chapters various aspects of spiritual power in this particular context are explored, such as divination, revelation, possession, and prayer. Unlike many authors, Hermione Harris takes Nigerian epistemologies seriously, taking as her point of departure not existing academic theories, but the personal experiences of individual believers. Hence she explains the concepts of spiritual power as they exist in the Yoruba language and the way these are used in *aladura* discourse. Harris leaves ample space for believers to express their own views of both the visible and the invisible worlds and the supposed relation between the two realms, basing her subtle argument on extensive quotations from her interviewees, as well as lengthy descriptions of ritual events.

The dynamic character of spiritual power is thus an important characteristic of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church that is highlighted in Harris’s approach. This dynamism is also shown by the way in which spiritual power has been transformed over time and distance, in the physical move from Nigeria to Britain. Although an ontological continuity between C & S and ‘traditional’ religion among the Yoruba can be demonstrated, Aladura revelation and Ifa divination, for example, are quite different, and the differences further evolve in the British context. It is the underlying principles that remain the same, and the binding element: spiritual power. Following some of her respondents, Harris uses the metaphor of electricity – perhaps not very original but certainly helpful – to discuss how spiritual power energizes those who believe in it. Her inves-
igation of spiritual empowerment, as we might call this process of mobilizing power, is rich and insightful. It should be read by everybody interested in understanding the new forms of African Christianity.

The concluding chapter has been written in the form of an epilogue, discussing some of today’s new (mega) churches in London that are also frequented by Nigerians. Given Harris’s long years of reflecting on the early phase of the Nigerian religious ‘diaspora’ (a term applied uncritically), it is not altogether surprising that this concluding part is not as incisive as the rest of the book. Other scholars may build further on her solid foundation, and they ought to address some of the recent literature that appears most relevant to Harris’s work. An important book is Stephen Ellis & Gerrie Ter Haar’s *Worlds of Power* (Oxford University Press, 2004), although this is not included in the bibliography, which contains mostly works before the year 2000 (suggesting that quite some time passed between submission of the manuscript to the publisher and its actual publication).

There is every reason to be grateful that Hermione Harris has had the courage to revive her work after so many years. This reviewer hopes that it will inform future scholars of African-initiated churches, in and outside Africa.

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*IMAGINING EVIL*


In the course of her comprehensive introduction, Gerrie ter Haar emphasizes that the majority of the contributors to the book are Africans. Her assertion that they know more of witchcraft since they have ‘lived experience’ of it is debatable. These African contributors are also teachers of religious studies and theology, and most of their contributions clearly reflect this. The most valuable articles in this collection are based not on experience but on research using the methods of social science.

The bulk of the book consists of descriptions, varying in quality, of witchcraft from various parts of Africa. It is startling that so few contributors are concerned with the major changes witchcraft beliefs have undergone, even in the last decades; they write almost as if present-day beliefs were merely survivals from the past. Stephen Nyoka Nyaga’s account (Tanzania) stands out for its meticulous field research and its recognition of the interplay of past and present. He is also the only one to consider another religion spreading in Africa, Islam, thus shedding some comparative light on the problem.

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Stephen Ellis aims to describe the influence of stories of the European witch hunts on historians and anthropologists, but his chapter is hampered by his incomplete knowledge of social anthropology and its contributions to more recent historical understanding of the witch hunts. The editor’s article, ‘Ghanaian Witchcraft Beliefs: A View from the Netherlands’, also disappoints, but for a different reason: it focuses on one pastor, his views and career rather than on Ghanaian beliefs in the diaspora, as the title seems to promise. Some suggestions for dealing with the problem represented by witchcraft accusations (it is not beliefs in witchcraft but actions taken against alleged witches that cause suffering, a distinction that deserves greater emphasis) are mooted. An interesting and rare instance in which such ideas have actually been tried out, in Zambia, is described by Hugo Hinfelaar, a Catholic missionary. While few of these contributions consider the extremes to which retribution against supposed witches has been taken recently, they are concerned with solving problems, a difference marking this book out from others in the field.

The most interesting – and controversial – article is the last in the book, in which Walter van Beek argues that anthropologists have been prevented by their relativist stance from investigating or understanding an important aspect of the subject of witchcraft. Intra- and intersociety variability in the consequences to those accused of witchcraft has been described but not explained. Understanding why violence does or does not ensue is essential if its modern manifestations are to be halted, but the failure to analyze if, how, and why a suspicion may be transmuted into action and what sort of action may result is also an analytical flaw. It prevents not only the development of counteractive measures but also full understanding of the phenomenon. His tilt at relativism will provoke debate, but his chapter does demonstrate significant gaps in our knowledge.

The second part of van Beek’s article is devoted to demonstrating a comparative method that recalls Mead or Benedict. ‘Six variables’ which ‘seem to form a logical chain ... of increasing witchcraft violence’ (303) are used to compare seven cultures, including historical Europe. This focus on the differences among societies rather than within them and on what encourages violence rather than what inhibits it is less practically oriented than it might have been. But van Beek nonetheless suggests a new field for research and one that might provide some solutions to the problems raised, as well as analytical insights.

All in all, this is a mixed bag but not without interest for students of witchcraft in contemporary Africa.
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[This paper compares the traditional African medicinal system with Western medicinal practice. The goal of both is to heal, protect, and make human life valuable. Hence, they are not mutually exclusive. The paper argues that the traditional perception of health with its metaphysical presupposition makes traditional medicine more functional and more germane to human practical needs than Western medicinal practice, which has pure science has its canon. However, for an effective health care delivery system in contemporary societies, the two approaches need to be integrated.]


[This work examines the counseling approaches and techniques used by Yoruba traditional healers of Nigeria. It also describes the functions performed by Yoruba traditional healers when they work within the Yoruba cultural milieu. The information, elicited from Yoruba traditional healers through videotape and interviews, was analyzed by a Nigerian woman from the Yoruba ethnic group. The results of the volume support the premise that culture plays a significant role in the kind of healing methods and counseling techniques used by professionals and traditional healers, as well as in the type of professionals chosen by clients for consultation concerning their problems.]


Akoko, Robert Mbe, & Timothy Mbuagi Oben 2005/06, ‘Christian Churches and the Democratization Conundrum in Cameroon’, in Africa Today 52, 3: 25-48

Akoko, Robert, 2007, “‘Ask and you shall be given’: Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon”, in Journal of Contemporary African Studies 25, 2: 299-315


[This article explores the complex relationship between Hip Hop Culture and the Islamic Faith, which have both been constructed by dominating discourses as ‘threats to American civilization’. Like the Muslim umma, the Global Hip Hop Nation functions as a worldwide network of ‘believers’ who have created ‘nationhood’ through cultural, ideological, and imaginary means. I view Hip Hop artists as ‘verbal mujahidin’, with their speech activities serving as alternative media sources narrating the experiences of a ‘nation’.


[The advent of modernity in the West is characterized by three main elements: capitalism, democracy and secularism. However, in order to understand this phenomenon, one must consider the role played by the so-called three religions of the Book: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Europe achieved modernity by capturing the classic past of the Ancient Greece, which has led to Renaissance. This strategy allowed Renaissance Europe to make the secularisation of social life a basis for modernity, and to decide that individuals could make their own history, and therefore should have the right to innovate and go beyond traditions. The kind of modernity brought about by the Renaissance breaks definitively with the fundamental principle of pre-modern societies, including those of Christian and feudal Europe. However, the 19th century Arab Islamic Renaissance never went beyond the parameters set by Islam, which would have otherwise enabled Muslims to break with traditions, and open up to modern concepts of freedom and democracy. Contemporary political Islam was not an authentic creation of the Muslim people, but was rather invented by the Orientalists in the service of British Imperialism in India. Political Islam, which denies the concept of emancipatory modernity, rejects the very principle of democracy as well as individual and collective rights. This poses a challenge to the development of Africa and the Middle East.]


[This paper is a literary critic’s attempt to complement the historian’s, the political scientist’s, and the Islamist’s accounts of the Islamic reform spirit in the dynamic Muslim community of Northern Nigeria. Consequently a thematic analysis of the religio-political reform poetry genre is put forth to illustrate the phenomenon.]


[This article examines the writing of Pentecostal history and in particular, the biases and presuppositions associated with it. The problem of sources and the neglect of the important role of indigenous (‘native’) workers in the historiography of Pentecostalism in Africa, Asia and Latin America is the main focus. It refutes the idea of an American ‘Jerusalem’ and urges a rewriting of this history from the perspective of those who ‘received’ the Pentecostal missionaries from the West.]


[Yergan rose through the ranks of the ‘colored’ work department of the YMCA, and was among the first black YMCA missionaries in South Africa. His exposure to the brutality of colonial white rule in South Africa caused him to veer away from mainstream, liberal civil rights...]

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[This section continues with further details and citations, which are not shown here for brevity.]
organizations, and, by the mid-1930s, into the orbit of the Communist Party. A mere decade later, Cold War hysteria and intimidation pushed Yergan away from progressive politics and increasingly toward conservatism. In his later years he even became an apologist for apartheid.


[AThis article focuses on a self-designated pantheistic movement, which experienced an original development among the disadvantaged population of Recife for 40 years. After analysing the social and religious dynamics which led to the emergence of this movement, and the various trends which contributed to the formulation of the new doctrine, the author studies the documents which make it possible to reconstruct the members of the Circle’s doctrine and practices.]


[This book explores the forging of Murid identity and pedagogy around the person and initiative of Amadu Bamba as well as the continuing reconstruction of this identity by more recent followers; reveals how religious power is built at the intersection of genealogy, knowledge, and spiritual force, and how this power in turn affected colonial policy.]


[Giant cats flying to America and cities under the sea off Cape Town are part of a cascade of imagery brought forth in the confessions of born-again witches. Now Christian, these ex-witches confess stories of murder and bloodshed to packed audiences in townships in the Eastern and Western Cape provinces of South Africa. The confessions reveal occult realms in deep engagement with the particular experiences of young, poor, black women in South Africa. These confessions are performances of risky agency in a country in which acts of witchcraft are severely punished. This article explores the possible motivations of these young, disenfranchised women who take up witchcraft and Christianity as one way to negotiate conditions of extreme violence and dislocation in the sprawling urban townships.]


[This paper is less a critique of Prof. Mudimbe’s work than an attempt to reflect on several themes in his writings in relationship to my own work as a historian of religion in Africa. The paper is divided into two sections. The first addresses what I consider to be the central problematic in Prof. Mudimbe's work: the exploration of the epistemological context that makes possible a particular discourse on Africa at a given time and place. The second part speculates on possible ways forward for an Africanist historian who wishes to engage with the problematic that Prof. Mudimbe has set.]
[Today, Zambia has a comparatively unified, somewhat exceptional, approach to religious education despite a wide variety of predominantly Christian denominations. This article retraces the history of the development of religious education from when it was entirely confessional to the present time when it has become largely educational. In so doing it identifies some of the difficulties encountered and some of the problems that lie ahead in promoting an even more religiously pluralistic and educational approach to religious education in a country that has been declared a Christian nation.]
[As countries’ populations become more religiously diverse, a need to review the religious education syllabus is often perceived. One such country is Zambia, which was not only traditionally religiously diverse but has become even more so with the advent of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism and other non-African faiths. This article explores the feasibility of adopting a multi-faith approach to religious education in Zambia in the light of such increasing religious diversity. Among the issues which this paper raises are: what kind of multi-faith religious education, that preserves its integrity, is likely to enhance social harmony in Zambia; and how might such a religious education be effectively introduced and implemented?]


[In Central Mozambique economic austerity and shifts in domestic organization have transformed kinship and gender relations in ways that reinforce reproductive demands on women. This paper examines the influence of commodification and female economic marginalization on virginity reviews, seduction fees, bride wealth payments, and childbirth assistance. Constructions of reproductive risk as human or spirit-induced threats of witchcraft, sorcery, or spirit possession resonate in this atmosphere of competition and instability. Rather than disappearing, occult practices may be increasing in response to the new inequalities associated with ‘modernity’. This pressure contributes to women's reproductive vulnerability and informs new strategies to manage risk during pregnancy.]


Christelow, Allan, 2002, ‘*Islamic Law and Judicial Practice in Nigeria: An Historical Perspective*’, in *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 22, 1: 185-204


[International aid and development is increasingly channelled through religious groups. This collection examines the role that these faith-based organizations play in managing international aid, providing services, such as health and education, defending human rights and protecting democracy. Focusing on Asia, Africa and the Middle East, this book argues that greater engagement with faith communities and organizations is needed, particularly in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and questions the traditional secularism that has underpinned development policy and practice in the North.]

Claudio, Fernanda, 2006, ‘*Cloth, Hoes, and Beads: Chikunda Domination, the Warlord Kanyemba, and the Chapoto Chieftancy in Dande, Zimbabwe*’, in Nicolini 2006.


[This article discusses the historiography of the Jesuit Mission in Ethiopia, 1556-1632, outlines the themes treated and provides a bibliography of 297 titles, divided into six chapters: general; politics; religion and theology; cartography, culture and gender; art and architecture; and individual persons.]

Conrad, Bettina, 2006, ‘*“We Are the Warsay of Eritrea in Diaspora”: Contested Identities and Social Divisions in Cyberspace and in Real Life*’, in Manger & Assal 2006.

[This book examines the tenuous hold that the Sudan Interior Mission, an evangelical Christian mission, has taken in a predominantly Hausa Muslim area on the southern fringe of Niger. Cooper’s involvement in a violent religious riot provides a useful backdrop for introducing other themes and concerns such as Bible translation, medical outreach, public preaching, tensions between English-speaking and French-speaking missionaries, and the Christian mission’s changing views of Islam. The book was awarded the 2007 Melville J. Herskovits Award by the African Studies Association (ASA), USA as an outstanding original scholarly work on Africa.]


[Between 1843 and 1869 the Basotho monarchy lost the better part of its cultivable land to the white settlers of the Orange Free State. While various political appeals for the return of this ‘Conquered Territory’ by the successor state of Lesotho since 1965 have proved unavailing, recent years have seen a rapid re-occupation of certain highland caves and their environs by pilgrims who identify them as ‘sacred to the ancestors’. Pilgrims to the sacred caves practise every form of African religion from pre-Christian Basotho ritual and medicine to independent Apostolic to established mission church Christianity. Attempts by the local white landowners to expel the pilgrims have proved fruitless in South Africa’s ‘new frontier’ districts bordering Lesotho, as the state is no longer willing to place the sanctity of private property above popular rights of access to religious and heritage sites. The article applies the conceptual apparatus of ritual agency and interpretation to the study of this inchoate movement for the re-appropriation of ‘ancestral’ lands by spiritual strategies. Grounded in the post-apartheid context of racialised contestation over the land, the study points to the emergence of a new set of conflicting ideological discourses operating parallel to cooperative forms of practical coexistence between black and white on the Free State-Lesotho border.]


[The volume not only shows how gender relations have been constructed on the African continent but reflects the changes in approach and inquiry that have been brought about as scholars consider gender identities and difference in their work. Specific themes covered here include the contestation and representation of gender, femininity and masculinity, livelihoods and lifeways, gender and religion, gender and culture, and gender and governance.]


[‘The unsolved murder in 1920 of Édouard Jacottet, a sixty-two-year-old Paris Evangelical Society missionary, is the bait used by Tim Couzens to get readers to explore the precolonial and colonial history of Lesotho. Couzens’s most salient theme is the heroic and ultimately successful struggle of several generations of missionaries to establish their denomination in Lesotho and then to transform it into the self-sustaining Lesotho Evangelical Church run by indigenous Basotho clergy and laity. This was the cause to which Jacottet had committed himself despite considerable resistance among his fellow missionaries’.]


[This study explores how psychological distress is identified and explained among Zulu people, examines how traditional healers understand their role and treatment methods and investigates the interaction between traditional and Western approaches to health care. Zulu people
consult traditional healers namely diviners, faith healers or herbalists, as well as Western doctors to treat mental illness and distress. Whilst Western biomedicine is seen as useful in providing treatment, diviners and faith healers are particularly valued for their skills in identifying the cause of illness. Patients and their families tend to shop around for a practitioner who gives advice in keeping with their own beliefs. Psychological distress is usually explained in terms of sorcery, displeasure from the ancestors or social causes. Traditional healers use treatments aimed at harmonizing the patient with their environment through neutralizing sorcery, appeasing ancestors or directly manipulating the environment.


[How did a storefront Sanctified church that was founded and formally led by a female change to one in which female leadership now occurs in ceremonial and ritual arenas, and what does this suggest about the institutionalization of female power? How might the positioning of the investigating ethnographer inform both the anthropological process and a humanistic interpretation of religion? These two questions shape this study of gender dynamics during two generations of an unaffiliated millenarian storefront church of a hundred souls, which began during World War II and has survived into the 21st century. Drawing on interpretations of doctrine, migration narratives, and germane cultural and historical contexts, this article explores the interplay of human agency, cultural legacies, and social contingencies in changing gender practices. As I was raised in this faith community, the study also provides a model for addressing the complexity of conducting insider/outsider ethnography.]


[Some of the most radical reinterpretations of Christianity are offered by AICs, founded by Africans skeptical of dogma offered by mainstream churches with roots in European empires. As these churches spread throughout the African diaspora, they have brought with them distinct practices relating to gender. Such practices range from the expectation that women avoid holy objects and sites during menstruation to the maintenance of church structures in which both men and women may be ordained and assigned the same duties and responsibilities. How does having a female body affect one’s experience of indigenised Christianity in Africa? Spirit, Structure, and Flesh addresses this question by exploring the ways ritual, symbol, and dogma circumscribe, constrain, and liberate women in AICs. Through detailed description of worship and doctrine, as well as careful analyses of church history and organizational processes, Deidre Helen Crumbley explores gendered experiences of faith and power in three Nigerian indigenous AICs, demonstrating the roles of women in the day-to-day life of these churches.]


This paper looks at a particular autochthonous medical knowledge and practice of Yaka healers in peri-urban Kinshasa and rural southwestern Congo. It first presents a sequential analysis of the well-known mbwoolu healing cult, directed at types of affliction most of which I would characterize as deep depression and related insanity. The mbwoolu patient is first led into a state of fusion with the group, with the aid of rhythmic movement and music culminating in a trance-possession. Following this, the initiate undergoes a therapeutic seclusion lasting from one month to some nine months in an initiatory space in which a dozen or so statuettes or figurines are laid on a bed parallel to the patient’s. In a play of mirrors between the figurines and the patient, the latter’s sensory perceptions and body movements are redirected and rejuvenated. The figurines thus function as doubles that the patient incorporates or inscribes in his or her own bodily envelope, which now constitutes a new interface with others. In the course of a verbal liturgy that unfolds to the rhythm of the initiatory rite, the initiate is gradually enabled to decode and incorporate traces of the collective imaginary conveyed by these figurines and liturgy. The statuettes enact a cosmogony in which the patient is intimately involved throughout. In this, the patient is led into an ontogenetic passage from a fusional and primordial state towards a particular and sexualised identity, one with precise contours and situate within a social hierarchy and a historicity of generations and of roles.


[The Bakongo religion, imported by slaves, developed in Cuba where it became known as palk monte, and evolved while conserving the memory of its origins. This memory appears in songs and prayers, and also in the written documents circulating in the community of believers. Through a process of double articulation, Kongo spirits have been identified with Yoruba orishas and with Catholic saints. The author shows that although the Catholic influence is obviously anterior to the deportation of the Bakongos to Cuba, one can also identify an influence of Haitian Voodoo, which developed on the island itself. Elements from another African-American religion, itself an heterogeneous creation from Haiti are therefore added to the combination of Kongo, Yoruba, and Catholic elements. The article highlights the complexity of the process of construction of a religion which blends traditional and external elements from various origins.]


[‘The Dance of the Devil and the Good Lord: Blues, Gospel and African-American Spiritual Churches’: In the musicology of African-American studies, the blues is traditionally said to be the ‘devil’s music’. This condemnation by black American Protestant churches views the blues as promoting a way of life in contradiction with Christian morals. By making a parody of church talk, some blues present a series of Christian antivalues. But this opposition takes on meaning only in the Protestant theological and social context. A marginal religious movement, the Spiritual Churches, found mainly in New Orleans, does not share this Protestant ethic, nor this opposition to jazz and the blues. Light is shed on the cultural osmosis between this religious movement and the various forms of popular music (including rock’ n’ roll and funk) in Louisiana’s cultural capital.]
Dias, Eduardo Costa, 2002, ‘Da’wa, política, identidade religiosa e “invenção” de uma “nação”’, in Gonçalves 2002: 45-68
[Funerals are key to the exercise of civil conduct in Botswana. Funerals constitute distinctive public spaces that focus local attention on how particular persons’ sentiments influence the well-being of others. By managing the social impact of sentiments of sorrow, love, jealousy, anger and resignation, all those who attend funerals ideally maintain a footing of civility, preventing recognised differences from causing permanent disruptions in social relations. In the context of death, people shape forms of community and difference - along lines of ethnicity, class, religion, gender and kinship - through the mutuality of their emotions. Funerals thus give rise to a public space and a civil discourse based on sentiment, as distinct from the bureaucratic and rationalising practices of official nationalism. This article is based on the authors’ respective fieldwork in a Herero minority community in Mahalapye, and with an Apostolic church in Gaborone.]

[The author comparatively examines South African and American historical literature that focuses on the formation of a ‘civil religion’, a synthesis of cultural inheritance and religious ideology that informed both societies as they made their way into the future. The forging of new national or regional identities was a process catalyzed by conflict and synthesizing history and religion in a way that would ultimately shape the formation of racial segregation in both societies].


[The Friday Masowe Apostolics of Zimbabwe refer to themselves as ‘the Christians who don’t read the Bible’. The Apostolics perceive scripture as an unnecessary, even dangerous, mediator. For them, the materiality of the Bible marks a distance from the divine and prohibits the realization of a live and direct faith. They claim they do not need the Bible because they receive the Word of God ‘live and direct’ from the Holy Spirit. Matthew Engelke documents how this rejection of scripture speaks to longstanding concerns within Christianity over mediation and authority.]


[This article examines the cultural construction of difference, danger, and disease among the Muslim patrilineal Hadendowa-Beja of Eastern Sudan and focuses on the ways in which gen-
dered discourses, together with symbolic and ritualistic practices, diagnose historical relationships of power, powerlessness, and social conflict. In particular, I show how the female body, viewed as a ‘fertile womb-land’, is the locus of anxieties about foreign dangers and diseases, which are perceived to be threatening to collective identity and well being. By using ‘foreignness’ as a double-edged category linked to both power and danger, I examine how Hadendo-wa’s feminization of social vulnerability draws attention to their own political history of exclusion and displacement.


[This article focuses on aspects of Muslim community formation in apartheid Cape Town from the 1930s to 1980. It discusses the identification processes of a group of first generation educated coloured Muslim teachers who participated actively in their community’s modernization. Key to the discussion is the socialization and educational processes that shaped their identities and influenced them to take certain stances in their engagement with the community. The article uses the notion of ‘fastening processes’ as a heuristic framework to explain how the teachers’ identities were fashioned in relation to their community ties. It shows how their early childhood religious socialization and modern politicization in high schools impacted on their communal activism during their adult years. They adopted modern reformist sensibilities which often placed them in opposition to the community’s prevailing traditional and imam-centered discourses. The article concludes with a discussion of some of their attempts at the community’s politicization and modernization. I show that while their impact may have been mixed, the teachers’ accumulated practices over time contributed significantly to the modern development of Cape Town’s Muslim community.]


[This paper critically examines the concept of salvation in the Old Testament and in three Nigerian AICs.]


[The authors examine the roles of the state, ethnic groups, religious groups, and the international community in several key areas of Eritrean law: blood feud or murder, land tenure, gender relations (marriage, prostitution, rape), and female genital surgery. They discuss how change can be brought to communities where legal ambiguity prevails, often to the grave harm of women and other powerless individuals.]


[Over time, Afro-Brazilian religions have been understood in very different ways by outsiders and the dominant society. Today, although Pentecostals think that the religious entities received under trance by the Afro-Brazilians are demoniac, the “outsider” vision is becoming more positive and the Afro-Brazilian religions tend to grow and be more generally accepted in the 21th century. The article presents some of the “outsider” vision of these religions in the state.
of Maranhao. Then, it analyses the factors which account for their growing acceptance in Brazil and discusses two strategies of modernization at work within these religions.


[This article explores Indian-African encounters in the province of Natal, South Africa through the lens of African therapeutics. By examining the historical antecedents of African therapeutics in this area, I demonstrate that what is considered ‘African’ or ‘indigenous’ knowledge is rather an amalgam of many cultural and political influences. Such polyculturalism resulted from the encounters of working-class Indian and African communities, as well as the rise of Indian healers and shop owners of African medicine, leading to the appropriation of each other's ailments, remedies and healers. These encounters combined with the pressure of biomedical scrutiny to help define and shape what is today considered ‘traditional’ African therapeutics.]


[This article examines the political and social implications of witchcraft accusations in apartheid and postapartheid South Africa. It focuses on the use of witchcraft accusations by young ANC ‘comrades’ in the 1980s as an instrument of power to settle local disputes. The elimination of ‘witches’ was part of the Black Movement ideology and was thought to eradicate all evil. The 1994 election did have an impact on local perceptions of witchcraft, but witchcraft beliefs are part of South Africa’s cultural heritage and will not easily be eradicated.]


[The article describes the contested relationship that existed between Herero people and German missionaries in Namibia between 1900 and 1940. It is argued that Herero converted to mission Christianity with specific aims and intentions, which were not necessarily the same as those envisaged or intended by German missionaries. The article highlights leisure time, commemorative activities and funerals, and indicates that Herero acquired specific forms of music, dress, comportment, and behaviour from German missionaries. Once these specific forms were acquired they were often transformed and brought to the fore in ways that were considered unacceptable by the missionaries and settler society in general. The article shows that apart from race there was little difference in the intentions and activities of Herero and German settlers, both of whom sought to influence the same colonial administration. In conclusion it is argued that, in the last resort, what was of primary importance in the colonial setting of Namibia between 1900 and 1940 was the issue of race.]


[This article examines the role of language learning in forging missionary identities. It identifies a range of responses to the Zulu language among missionaries in Natal in the 1850s and 1860s, addressing their relationship not only to the work of colonisation, but also to their own evangelical self-conception. For many missionaries the experience of second-language learning came to be definitive of their evangelical identity. In a positive sense, learning to speak Zulu was considered as the indispensable key to the central tasks of mission, whether primary attention was given to preaching, translation, or interpreting ‘the minds and modes of thought’ of Zulu-speakers. However, attitudes to the Zulu language were driven as much by anxiety as by a sense of confidence, or cultural and religious superiority, as missionaries were exposed to censure or ridicule by the Zulu-speakers they sought to convert, and concerns about the sinful nature of the ‘unsaved’ Zulu were mapped on to attitudes to language.]


[The present article explores the apparent universality of Christian symbols with reference to the ritual of communion in part of Catholic Southern Tanzania. Despite the significance of ideologies of salvation in both Christian doctrine and social theory, many popular interpretations of core Christian rituals in Africa and elsewhere emphasise the remembrance of Christ rather than his resurrection. Theories of Christianity as a universal religion may have overplayed the extent to which Christian symbols are universally interpreted.]


[This article examines the place of religion in social science accounts of Africa, particularly as they relate to politics and culture. It explores the significance of representational continuities across the twentieth century and across disciplines, which present African social life as religiously determined, and considers the political implications of African exceptionalism as a mode of analysis and policy rationale. Finally, the article considers some directions of institutional change in southern Tanzania and the consequences for understanding religion.]


[The national telecommunications company of Senegal (SONATEL) undertook a bold initiative, beginning in 1985, to develop the country’s telephone service. The system, which was implemented gradually and consists of an all-digital fiber optic network, provides a national coverage which is second to none in West Africa. SONATEL continues to modernise its basic network, providing expanded teleservices and facilitating development of the information superhighway. This revolution in ICTs provides a foundation for a ‘civilisation of the universal’, to use Léopold Sédar Senghor’s phrase, and poses a major challenge for Senegal’s increasingly urban, internationally-oriented society.]


[This book has emerged from the IAHR XIXth World Congress in Tokyo in March 2005. It tells us what the world’s leading scholars have to say about issues of conflict and peace, ethical questions concerning the use of advanced technology, explanations of the global religious revival, and the role of women in religious leadership, as well as questions about how to study religion. One section of the book is devoted to Japanese scholarship concerning the world’s major religions. Contributors include: Talal Asad, Chin Hong Chung, Armin Geertz, Gerrie ter Haar, Rosalind Hackett, Eiko Hanaoka (-Kawamura), Shotô Hase, Mark Juergensmeyer, Noriko Kawahashi, Kiyotaka Kimura, Ursula King, Pratap Kumar, William LaFleur, Sylvia Marcos, Tomoko Masuzawa, Ebrahim Moosa, Kojiro Nakamura, Vasudha Narayanan, Haruko Okano, Suwanna Satha-Anand, Susumu Shimazono, Noriyoshi Tamura, Masakazu Tanaka, Hiroshi Tsuchiya, Yoshio Tsuruoka, Manabu Watanabe, Pablo Wright.]


[This article explores how storytelling can help create a space for transformational learning. In particular it looks at the role of storytelling in education for peace in Africa. It also touches on related issues, including the role of historic peace churches, the role of women, and the role of faith convictions, in the process of moving from violence to peace with justice. The case study for the essay is the Watu Wa Amani (People of Peace) conference held in Nairobi in 2004.]


[Few historians have examined the history of this important aspect of the missionary movement. This collection of articles on Asia and Africa uses the extensive archives that exist on medical missions to both enrich and challenge existing histories of the clinic in colonial territories – whether of the dispensary, the hospital, the maternity home or leprosy asylum. Themes addressed include the attitude of different Christian denominations towards medical mission work, their differing theories and practices, how the missionaries were drawn into contentious local politics, and their attitude towards supernatual cures.]

Hardiman, David, (ed.) 2007, Medical Missionaries in India and Africa. Amsterdam, etc: Clio Media Press.

[The book describes the development of the religion as an ‘alternative’ space in which subjugated and enslaved blacks could gain a sense of individual and collective identity in opposition to the subaltern status imposed upon them by the dominant society. Outlawed and persecuted in the late colonial and imperial period, Candomblé nevertheless developed as one of the major religious expressions of the Afro-Atlantic diaspora.]


[This article discusses the articulation of religious rhetoric with neoliberal principles of the market economy in Tanzania, looking specifically at Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity. Religion is interpreted here as a reflection of and model for a lived reality. On the one hand, a lived reality generates and shapes religious beliefs and ideas. On the other, religious beliefs and ideas inform the ways that economic circumstances are perceived, interpreted and acted upon in specific social and historical contexts. This is a discussion of charismatic Christian perceptions and of the perceived spiritual and economic changes in Tanzania ahead of the general election of 2005. These Biblical allegories, as well as the gospel of prosperity, are brought together through an account of the activities of one particular charismatic ministry. The rhetoric and logic of prosperity through giving are discussed within the anthropological notion of gift exchange as well as with some born-again understandings of the significance of offerings to God as a means to prosperity and accumulation.]


[This article examines the emergence and significance of religion among Eritreans in the United States as a basis for building community in diaspora, reconfiguring nationalist identity, and constituting transnational civil society. It argues three related points: that religious identity and gatherings help mitigate against fractured political identities that have weakened secular diaspora associations; that practicing Eritrean identity through religion challenges the hegemonic power of the Eritrean state to transnationally control diaspora communities and dictate national identity; and that the very incipience of religious bodies as transnational avenues provides Eritreans in diaspora with an autonomous space to resist the state's totalizing demands. Through a critical ethnographic investigation of religious identity and church bodies in Eritrea and one United States diaspora community, the article shows that uneven transnational networks between the United States and Eritrea create new spaces for political action. Specifically, the relative autonomy of churches and the incipience of their transnationalism allow diaspora Eritreans to use religion in the constitution of an emergent transnational civil society.]


[This study re/constructs, from the known written and oral sources, the life of the legendary Abd-al-Karim, founder of Islam and a new Wadai kingdom in Chad in the 1600s. In the spirit of postcolonialism, blurring the line between historical and literary accounts, one fictional account is included. Two research questions guide the analysis: how is the life of Abd-al-Karim imaged in history and story? and how does the 1970 oral corpus take back history and restore local agency? From the analysis emerge images that tend, broadly speaking, to an African, an Arab/Islamic, or a European construction of identity for this historical figure. Ancestry, history, language, geography and place, constructs integral to identity, were revised by oral informants, who engage the dominant cultures, Islam and Europe, but renegotiate identity, ultimately claiming a hybrid cultural identity for Abd-al-Karim. While they localise the legend and indigenise this culture hero, they simultaneously affirm Islam, claiming a religious identity that gives them a sense of global belonging.]


[This article analyses issues of health, healing and medicine in the early Presbyterian Church in the Northern Malawi region during the first decades of the twentieth century. A central theme is the relationship between the emerging church and African healing theories and practices. The initial focus is on the discussions and debates in the Livingstonia Presbytery, the central meeting forum for the missionaries and African church leaders. The article then shifts to the level of individual congregations and church leaders, consulting congregation papers and oral sources, analysing the role of African clergymen, evangelists, preachers, ministers and their families in the search for health and therapy in local communities. Although missionary attitudes towards African healing were generally derisive and dismissive, and missionaries had hegemonic aspirations to create a healthy Christian society where missionary medicine would be central, the article argues that the topics of illness and health were open to contestation. In both theory and practice, the African Christian elite negotiated an acceptance of medical pluralism among the Presbyterian Christian communities of Northern Malawi.]


[The Neolithic rock images of Iheren, Algeria are the starting point for Augustin Holl's careful analysis of the iconography of Saharan rock art. Holl examines the various strands of evidence – icons, ideas, motifs, colors, and sizes – and weaves them together into a story that offers a window on the pastoralist worldview through the semiotics of their art.]


[Pentecostalism is the result of an interesting amalgamation of different traditions: black and oral cultures, middle-class and proletarian languages, catholic and evangelical spiritualities. These traditions are contextualized in Western, Latin American, Asian and African contexts which produce a bewildering pluralism. This ‘post-modern religion’ is not only a challenge to Pentecostal theologians but also to the ecumenical community.]


[The South African Suppression of Witchcraft Act of 1957 outlawed tribal mediation by chiefs and sangomas (African priest-diviners) in witchcraft accusation trials. This Western legislative intervention denies African justice to Africans who believe in the reality of African witchcraft. As a result there have been many recorded instances where ordinary African peo-
ple, thinking themselves bewitched, have turned to self-help to protect themselves against bewitchment; mob justice and witchcraft violence have escalated like never before. This paper argues that the Suppression of Witchcraft Act should be repealed so that legitimate sangomas can be reinstated as mediators in witchcraft accusation cases. The distinction between sangomas and witches is clarified and a Jungian framework is used to shed light on the nature of African beliefs in witches, ancestors, and spirit worlds. Standard models of anthropology and psychology have tended to treat such beliefs as symptoms of superstition or madness. My argument is that by approaching these belief systems from a Jungian perspective, new ways of thinking about them are introduced which can help us find a solution to the problem of witchcraft violence in South Africa.


[Ogbanjelabiku refer to people who are believed to cycle rapidly and repeatedly through birth and death. The Igbo believe that ogbanje results from subversion of human destiny by willful alliance of the newborn with deities who guard the postulated interface between birth and prebirth (spirit) existence, while the Yoruba attribute many abiku to possession of a pregnancy by spirit pranksters most often referred to as emere. Surviving persons manifest abnormalities of psychological life with vivid fantasy life or dreams characterized by the presence of water, orgiastic play with unfamiliar children, and frightening contact with a water goddess - mammy water. Labeled children and adolescents often exhibit manipulative, histrionic dissociative, and other maladaptive behavior. They may also be gifted. Contradictory and facultative practices of excessive indulgence of and ostentatious hostility towards ogbanjelabiku children are described but are better understood as exhibitions of acceptance of life and rejection of death. This paper reports one study of the deployment of cultural cosmology in shaping individual and group adaptive responses to high infant mortality in Nigeria.]


[This paper gives insight into how Igbo healers of Southern Nigeria conceive of insanity and apply endogenous knowledge and expertise to heal it, contrary to the belief that cosmopolitan orthodox medicine only can provide efficacious cure for insanity. Resort to community support and culture remains people’s widely shared way of dealing with insanity and related disturbances. While pharmaceutical drugs are being made available to health seekers, local herbal and ritual resources as well as communicational and bodily skills do constitute the asset for holistic healing. Although research shows tensions between the local, Christian and biomedical views, the paper argues that effective healing tends to be successful when the etiology and treatment include due ancestral compliance work in harmony with people’s views, emotions and life-worlds. The paper offers an endogenous theory of symbolic release underlying a genuinely Igbo cosmological and epistemological strategy, side by side with the ritual of tying and untying for releasing the forces hampered by intrusion, and for achieving treatment based on culturally meaningful herbal and animal resources. To rescue the help-seeking individual and kin-group, as a first principle, the forces that tie the afflicted need to be rusticated before effective results can be obtained with treatment.]


[African elements in the development of Cuban culture have historically been manifested in the development of Cuban religions, in particular the Congolese and Bantu derived *Regla Conga* (Palo Monte), the Yoruba derived *Regla Ocha* (Santería), the Benin derived *Regla Arara* and *Vodoo*, and the *Sociedad Secreta Abakua* whose origins are Old Calabar and southwestern Cameroon. I will dwell on the *Sociedad Secreta Abakua* which has historically consisted of male only mutual associations. I will examine the historiography on the origins of the society and offer a political economy approach which dwells on the development of the social formation of the societies of Old Calabar and the emergence of the male only *Ekpe* and *Ngbe* or Leopard Societies whose functions were those of a state apparatus which provided religious and ideological legitimacy for an emerging merchant class. The next level will dwell on its development as a contested Cuban institution based in poor neighbourhoods of the port cities of Havana, Matanzas and Cardenas. Its members became a source of labour on the wharves, in warehouses for over 100 years. Its membership underwent transformation from black only to mixed white and black and later Chinese ex-indentured labour. It became transculturised, drawing its religious pantheons and rituals from Old Calabar, Yoruba and Bantu elements, as well as Roman Catholic symbols. In the colonial and neo-colonial periods the *Abakua* were demonised and persecuted.]


[Though royal wives in *Oyo-Yorùbá* community are invisible in some social, political and religious lives of their people, they are visible in the sphere of poetic creation. We opine that *Yorùbá* kings are powerful in most spheres, but in orature, the power of women in general, and royal wives in particular, cannot be underestimated. Through the examples of *yànhì́bà* and *ìgbàttí*, two poetic spheres created by tradition for royal wives from *Oyo-Yorùbá* community, this paper argues that royal wives reposition themselves as channels of poetic utterance. They use poetry to redefine their position as wives and women, reassert themselves and subvert unwanted values. In particular, they use their creative power as a weapon for subverting male-constructed structures and views in society. In exercising their creative power, the women use their power to speak, to perform and to decide the course of action. In conclusion, we state that contemporary women writers also enhance the efforts of women in orature. In this regard, the paper refers to Emecheta’s novels that condemn the economic, sexual and soci-]
al exploitation of women. Like the royal wives, Emecheta creates protagonists who use their intellectual power to decide on issues that concern them.]


[One of the images presented here is a unique source, depicting African women performing ‘Born House’ for a missionary baby in inland Cameroon in 1909. It indicates that relations between women as women on and around mission stations cannot merely be subsumed under the concept of a racial hierarchy. The other - an example of a widespread genre in the Basel Mission archive - leads into a discussion of the history of girls' and women's handwork classes in what is now southern Ghana, where participation was energized by an indigenous sense of aesthetics and dress. The Ghanaian fashion industry of today (and the women’s profession of dressmaker) have their origins on mission house verandas in the nineteenth century.]


[Contrary to traditional views, this article suggests that missionary medicine in Tanganyika was not entirely curative in focus and small in scale. Rather, it should be regarded as a vital aspect of early colonial health services, serving those excluded by the colonial state. It ensured that where there was a mission hospital in rural areas, local people could chose Western biomedicine for healing.]


[This book explores the changing, hidden face of the Afro-Brazilian indigenous religion of Candomblé. It offers a comprehensive look at the development, beliefs, and practices of Candomblé by exploring its transformation from a secret society of slaves - hidden, persecuted, and marginalized - to a public religion that is very much a part of Brazilian culture in the first half of the twentieth century. Its major focus is on the ritual practice of secrecy in Candomblé. It features a hierarchic series of initiations, with increasing access to secret knowledge at each level. The nature and uses of secrecy evolved with the religion. It is speech about secrets, and not the content of those secrets, that is now most important in building status, legitimacy and power in Candomblé.]


[In this paper, the Residence Prealpino, a building declared uninhabitable but which houses some 300 Senegalese migrants in an otherwise well-to-do neighbourhood in the town of Brescia, Italy, is taken as a case of how migrants’ lives are influenced both by the local context in which they make a living and by the transnational linkages they maintain with their homelands. Studies of integration normally focus on how migrants adapt to the situation in the country of arrival and often do not see that arriving in a new country does not mean leaving the old behind. Although transnational studies take this into account they have tended to neglect the influence of local circumstances and display a rather optimistic picture of transnational migrants’ lives. This positive interpretation of transnationalism is especially evident in the case of the Mourides, the Muslim brotherhood to which the majority of the Senegalese in Brescia belong. They are often heralded as African winners, conquering the world. While this may be true in some respects, it is only part of the picture. The case of Residence Prealpino shows how making a livelihood at the margins of a European society is often difficult but also indicates how Mouride local and transnational links help people cope with this situation. It thus contributes to a more nuanced view of the Mouride brotherhood and what it is to be a Mouride migrant in the current era.]


[This book explores the story of the presence of the gospel in many African communities, which the author asserts, starts from the people’s cultural backgrounds and contours through the patterns of the insertion of the gospel to the challenges of the new change agent to the ingredients of the Igbo worldview, culture, and religious traditions. Beginning with a discussion of church historiography, the author explores the rejection of the Euro-centric position within historiography itself and critically examines the nationalist one. He also advocates an irenic, ecumenical history that searches the memory of the people and empowers their future. This book reconstructs the vertical and horizontal patterns of the coming of Christianity into various parts of Igboland from a vast array of sources and multidisciplinary resources. The author breaks Igboland into subculture theatres and explores the connections between ecology and religion with a cultural framework. In an attempt to explain why different parts of Igboland responded differently to Christianity, he also engages the socio-political, economic, and other cultural forces that shaped the fortunes of Christianity. Many accounts of Igbo Christianity in the post-Civil War period tend to deal with a past that was dominated by missionary impulse. The author, however, turns to the spiritual revival that occurred in the 1970s and that webbed the import of other cultural changes in religion and education, to give one of the first holistic accounts of the explosion of contemporary Christianity in Igboland.]


[Kalu inquires into the role Christianity plays in African political and socio-economic life, i.e. into the dialectics of power, poverty and prayer in post independence Africa in general. The book raises key questions in modern African church history. First, from a historiographical perspective it urges that ecology and indigenous worldview are crucial for writing church history precisely because ignored indigenous knowledge holds clues to the failure of economic and political policies, and the attendant scourge of poverty. Second, it examines how various Christian forms (mainline churches, African initiated churches, and the new charismatic movement) have responded to the darkness that has covered Africa at noontide. Third, it uses
a country case study to explore the dilemma of pluralism as a power and theological concept in the midst of the monopolistic power of new African states. Finally, it draws attention to the emergence of the voice of African women theologians challenging patriarchy in the churches as one of the sources of the weak response of churches to the structures of injustice in Africa.


[In Africa, Pentecostalism is sweeping the continent. Today, about 107 million Africans are Pentecostals and the numbers continue to rise. This book provides an overview of Pentecostalism in Africa. It shows the amazing diversity of the faith, which flourishes in many different forms in diverse local contexts. It demonstrates that African Pentecostalism is distinctly African in character, not imported from the West. It presents the religion’s many functions in African life. Rather than shying away from controversial issues like the role of money and prosperity in the movement, it describes malpractice when and where it occurs. Offering a comprehensive look at African Pentecostalism, this study touches upon the movement's identity, the role of missionaries, media and popular culture, women, ethics, Islam, and immigration.]


[Through an examination of the concepts used by Lunda-speaking auxiliaries to translate mission medicine at the hospital run by the Christian Missions to Many Lands in Mwinilunga, from 1922 to 1951, this article argues that auxiliaries translated missionary medicine in ways missionaries could neither imagine nor control. To express, domesticate, and hence familiarise missionary medicine, auxiliaries appropriated concepts from pre-existing Lunda secular and ritual vocabulary through which indigenous medicine in the district was expressed, debated and internalised. Consequently, Christian medicine in Mwinilunga came to be understood as if it were a variation of Lunda medicine - which CMML healers dismissed as no more than a citadel of paganism. In translating mission medicine in this way, African auxiliaries not only confounded their employers’ ambition to undermine local medical beliefs, but they also demonstrated that they were self-motivating actors who joined mission employment for reasons often at odds with the expectations of their employers.]


power over African American Muslims. I demonstrate this through a conversation between three Muslim women: one African American, another Pakistani American, and the third Eritrean American. In this heated discussion, the African American Muslim woman articulates her experiences of racism and discrimination in the American ummah. The way in which the two immigrant women respond only reinforces her sense of exclusion and isolation in contexts in which immigrant Muslims dominate. Her struggles to define and articulate her experiences as black, female, and Muslim position her voice within the broader tradition of black feminist thought and resistance.


[Kirsch article examines the role of indigenous concepts of visuality in an attempt by contemporary African Christians in Zambia to stabilize charismatic authority by means of a new prophetic scripture containing drawings of visionary revelations. It is demonstrated here how the chains of referentiality by which church leaders sought to authorize themselves and the scripture involved paradoxes of visuality that eventually led to the demotion of the scripture and its ‘author’. Since the scripture was said to depict what could also be observed by stargazing, its indexical function became obsolete once people accepted the indexed as reality.]


[Table of Contents: ch. 1: Context and Approach to African Medicines; ch 2: Bono (Akan) Society and Healing Perspectives; ch. 3: Aduro: Indigenous Conceptions of Medicine; ch. 4: Nyansa: Indigenous Knowledge and Medicine; ch. 5: Ayaresa: Discussion and Conclusion]


[The essays collected in this volume examine how religion [in Nigeria] interfaces with history, politics, development, culture and literature. The multidisciplinary approaches and multidisciplinary dimensions of the contributions establish the volume as a befitting tribute to a scholar whose work is grounded in interdisciplinarity and profound respect for multi-perspectives.]

The book explores the ways Christianity and colonialism acted as hegemonic or counter-hegemonic forces in the making of African societies. This volume uses a wide range of perspectives to address the intersection between missions, evangelism, and colonial expansion across Africa. The contributors address several issues, including missionary collaboration with the colonizing effort of European powers; disagreements between missionaries and colonizing agents; the ways in which missionaries and colonial officials used language, imagery, and European epistemology to legitimize relations of inequality with Africans; and the ways in which both groups collaborated to transform African societies. The book argues that missionary endeavours and official colonial actions could all be conceptualized as hegemonic institutions, which both pursued the same civilizing mission, even if they adopted different strategies in their encounter with African societies.


This article brings together ideas from medical anthropology on so-called medical pluralism, and a transnational lens in migration studies. It examines how legal status, transnational networks and religion interrelate in health practices among Ghanaians living in London. It provides an overview of the settlement of Ghanaians in London since the 1960s, and shows how transnational linkages have increased since then. It further demonstrates the strong transnational components health practices can have, including money, medicines and prayers being sent between Ghana and abroad, and between different European countries. 'Transnational therapy networks' is proposed as a term to describe health-related activities, which span Europe and Africa. These are interlaced situational, formal and informal contacts between people which become meaningful in the event of sickness, providing financial and practical support and help in finding the right treatment.


This book was originally presented as a series of public lectures in the context of the Center for Mysticism, under the auspices of the Dept. of Religious Studies and Arabic at the University of South Africa, in August and September 2007. Against the backdrop of the teaching of the Buddha as preserved in the early sutras, it analyses the following four major turning-points in Buddhist mysticism and philosophy: [a] Hinayana Abhidharma; [b] Nagarjuna and the Madhyamika School; [c] Vasubandhu and the Yogacara School; [d] Fa-Tsang and the Hua-Yen School. These schools are understood in the wider framework of Indian metaphysical-mystical thought, and with reference to comparable figures and ideas in the history of Western mysticism and philosophy. The book is carried by the conviction that these Buddhist schools are highly relevant to human existence today in a social and ecological context endangered by human ignorance, greed and hatred.


Une longue enquête ethnographique menée à Paris et en banlieue auprès de marabouts et de leurs clients permet de répondre à des questions sur leur origine sociale et leurs diverses fonctions. Cet ouvrage porte attention aux brassages, aux phénomènes de contacts culturels et d’emprunts que favorise la vie dans une métropole. Mais il propose aussi de comprendre la place magico-spirituelle que les marabouts ouest-africain ont prise à Paris. Enfin il traite de la gestion de l’infortune, du malheur et du désir, thème essentiel d’intervention des marabouts, devenu leur principal gagne-pain. Loin de considérer les marabouts comme un isolat culturel,
l’auteur montre leurs liens avec la société globale. Elle souligne la façon dont ils se sont très tôt intéressés à des techniques divinatoires et à des savoirs étrangers au patrimoine ouest-africain, comment ils ont cherché à fonder une part de leur légitimité sur le respect des lois françaises, et ont acquis une clientèle multiculturelle dès leur arrivée en France. Elle éclaire ainsi en quoi les marabouts sont devenus un révélateur des tensions et des failles de la société urbaine contemporaine.]


Lambek, Michael, 2005, ‘Africa Bewitched’, in Reviews in Anthropology 34, 4: 343-353


[This article explores innovation in Tswana medicine (bongaka), and examines the effects of language translation in a plural medical world. The discussion focuses on Tswana diagnostics and epidemiology in post-Second World War southeastern Bechuanaland, where increasingly pervasive experiences of particular forms of bodily misfortune merged with trends in women’s extra and pre-marital sexual activity, male labour migration, intergenerational struggles over blood, semen, money, and collapsing public health became manifest and understood in terms of evolving disease etiologies. Rather than envisioning medical pluralisation as a process that produces hybrids, the case in question suggests that translation creates productive misunderstandings that facilitate the coexistence of distinct medical categories, while patients become adept at moving across ontologically distinct domains of medical practice.]


[This article demonstrates that massage is a commonplace and important healing strategy amongst ‘Khoisan’. Ethnographic and anthropological literature, however, does not seem to reflect this and largely ignores or downplays massage. The article accounts for this apparent anomaly in terms of the contingency of the ethnographic eye. I contend that the primary rea-
sons for this partiality concern the ‘everyday’ and ‘recognisable’ nature of massage and that the low medical status accorded massage through history has persistently deflected ethnographic interest. I further suggest that an overwhelming anthropological focus on the San healing dance has overshadowed recent research into healing strategies and perpetuated an uneven representation of Khoisan medicine. The article then describes how massage and the dance relate to one another in a wider healing context. By linking the dance and massage in this manner, I suggest how aspects of current massage practice continue to operate within distinctive and old Khoisan ways of thinking about and practising medicine. The article ends by presenting examples of ‘Khoi’ disease categories and their treatment by massage. Whilst not going so far as to identify a Khoisan ‘medical system’, the article uses massage to lay the bones of a distinctive and coherent approach to illness and treatment.


[As sufferers and healers, the prophets (aneneri) of central Mozambique engage in complex relationships with the Christianised spirits who possess them. Particular material items play a central role in these relationships, and in the transformative processes and activities involved. The objects that figure in Mozambican prophet healing, including clothing, bibles, mirrors, certain foods, church and hospital buildings and flags, materialise powerful social forces of the past and present; in the hands of prophet healers and their patients, they provide a means to direct these forces toward the resolution of suffering at the level of the body and the community. As they are made, held, worn, inhabited and utilised, these items in turn construct the subjectivities of those who wield them. This article addresses the material culture of the prophets as potent objects engaged by powerful subjects towards the work of bodily and social transformation.]

[In southeast Africa, the power to heal is often associated with crossing borders, whether literal or metaphorical. This wide-ranging volume reveals that healers, whose power depends on the ability to broker therapeutic resources, also contribute to the construction of the borders they transgress. While addressing diverse healing practices such as herbalism, razor-blade vaccination, spirit possession, prophetic healing, missionary health clinics, and traumatic storytelling, the nine lively and provocative essays in "Borders and Healers" explore the creativity and resilience of the region's healers and those they heal in a world shaped by economic stagnation, declining state commitments to health care, and the AIDS pandemic. This important book contributes to understandings of the ways in which healing practices in southeast Africa mediate divides between the wealthy and the impoverished, the traditional and the modern, the local and the global.]


[This book deals with two types of African diasporas, the first of which originated in the migration histories of the Indian Ocean and brought new groups into Africa. This is illustrated by case studies of Hadrami communities in Sudan and Zanzibar, and the Malay community in Cape Town, that produced trade inks as well as processes of Islamization. The second type originated with the failing African states and cases discussed are an Eritrean diaspora in Germany, alongside Sudanese diasporas in Norway and the USA, and a Somali diaspora in Norway. The papers deal with processes of homemaking, political mobilization in the diaspora through local organisations, religious networks and cyberspace nationalism. The central conceptual argument is that ‘diaspora’ is not only a post-modern reaction to the xenophobia of Western nation states but must be seen as part of a broader history of human migration and intercultural experience. This calls for a perspective which taken into consideration historically produced variation and dynamism.]
movement toward a multi-faith syllabus gained momentum. This new syllabus is then subjected to some critique. An attempt to classify the new syllabus’ methodology is also provided. A discussion of the public and religious groups’ response to the multi-faith syllabus follows. Finally, through a small survey, views of teachers (n = 48) on the new syllabus are discussed and the overall outcome appears positive. The conclusion is that the Botswana multi-faith syllabus, with adjustments, is relevant to the educational needs of a homogenous society.


[This article focuses on the history of an anti-witchcraft movement, Aberewa, which spread round 1874 and was to revive and strengthen a former movement called Sakrobundi, already widespread in the Kingdom of Gyaman in Ivory Coast. Aberewa attained its peak in the 1880s-90s and expanded to Asante kingdom by proposing an alternative and higher authority than had been institutionalised in and dispensed by Asante office holders. The author provides a detailed reading of Aberewa and recounts and explores the crucial links between Aberewa and the earlier anti-witchcraft movement, Sakrobundi. More importantly, he furnishes a life history of the remarkable Sie Kwaku, born around 1845 at Welekei (Ouliké) in Gyaman, the leading actor in both Sakrobundi and Aberewa and a significant figure in the still understudied history of Akan belief.]


[This paper provides an ethno-historical eyewitness account of the Medoma shrine in Kumasi, Ghana, and contextualises it in relation to historic and current Asante indigenous beliefs, the Pentecostalist churches, the ever growing African-American diaspora in Asante, and the internationalisation of Asante indigenous beliefs. It supplies a biography of its founder and priest, Nana Abass/Kweku Abebrese, explores his beliefs, his views of Pentecostalist Christianity and his projects, discusses the motives of the shrine’s clients, Asante, Ghanaian and Afro-American, and proposes an interpretation of the nature of Asante indigenous beliefs in the past and in the present age of globalization and charismatic Christianity.]


[This article discusses African-American Muslim intellectual thought, its invisibility in general society, its range, and its multiple strands. The author argues that Black Muslim intellectual thought is a rich tapestry of traditions dating to the first African slaves that has been systematically marginalized and misunderstood by scholars of the African American religious experience.]

[The article contrasts two visions of Islamic incursion into western Africa and the resultant tension between the indigenous population and Muslims. Ousmane Sembène’s *Ceddo* depicts, cinematographically, the resistance of indigenous Ceddos in their attempt to maintain their animist autonomy against the forceful imposition of Islam in their rural community. Maryse Condé, in *Segu*, shows the gradual imposition of expansionist Islam on the Bambara, riddled themselves by internal dissent and weakened by slavery as well as by the diverse attractions, literacy and architecture, of Islam. In his film of the late 1970s, Sembene incarnates the resistance in a young Ceddo princess. In her *Segu*, the first volume of which was published in 1984, Condé charts a weak-spirited, ineffective resistance that is presented as an initial stage of the decline of the civilization that had impressed Mungo Park, during his first visit to Africa, and continues all the way to the alleged socialism of Sékou Touré.]


[The purpose of this project is to analyse Ethiopian hagiographies with female saints as their subjects. It attempts to show how women saints are portrayed in the hagiographies. The main hagiographies of female saints used for this discussion will be Gädlä Krestos Sämra and Gädlä Feqertä Krestos. The discussion of these texts is informed by the feminist literary approach to retrieve the representation of female voices from hagiographic literature, so heavily dominated by male authority and patriarchal values. I hope that examining the manuscripts will show the importance of reading religious texts for providing insights about gender relations as they are articulated today. I also believe that the hagiographies and their study provide new perspectives for the study of gender relations.]


[The Afro-Brazilian religions have experienced a strong expansion in the last three or four decades of the 20th century, both in their syncretic versions, associated with the rise of the Umbanda, and their more traditional, often re-Africanized forms. They are now present in the most modernized cities and regions of Brazil. Following some intuitions of Roger Bastide, the sociological meaning of this expansion is questioned in this paper. Their dissociation from their original ethnic and social communities implies their transformation into highly standardized symbolic goods directed to a market composed of people of all regional and ethnic backgrounds. This entails the ‘ecclesification’ of these religions and their drift toward kitsch and showy ritual expressions. The ambiguity of these changes is highlighted, as a certain ‘re-enchantment’ of society seems to be counterbalanced by the virtual dissolution of the Afro-Brazilian religious legacy.]


[Yoruba theatre is undergoing a crisis in the context of an unrelenting economic recession in Nigeria that began in the early 1980s. This situation has released tensions that lead to a real and sadly all-too-justifiable sense of insecurity and to proliferating accounts of witchcraft attacks. The outcome has been a rise in violence manifested in the unleashing of the powers of witchcraft and enflaming relations between small rival groups hitherto unified under the sway of a salaried and at least until the beginning of the 1980s optimistic middle class. Yoruba neotraditional theatre that represents deities on stage that belong to ‘an invisible world’ is playing with fire and, by conjuring up the powers of witchcraft, has in turn itself been bewitched.]


[In this article, the report of a trial is described that occurred in the slave-courts of Jamaica in 1824. It provides a text for understanding an encounter between African obeah and English forces. It is argued that the English court as an auditorium - with its forces of science, medicine, and law arrayed against a single accused African - was able to isolate and weaken obeah, a force that was ordinarily held in awe by Africans in their own communities and by some English outside of the court. The article explains why it was inevitable, though not inherently truthful, that the court would view obeah as irrational, and deem the African sage, referred to as an ‘old warlock’ by The Times, to be fraudulent.]


[The bagre myth is part of the oral traditions of the Dagaaba of northwestern Ghana. The author suggests through a content analysis of this myth, that, contrary to patriarchal Dagga society, the woman is the heroine in the bagre myth. She dares to venture into the unknown world and gain new knowledge.]

[Some aspects of the intersection of Islam with a legendary Chicago street gang, the Blackstones, provides a counter-intuitive instance in which postindustrial ghetto space produces alternative forms of cosmopolitanism. This is referred to as ‘ghetto cosmopolitanism’ and is introduced as part of a larger history through which contending notions of Black subjectivity have emerged to challenge the dehumanization of poorer and more marginal African American communities. The story of the Blackstone legacy and Islam explores this unique indigenous engagement with Muslim identity towards that end, while it also expands the way in which we understand contemporary ghetto space relates to transnational processes and globaliza tion.]

[The Aari were reduced to a quasi serfdom after being being conquered by Ethiopia in the late 19th century and unable to practise their traditional religion. The ‘Ak’aat K’aal movement, though shortlived, enabled them to cope with Ethiopian domination and serfdom.]


[The meta-narrative of modernity often posits an inevitable shift from ‘dividual’ to ‘individual’ modalities of personhood. This presumes that with growing commodification, persons are no longer enmeshed in networks of reciprocal exchange, but acquire a sense of individual autonomy, and perceive the body as bounded from external influences. The villagers in the Bushbuckridge area of South Africa, however, continue to perceive the body as permeable and partible. They believe that bodies transmit substances to and incorporate substances from other bodies, and that the conjunction of breath, aura, blood, and flesh gives rise to a dangerous condition of heat. By practicing various taboos associated with sex, pregnancy, and death, villagers aim to avoid contamination. This system of taboos is not a relic of the past, but is integral to contemporary situations of life.]


[Le christianisme était une religion de marginaux Luba Lubilanji entre 1891 et 1909, date de la reconciliation entre le chef Kalamba Mukenge et les agents de l’état colonial. Les guerres de Kasongo Cinyama, les razzias de Ngongo Leteta et celles des Chokwe, l’action de l’administration en faveur des Luba Lubilanji et les premières methods d’évangélisation scheutistes
(le rachat des esclaves, les fermes chapelles, les chapelles-écoles, les écoles) ainsi que les ma-ladies épidémiologiques expliquent l’adhésion massive des populations au christianisme.


Obadare, Ebenezer, 2007, ‘Religious NGOs, Civil Society and the Quest for a Public Sphere in Nigeria’, in African Identities 5, 1: 135-153


[The entry of the Igbo into the vibrant Nigerian home-video industry is marked predominantly by the utilization of rituals of sacrifice to generate contexts in which wealth and riches transport the characters from a normal reality to a world of fantasy. The ritual sacrifices required to achieve this ‘success’ are almost always of humans. The journey to this fantasy world of riches, though often monstrous, appears to bring ‘success’. This success however, usually turns out to be temporary, an aberration of reality rather than a new reality. The stated moral intent of the films is to present a form of bad behaviour in order to discourage people from engaging in it, yet more than anything else the video-films validate the efficacy of rituals in the way and manner that the characters in the filmed ‘rituals’ are portrayed: fabulously rich and successful. Far from acting as a deterrent therefore, the selective scapegoatism of failure which leaves the majority of them not only unpunished but in fact ‘rewarded’ sustains the belief and perhaps fuels the urge to practice and fulfil such rituals as a quick and easy means to affluence. It is on the above premise that this study aims at investigating the use of rituals in Igbo videos and its implications for the wider viewing public.]


[At a time when local traditions across the world are forcibly colliding with global culture, Beyond Primitivism explores the future of indigenous religions as they encounter modernity and globalisation. Under the auspices of Jacob K. Olupona, Charles Long, David Chidester and Bruce Lincoln, the book offers historical and comparative analysis of the significance of indigenous faiths today.]


[This volume focuses on new understandings and insights concerning the presence and relevance of African immigrant religious communities in the United States. It explores the profound significance of religion in the lives of immigrants and the relevance of these growing communities for U.S. social life. It describes key social and historical aspects of African immigrant religion in the U.S. and builds a conceptual framework for theory and analysis. The volume broadens our understandings of the ways in which new immigration is changing the face of Christianity in the U.S. and adds needed breadth to the study of the black church, incorporating the experiences of African immigrant religious communities in America.]

Olúpọ̀nà, Jacob K. & Terry Rey (eds.) 2007, Orisa Devotion as World Religion: The Globalization of Yorùbá Religious Culture. (Madison [WI]: University of Wisconsin, 592 pp., ISBN 0299224643 (pbk), $34.95

[This book explores the emergence of Òrìṣà devotion as a world religion. Originating among the Yorùbá people of West Africa, the varied traditions that comprise Òrìṣà devotion are today found in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Australia. The African spirit proved remarkably resilient in the face of the transatlantic slave trade, inspiring the perseverance of African religion wherever its adherents settled in the New World. Among the most significant
manifestations of this spirit, Yorùbá religious culture persisted, adapted, and even flourished in the Americas, especially in Brazil and Cuba, where it thrives as Candomblé and Lukumi-Santería, respectively. After the end of slavery in the Americas, the free migrations of Latin American and African practitioners have further spread the religion to places like New York City and Miami. Thousands of African Americans have turned to the religion of their ancestors, as have many other spiritual seekers who are not themselves of African descent. Ifá divination in Nigeria, Candomblé funerary chants in Brazil, the role of music in Yorùbá revivalism in the United States, gender and representational authority in Yorùbá religious culture—these are among the many subjects discussed here by experts from around the world.


[Luo society has been cited frequently as one of the most traditional societies in western Kenya. In the past century, religious eclecticism is moving the focal point of healing by the *jolang’o* into dominant African independent churches where Luo beliefs handed down from the past are preserved and reorganized with new expression. In these churches, prayer, spiritual, and faith healing are central liturgical activities that meet an incessant need for puodhruok – holistic spiritual healing. The study identifies the major juogi or spiritual forces responsible for spirit attack and healer illumination. It appears that in the area of ethnomedicine, African beliefs are as strong and pervasive as ever before.]


[Examining some recent publications on Afro-Cuban religions in the US, this essay argues that some of the evident shortcomings of the literature on this subject may hold important epistemological and methodological lessons for the anthropology of religion in general. These concern the pervasive lack of critical attention to the criteria by which formations of religious knowledge and practice are constituted as objects of study; a failure to acknowledge the historical interaction between theoretical models and public demand structures for authenticated cultural difference; the tendency to treat the relation between observer- and insider-discourses as unproblematic and transparent; and a similarly widespread trend towards over-systematising and homogenising internally heterogeneous and unbounded aggregates of knowledge and practice. What is suggested instead is an ethnographically informed and actor-centred sociology of knowledge focussed on mutually articulated universes of meaning, and capable of tran-
scending artificial conceptual boundaries between ‘the religious’ and the sphere of ‘everyday life’.


[Footballers Essomba and Ashu, team manager Kalla and spiritual adviser Zé are the key characters in this anthropological study of football in Cameroon. It focuses on traditional religious activities in local football. Though it usually takes a well-organized club with professional executives, a team of talented players and an experienced coach to win a match, in Cameroon success in football is also said to require a powerful ‘big man’ of a specific ethnic affiliation, a considerable budget for ‘motivation’ (bribery), and the right kind of spiritual assistance. Even then a team may lose matches because of struggles within the club and team caused by corrupt executives, coach’s players and godfathers, spectator violence, or may be attributed to witchcraft and sorcery.]


[We know relatively little about African conceptions of mental illness in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but in researching the social history of mental health in Natal and Zululand, investigation of one phenomenon - the ‘epidemic’ of indiki spirit possession in Zululand from the 1890s to 1914 - has proved particularly illuminating. It shows that African concepts of mental illness were in a state of flux at this time as therapies for psychological distress adapted in the face of the entrenchment of colonialism, Christianity and a cash economy. Furthermore, African mental health strategies were not always as inclusive as has sometimes been suggested by scholars. This had very real consequences for a number of women - known as the amandiki - who were tried by the colonial state for the crime of witchcraft between 1894 and 1914. As the ensuing court cases revealed, colonial psychiatry was not simply or necessarily a blunt tool for social control. Instead, changing Western concepts surrounding, and responses to, criminal responsibility and mental illness posed legal problems for the colonial authorities in their attempts to distinguish between witchcraft, hysteria and spirit possession.]


[Multiple quarrels within and between families in rural southern Malawi mediate a ‘hidden history’ of social differentiation and class formation. The paper argues that conflict over land underlies most of the disputes, is central to the division of matrilineal families and, in turn, to the process of social differentiation and class formation. The disputes have the effect of turning family members into ‘strangers’, or those who do not belong on the family land. Family oral histories suggest that the matrilineal groups split up not only along the cleavages between sisters’ daughters but between sisters. A final rupture of a matrilineal family occurs through increasingly bitter quarrels, often including accusations of witchcraft, and the move of a group of sisters to a different area, thereby ceding the matri-family’s land to those who remain. The paper concentrates on this ‘hidden’ process, although it also provides a sketch of some of the key past and present patterns of differentiation in Malawi.]


[The Kuku blacksmiths occupied a paradoxical position in the society: they were respected and despised. They were highly revered for their technical skills, but were despised because they deviated from the Kuku values and norms. They worked and danced naked; they never bathed, and ate their food without washing their hands; they drank strong liquor, and smoked ***marijuana*** in long pipes; they sang songs that ridiculed women, and were also renowned for their being promiscuous; and they never owned farms, livestock, or proper houses.]


[This paper examines the ways in which the official performance of a masquerade festival in an Òkìtì Yorùbà town in Nigeria depends upon the action of participants taking place away from the performances that the public witnesses. In the Òkìtì Yorùbà town of Ìkòlé the biannual masquerade festival is one of the most dramatic ritual events within the town. It examines the way that the formal presentations of masquerade within the official ritual period are underpinned by the contestations that take place behind the scenes of the festival, that in turn rely upon the differing identities that are established in the performance of differing masquerade types. Thus the paper generates a ‘backstage’/‘frontstage’ approach to the festival and in so doing it places the performance of the participant observer within the analysis arguing that this, within the conditions of the festival is as much a performance as any other part of the performances called upon during the festival.]


[This article details the work of the Birmingham Initiative, a Methodist inspired, ecumenical research project that operated in Birmingham, UK, between 1995 and 1999. As the Christian Education Development Officer employed by this project, the author undertook doctoral research among twenty-six inner-city, Black majority churches from Methodist, Baptist Anglican, and Reformed Church traditions. One of the central aims of the research was to create the first African-centered Black Christian Education of Liberation for the British context. The major outcome of this research was the creation of the first practical Black Christian education curriculum in Britain, entitled Growing into Hope.]


[This paper details the fruits of an ongoing piece of research which attempts, by means of Christian drama, to develop a new approach to undertaking Black theological reflection with marginalized and oppressed peoples in Britain. The author juxtaposes elements of experiential learning and praxis-orientated approaches to education, with some of the central elements of Black liberation theologies, in order to create a ‘dramatic’ approach to theologian reflection that is rooted in the experience of Black people living in Britain. By using drama, the author asserts that this method for doing theology enables poor, marginalized and oppressed peoples to become a central part of the process of creating new knowledge. As such, it is a process of the democratization of theology. It is an accessible and interactive contextual Black theology for Britain.]

Rebellions broke out in many areas of South Africa shortly after the institution of white rule in the late nineteenth century and continued into the next century. However, distrust of the colonial regime reached a new peak in the mid-twentieth century, when revolts erupted across a wide area of rural South Africa. All these uprisings were rooted in grievances over taxes. Rebels frequently invoked supernatural powers for assistance and accused government officials of using witchcraft to enrich themselves and to harm ordinary people. As Sean Redding observes in *Sorcery and Sovereignty*, beliefs in witchcraft and supernatural powers were part of the political rhetoric; the system of taxation—with all its prescribed interactions between ruler and ruled—was intimately connected to these supernatural beliefs. In this study, Redding examines how black South Africans’ beliefs in supernatural powers, along with both economic and social change in the rural areas, resulted in specific rebellions and how gender relations in black South African rural families changed. *Sorcery and Sovereignty* explores the intersection of taxation, political attitudes, and supernatural beliefs among black South Africans, shedding light on some significant issues in the history of colonized Africa.


[In this article, the informal views of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in Makweteng are described and compared, as well as their formal policies and their responses to both segregation and apartheid. Questions are asked about the consistency of their initial approaches and the practical choices they made in fully accepting the ‘other’. The contribution of these churches to social change in South Africa is also discussed]


[Founded in the 1880s by Cheick Amadou Bamba, the Mouride brotherhood has its capital in Touba, Senegal, where Mourides have constructed the largest mosque in sub-Saharan Africa. The brotherhood’s vertical and horizontal ties and a culture of migration have been readily reproduced within transnational networks. Most Mouride migrants are men, who are involved in circulatory migration. They have left their families in Senegal where their transnational social networks are ‘anchored’. In addition to exploring their transnational networks in both receiving and sending contexts, I consider Mouride attitudes towards and discourses about the society of migration. Their Afro-Muslim critique of Italy offers methodological lessons. Indeed, it demonstrates the need to combine analytic anti-essentialism with the ethnographic exploration of prosaic essentialisms.]


[The paper compares two different West African communities living and working in Italy. The mostly male Senegalese migrants generally belong to the Mouride Sufi brotherhood, whose vertical and horizontal ties are reproduced in transnational networks, and these often help migrants organise their business activities as well as their temporary settlement within the receiving contexts. Ghanaians in Italy are Christians with a growing number of Pentecostals. They have a balanced gender ratio and, unlike the Senegalese who are strongly identified with the project of return, Ghanaians families tend to settle in Italy. Yet transnational connections and activities (remittances, home associations, investment in housing or entrepreneurial activities) are frequent among Ghanaians too. Despite differences, there are therefore also similarities. The paper focuses on the complex politics of interplay with the receiving contexts and explores the potentials and obstacles for the enhancement of transnational linkages.]

[Realists consider beliefs cause wars. Idealists consider wars cause beliefs. The war in Sierra Leone offers some scope to test between these two views. The main rebel faction, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was, sociologically speaking, an accidental sect. It lost its original ideologues at an early stage, and absorbed others with a different orientation as a result of military misfortunes. Bombing reinforced the sectarian tendencies of an enclaved movement, and belief proliferated. This confounded military assessments that the movement could be rapidly brought to heel by a private military intervention sponsored by British and South African mineral interests. The movement became an uncontrollable juggernaut, driven by strange sacrificial notations directed against rural populations it had once set out to liberate. The war in Sierra Leone is consistent with the Durkheimian argument that performance forges collective representations. Dealing with armed insurgency in Africa requires appreciation of the artefactual and circumstantial character of social and religious beliefs.]


Rytter Hansen, Birthe, 2003, ‘Public Spaces for National Commemoration: The Case of Emlotheni Memorial, Port Elizabeth’, in Anthropology and Humanism 28, 2: 43-60

[This article examines how commemorative projects try to deal with the past in the present in order to make possible the imagination of a united South African nation. It looks at how one commemorative site, Emlotheni Memorial, was intended to act as part of the larger nation-building project in South Africa. Taking up issues of ancestral belief, social space, and recognition, this article examines how residents experienced the memorial as exclusive rather than inclusive. The article argues that the memorial site, rather than providing an opportunity for local residents and other South Africans to participate in building a shared history and identity, instead ended up reproducing the segregated past of South Africa.]


[Anthropological studies of African conceptions of illness have often worked with a division between the natural and the supernatural, with the focus being on the efficient, or final, causes of an illness. This approach tends to maintain local African explanations of sickness within a framework of exoticism. Based on a study among the Bissa in southeastern Burkina Faso, this paper offers an alternative analysis, with the main focus being on how the process of transmis-
ension is conceived. Four different modes of illness transmission are identified: (1) ingestion of improper substances, (2) breaking of social taboos, (3) sorcery, and (4) improper interaction with spirits. Notions of proximity and improper sharing of space play a role in all four types of illness transmission. I demonstrate how local theories of illness transmission indicate a dynamic interaction between spatial domains and social relationships. Such a focus may well be more useful for health planners than the one that emphasizes the differences between African and biomedical notions of causation.


[The book illuminates Santeria as a theological system and as a vital, continuously evolving community. Beginning with the transatlantic history of how Yoruba traditions came to Cuba and were established and adapted to Cuban society, Sandoval provides a comprehensive comparison of Yoruba and Cuban mythologies, followed by an overview of how Santeria has continued to diffuse and change in response to new contexts and adherents, with an especially illuminating perspective on Santeria among Cubans in Miami.]


[Portugal, for long a country of emigration, has in recent decades become one of immigration. One of the largest groups of newcomers is constituted by Africans from the former Portuguese colonies. This paper focuses on how religion and ritual traditions from their home country are manipulated by people from Guinea-Bissau in order to recreate their identity in the urban world of Lisbon. Based on fieldwork conducted among the Pepel of Guinea-Bissau from 1997 to the present and on ongoing research on a Pepel religious healer in Lisbon, this paper specifically dwells on the issue of transnational spirits. It explores how such entities are constructed, and the rituals around them. This entails a complex and ceaseless relation between the world of the living and the world of the dead, as well as a constant flow of goods and symbols between the physical original grounds, in Guinea-Bissau, and Lisbon: people, money, goods, practices and ideas, as well as spirits, circulate and create bridges between Europe and Africa.]


[Shaw challenges claims that Africans felt (and still feel) no sense of moral responsibility concerning the sale of slaves. While the slave-trading past is rarely remembered in explicit verbal accounts, it is often made vividly present in such forms as rogue spirits, ritual specialists' visions, and the imagery of divination techniques. Drawing on extensive fieldwork and archival research, Shaw argues that memories of the slave trade have shaped (and been reshaped by) experiences of colonialism, postcolonialism, and the country's ten-year rebel war. Thus money and commodities are often linked to an invisible city of witches whose affluence was built on the theft of human lives. These ritual and visionary memories make hitherto invisible realities manifest, forming a prism through which past and present mutually configure each other.]

[Many enslaved Africans brought to the United States during the transatlantic slave trade were Muslims. Although eventually stripped of their beliefs, customs, and traditions in the New World, their religious faith would play a seminal role in the creation of a new music genre: the blues. This article argues that when comparing the early blues to the musical practices of Islam, the Islamic influences on the blues are strikingly evident.]


[This timely collection offers new perspectives on Muslim-Christian encounters in Africa. Working against political and scholarly traditions that keep Muslims and Christians apart, the essays in this multidisciplinary volume locate African Muslims and Christians within a common analytical frame. In a series of historical and ethnographic case studies from across the African continent, the authors consider the multiple ways Muslims and Christians have encountered each other, borrowed or appropriated from one another, and sometimes also clashed. Contributors recast assumptions about the making and transgressing of religious boundaries, Christian-Muslim relations, and conversion. This engaging collection is a long overdue attempt to grapple with the multi-faceted and changing encounters of Muslims and Christians in Africa]


[Discusses the role of the mainline churches before, during and after the genocide in 1993 in which 1 million Ruandans were killed, as well as the upsurge of neo-Pentecostal churches in Ruanda after 1994, the process of grassroots reconciliation, and the current political situation.]

[Since la Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre is a national patron for all Cubans of all racial origins, syncretism has led practitioners of Afro-Cuban religions to incorporate this *madonna* as the Yoruba Ochun. In the process of making the Cuban Catholic Virgin African, syncretism also makes African religion Cuban. Here we have not only a case of monological syncretism, wherein Christianity or African religions talk past each other in order to absorb only bits and pieces from each other, but also a dialogical syncretism in which the exchanges go in several directions.]

[After revealing the importance of rumor and gossip as catalysts for accusations of witchcraft and sorcery, it demonstrates their role in the genesis of social and political violence, as seen in peasant rebellions, as well as witch-hunts. The study draws upon examples from Africa, Europe, India, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia.]

Strickrodt, Silke, 2007, “‘If She no Learn, She no Get Husband”: Christianity, Domesticity and Education at the Church Missionary Society’s Female Institution in Freetown, 1848-1880’, in Jones 2007: 14-35


[The very topic of myth has rarely emerged in Hausa studies due to the lack of conventional mythic material. This article looks at how myth emerges not in Hausa literature, but in the spirit possession ceremony known as bori. Unlike traditional myths, bori is a performed event accompanied by musicians who sing diverse and creative praise-epithets and songs to and about the spirits, and the spirit possession ceremony possesses only a marginally standard form. Enveloped by ritual, the performance itself is unique in each particular manifestation, with only vaguely predictable elements confining its realization. It is here, within the performance, guided by tradition, an aetiological origin, and a stable pantheon of spirits, that we find myth communicating itself, mediating between a host of binary opposites, emerging and then disappearing with the close of each performance.]


[This paper examines an ethno-religious movement, the Nation of Islam (NOI), which globally appeals to Black Diaspora. Despite being originally American, this movement has become a global ethno-religious movement due to its appeal to blacks worldwide. This paper aims to examine how the NOI’s ethnic, racial, political, social and religious teachings appeal to Africans and Caribbeans beyond the borders of the USA in geographical areas such as the Caribbean, Canada, West Africa and Western Europe. However, it specifically focuses on the global impacts of the NOI in Britain. It is important that a movement’s external and internal relations with both surrounding society and its infrastructure play crucial roles in establishing itself. The NOI’s UK chapter’s history and experiences that the movement has gone through have shaped its organizational development as well as its public perception and image.]


[This article shows that women’s expressive traditions, despite being dismissed by brahmanised sectors of the Hindu diaspora, constituted a contra-ethnicising logic which helped to consolidate the position of the Hindu-Gujerati traders settling in colonial Mozambique. They also provide emerging generations with significant resources for the redefinition of the self and the other in the two main postcolonial contexts, Portugal and Britain.]


[Using oral history interviews conducted at The University of Iowa after September 11, 2001, Black autobiographies, and recent social-scientific and cultural studies of African-American masculinity, this article evaluates identity formation among Sunni Muslim converts and second generation Muslims involved in hip hop culture. The article also discusses visual representations in television and cinema that frame youth conversion experiences.]


[For a century and a half, Otjiherero-speakers in central Namibia have engaged in healing rituals played out around the Holy Fire and involving a resolution of tension through appeal to male patrilineal ancestors. These ceremonies are part of traditions that have increasingly come to define Herero ethnic identity, and that have been deeply affected by the historical developments of the period. The first part of this article traces these changes and their effects on the development of healing within a broader ritual tradition, arguing that the genocide of Herero in 1904 and the burial of Samuel Maharero at Okahandja in 1923 were defining moments in this history. It is possible to detect traces of change in healing practices by interweaving this evidence with a broader historical narrative. Healing at the Holy Fire has not, however, been the only source of medical care for Herero, who have also relied on herbal medicine, massage, midwifery and the skills of specialist doctors and diviners (as well as biomedical care), and have frequently crossed putative ethnic boundaries in their search for healing. Oral testimony tends to stress those healing practices that are seen as specifically Herero. Ethnicity must, however, be understood as a historical artefact, not as a natural phenomenon.]


[This paper analyses the effects of government education policies on the Gospel Missionary Society (GMS). Its small size and faith basis made it impossible for GMS to meet the government conditions for receiving grants. Eventually, GMS was forced to withdraw from colonial Kenya altogether.]


[Although the debate on female circumcision has triggered significant discussions of universalism and relativism, this discourse has sometimes obscured critical questions of social justice. Lack of scholarly interrogation of the larger social cultural contexts has led to misconceptions, and assumptions which inhibit efforts to transform the situation of women in circumcising communities. The cry for change by some and the defense of this practice by others leads to inaction and the persistence of this practice. The voice of girls whose health is compromised by this practice is completely overlooked. My paper proposes the need for the female circumcision discourse to transcend academic confrontations to engage realities that women in circumcising communities face.]


[Ajé is often misconstrued as witchcraft. However, it is central to the Yoruba ethos and cosmology. Not only does it underpin the concepts of creation and creativity, but as a force of justice and retribution, Ajé is essential to social harmony and balance. As Africans were forced into exile and enslavement, they took Ajé with them and continued its work of creating, destroying, harming, and healing in the New World. Washington begins with an examination of the ancient forms of Ajé in Yoruba culture, which creates a framework for innovative readings of important works by Africana writers, including Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Ben Okri, Wole Soyinka, Jamaica Kincaid, and Ntozake Shange.]


[An image of Bushmen etched by ethnographers rapidly emerged as a centerpiece of anthropological practice during the first decades (1947-1968) of the Cold War. But that unifying image of a mythic human past - of absolute primitiveness with ethnographic authenticity - was constructed in the Kalahari before any anthropologist arrived there. The popular image was forged in Laurens van der Post’s TV films for the BBC, first shown in 1956, and in his books derived from those films, and almost simultaneously by the Marshall family’s work. The Cold War forged a crisis in Euroamerican ontology, a crisis of personal and collective identity, of continuity with the past and continuation with the future couched in terms of a threat to cultural life as Western Europe and America knew it. ‘A metaphorically powerful response to the crisis arose in a revival of attention to humankind’s presumptive primordial roots; along with extinct and extant primates, Bushmen quickly became a main subject of this attention, proposed as exemplars of Euroamerica’s image of what its evolutionary alter ego ought to be and could become again. Van der Post configured his myth in conceptions of natural being and an individualized collective unconscious drawn from Jung and the antimodern reflections of T.S. Eliot. The imagery of his books and films has since been absorbed by countless millions all over the world. An analysis of van der Post’s contribution to this discourse tells much about the anthropological interest that followed’.]


[This article offers some preliminary insights into the complexities of becoming and being white izangoma in contemporary South Africa. Written from an insider’s perspective, it examines the significance of becoming an isangoma, and engages with some of the main criticisms of those who oppose white practitioners. It provides a brief description of the making of an isangoma and includes some of the particular challenges to the white initiate (or thwasa). The article argues that the inevitable traces of ancestral agency in the sangoma experience - its ancestral hybridity - renders every sangoma practitioner hybrid, in the sense of being new, diffe-
rent, and (unless their healing is found ineffective) authentic. Finally, with the essentially healing role of **sangoma** in mind, the article touches on the potential for expanding the roles of white **izangoma** as contemporary healers of colonial wounds, as mediators, and as translators between biomedicine and traditional medical practice.


[This paper provides a brief historical survey of the establishment of Christian churches in the state of Ilorin, Nigeria. After examining the early resistance to the spread of Christianity in Nigeria, the paper reviews the history of the first and second generations of churches in Nigeria. The paper then surveys the social impact of church and mission in Ilorin, including the religious and educational aspects all of which contributed to the improvement of the educational standards in Nigeria, even among the Muslim schools. The paper concludes that most of the innovative and positive ideas introduced through the church schools were readily adopted by the Muslim schools, once they saw the advantages that were to be derived from them.]


[By and large, Pentecostal theology has proceeded with little attention to black Pentecostalism except as ‘objects’ of historical or sociological analysis. But what does Afropentecostalism—black Pentecostalism in its global contexts—have to contribute to the formulation of a world Pentecostal theology for the twenty-first century? The works of Frank Chikane in South Africa, Robert Beckford in Britain, and Cheryl Sanders in North America are discussed and analyzed as points of entry into the theology of Afropentecostal churches. This essay assumes that the future of world Pentecostal theology cannot ignore the important contributions of Afropentecostal theological traditions.]


[This article compares the evidence from two related movements: the contemporary Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and the cluster of organisations that have been closely associated with Hasan al-Turabi in Sudan, in order to query the extent to which Islamism is compatible with liberal democratic politics. The answers suggested are, in the Egyptian case, hopeful, but for Sudan decidedly pessimistic. However, there are complexities within both stories. The comparison indicates ways in which the outcomes are related to the framing circumstances, but also points out the limitations of the information currently available in the academic literature.]


HIV/AIDS & RELIGIONS IN AFRICA


[The Azande of Ezo county, southern Sudan, consider HIV/AIDS to be their worst health problem. Although there have been few confirmed cases, there is ongoing migration from neighbouring countries that are thought to have high prevalence. There are also more locally specific reasons for concern. Zande fears about HIV/AIDS relate to understandings of witchcraft. Witches, like HIV positive people, may look like everyone else, but are secretly killing those around them. Some individuals, who know they are HIV positive, demonstrate that they are moral persons by being open about it. They are active in providing information about the epidemic, and associate their activities with the Christian churches. Their efforts, and those of local religious and political leaders, have contributed to awareness about modes of transmission associated with sexual intercourse and contamination with infected blood. However, accepting such messages does not necessarily contradict witchcraft causality. Also, without knowing who are secretly positive, almost anyone is suspect. Advice about stopping sexual intercourse is viewed as untenable or worse, because sexuality and procreation are fundamental to life. A minority is enthusiastic about the use of condoms; but most people have had no personal experience of them and oppose their introduction. It is unclear why HIV/AIDS controls cannot be like those for other diseases, such as sleeping sickness. Support is expressed for testing facilities, and for clinical treatment. In addition, there are requests for all positive people to be publicly identified and concentrated in one place.]


[The demography of both urban and rural South Africa is shaped by migration, with three unique patterns: labour-sending, labour-receiving and rural areas. This article explores the relationship between HIV risk and migration in South Africa. It identifies the urban informal settlements common in labour-receiving areas as key magnifiers of HIV risk, increasing the vulnerability of migrant workers in these townships. It examines the urban informal settlement, a unique social environment with distinctly high-risk behaviour dynamics, as a focal determinant of HIV. It proposes this framework as an extension of the migration-HIV dialectic beyond the traditionally unidimensional approach, to encompass a more contextualised discussion. This methodology, which uses the environment as an entry point to understanding behaviour and emphasises the importance of addressing the HIV-migration issue within a broader development perspective, has important implications for HIV programmes in South Africa.]


[This article investigates the characteristics and determinants of out-migration in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, using data from a panel designed to investigate the household impact of the epidemic. Departure models show that individual attributes, notably age and gen-
der, play an important role in explaining out-migration from households that have not experienced morbidity or mortality. In affected households, a number of household-level variables, notably the sex of the household head, place of residence, family structure, the dependency ratio, human capital and household size, feature as important determinants of out-migration. Health shocks independently explain part of observed differences in out-migration from affected households, the out-migration of ill persons from affected households and the out-migration of orphaned children from affected households. Thus, migration represents an important strategy for poorer households having to cope with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, both as an economic survival strategy and as a social strategy aimed at accessing support from the extended family.

Borne, Francine van den, 2005, Trying to Survive in Times of Poverty and AIDS: Women and Multiple Partner Sex in Malawi. Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 385 pp., Euro 35


[This PhD thesis discusses the social environment, experiences and perceptions of fourteen orphans in north central Namibia. The researcher followed the children for five months, visiting them at home and setting up a children’s club at school. The loss of their parents, the children’s workload, bullying and their general concerns and worries were among the topics discussed. This research, which focuses on the development of research methods to use when talking to children about sensitive subjects, contributes to the fields of both the anthropology of childhood and medical anthropology.]


[Using the conceptual framework of social reproduction as a way of reassessing the AIDS crisis in Africa, this paper finds contradictory tendencies: a devastating impact on agricultural modes of livelihood which sustain the majority and which enable workers to present themselves as cheap labour, but also a crisis for the reproduction of capital as its supply of such labour is depleted. The impact on and response to the epidemic by the state is explored as well as its reflection of marked gender and class inequalities. Conversely the impetus to certain fractions of capital which benefit from AIDS and the confrontation of the state and pharmaceutical companies by an emergent populist movement demanding the right to treatment, exposes the extent to which transformation rather than simple reproduction is in evidence.]


[A critical consideration of the way social class is defined in studies of HIV/AIDS in Africa exposes the inadequacies of ‘indexical’ accounts in which class is reduced to a statistical category (the predominant mode of analysis in epidemiological research). It compares this to relational accounts, which view class as a set of dynamic interactions between groups struggling to assert or defend social positions relating to livelihoods. Arguing that class relations frame both the transmission and the response to the AIDS epidemic in Africa, it looks at the evidence which can be drawn from both indexical and relational accounts of the particular significance of class in this situation, noting its crucial intersection with gender relations and taking Tanzania as its key case.]


[This article reassesses the importance of ‘religio us health assets’ in understanding and responding to local contexts of health and health provision through a reading of a case study on local governance in South Africa. It highlights the complexities of migration in South African cities and the impact this has on an already complex context of health care policy and provision, and illuminates the reality of compromised personal, familial and communal environments, and weak support structures.


[Male risk behaviour and lack of awareness of risks have not altered significantly. There are potentially explosive possibilities for the spread of HIV/AIDS to and from Limpopo Province.]


[Travail d’inventaire d’un système symbolique relatif à la maladie sida [HIV/AIDS], la collecte de ces données se situe dans un contexte africain très précis : celui de la région lobi au Burkina, durant la période antérieure à l’annonce des trithérapies – entre 1992 et 1996.]


[This paper reviews the current state of knowledge on the interconnections between mobility and HIV and argues for more research that will further understanding of migrant vulnerability and the development of appropriate policies and models of intervention and care.]


[This article re-examines the case of Billy Goodson Chisupe of Malawi, who in 1995 claimed to have discovered a cure for AIDS, and distributed the cure, at no charge, to nearly a million people. Existing interpretations of these events fail to recognize their significance; the mass movement to Chisupe reflected neither the ‘inevitable’ expression of a cultural pattern nor a public demand for ‘moral purity’, as Schoffeleurs and Probst have theorized. It is argued here that the Chisupe affair can be explained not as ‘mass hysteria’ but as the product of rational fears (of AIDS), calculations (of the probability that someone like Chisupe might be ‘real’) and desires (for a chance to speak openly about inequality, politics, and the threat posed by disease). Chisupe’s message - about inequality, and respect for African ‘tradition’ and science - is the crucial missing link in the existing portraits of the Chisupe affair, and that there are potential political and public health implications to the failure to understand the appeal of that message.


[Recent research conducted in Lesotho, Kenya and South Africa has revealed that HIV/Aids will seriously impact on a range of land issues as a direct result of very high infection rates in these countries. HIV/Aids will affect different forms of land use, the functioning of land administration systems, land rights of women and orphans as well as the poor generally, and inheritance practices and norms. The epidemic not only affects the productivity of the infected, but also diverts the labour of the household and extended family away from other productive and reproductive activities as they take care of the sick. Affected households fall below the social and economic threshold of vulnerability and ‘survivability’, leaving the survivors - mainly the young and elderly - with limited resources to quickly regain a sustainable livelihood. This indicates the importance of effective land administration systems and of land rights as HIV/Aids impacts on the terms and conditions on which households and individuals hold, use and transact land. This has a particular resonance for women and children’s rights, which, in the context of rural power relations that are themselves coming under increasing pressure from the epidemic, are especially vulnerable to being usurped. Thus, the impact of HIV/Aids on land raises complex and sensitive issues for land policies and programmes, particularly if they are intended to underpin rural development and sustainable livelihoods.]

[‘Public Policy and AIDS in Africa: From Anthropology to Political Science’; the contributions made by political science and social anthropology are used to set ideas and theories about public policy in the light of the fight against AIDS in Africa. The Cameroonian situation serves as an empirical example for illustrating various dimensions of the multidisciplinary dialectics between international standards and local forces. Light is shed on the rationales and contradictions, ranging from ‘global’ issues to the interplay of transnational actions, related to this major issue in international relations and contemporary Africa. Far from any interest group, the effort is made to reconstruct the process whereby the work of anthropology on itself and its criticisms of the biological and medical sciences are placed in a history that tells us about the evolution of the epidemic and, too, about the epistemology of the social sciences that study sub-Saharan Africa. Political science and its concepts are used in this study, which is placed in between empirical and modest epistemological goals. A few approaches for understanding politics in relation to AIDS in Africa are proposed.]

[‘De l’intime au politique: le sida en Afrique, un objet en mouvement’; L’objet de cet article est de tenter de montrer comment s’est construite cette recherche qui a évolué de la question des ‘jeunesses urbaines’ face au sida au Cameroun, vers l’analyse critique de la politique publique de lutte contre cette pandémie sur l’ensemble de l’Afrique subsaharienne : de l’intime au politique. Ce texte part des questions liées à la sexualité, mise en cause dans l’expansion de la maladie, pour épouser des interrogations politiques sur ce que l’auteur a appelé ‘un modèle dissonant de politique publique’.]

[Les années 1990 ont été, en Afrique du Sud, celles de la sortie de l’apartheid. Elles ont été, également, celles de l’expansion du sida: cette situation sans précédent a fait l’objet d’une con-
troverse inédite, sur les causes de l’épidémie et sur les effets des médicaments, qui a profondément divisé la société sud-africaine et ébranlé ses jeunes structures politiques. Comprendre la crise épidémiologique que connaît aujourd’hui l’Afrique du Sud et le drame social auquel elle donne lieu suppose de penser les événements à la lumière d’une histoire qui fournit à la fois les conditions objectives de la progression de l’infection et la trame narrative à partir de laquelle les acteurs l’interprètent. Il s’agit donc de rappeler la présence du passé dans les inégalités de distribution de la maladie et dans les arguments échangés au cours de la polémique, dans l’expérience quotidienne des habitants des townships comme dans la mémoire affleurant sans cesse dans l’espace public. Ce livre aborde cette histoire douloureuse et son inscription dans la société sud-africaine. Il en explore les ramifications complexes au cœur des politiques de santé et des débats de société, dans la vie d’un hôpital et le discours des travailleurs des mines, à travers la biographie d’une jeune malade et les peintures d’artistes engagés.


[In this book, France’s leading medical anthropologist takes on one of the most tragic stories of the global AIDS crisis: the failure of the ANC government to stem the tide of the AIDS epidemic in South Africa. Didier Fassin traces the deep roots of the AIDS crisis to apartheid and, before that, to the colonial period. One person in ten is infected with HIV in South Africa, and President Thabo Mbeki has initiated a global controversy by funding questionable medical research, casting doubt on the benefits of preventing mother-to-child transmission, and embracing dissidents who challenge the viral theory of AIDS. Fassin contextualizes Mbeki’s position by sensitively exploring issues of race and genocide that surround this controversy. Basing his discussion on vivid ethnographical data collected in the townships of Johannesburg, he passionately demonstrates that the unprecedented epidemiological crisis in South Africa is a demographic catastrophe as well as a human tragedy, one that cannot be understood without reference to the social history of the country, in particular to institutionalized racial inequality as the fundamental principle of government during the past century.]


Guest, E., 2003², Children of AIDS: Africa’s Orphan Crisis. London: [No publisher].


[The HIV/AIDS crisis is urgent, complex and life threatening to women. The authors go beyond the biological and epidemiological dimensions of the disease to name the scandal of stigma as a major factor in the ethical challenge posed by HIV/AIDS. They dig into the religious-cultural worldviews that shape our understandings of the world in which we live, thus exposing some of the deadly cultural, theological and scriptural roots of attitudes and practices that have compounded the crisis of HIV/AIDS in Africa, ultimately robbing millions of women of their dignity and lives.]


[By unveiling his HIV-positive status at a time when AIDS patients were ostracized, Lutaaya used his stature to mobilize consciousness around the epidemic. He gave a human face to liv-
ing with AIDS and helped to counter the perception of the disease as a monstrous thing, suggesting that even a city-based social icon was not immune to problems that someone in the village could have.


[South Africa’s mainstream print and broadcast media have attained a central role in shaping the discourse about HIV/AIDS as a result of their elevated role in politics after apartheid. Studies of media coverage of HIV/AIDS, however, have shown that despite the horrific impact of AIDS in South Africa, until recently national media coverage (both the extent as well as the content) -- with few exceptions -- does not reflect the urgency of the crisis. Instead, media coverage focuses primarily on conflicts around HIV/AIDS policy. In this essay we want to explore some of the reasons for this as well as the consequences this has had for AIDS politics. We show that while it is true that often lack of resources, “AIDS fatigue”, racial tensions in newsrooms, and the conflict frame (between the state and AIDS activists) are relevant explanations for the deficient coverage of HIV-AIDS, they don’t tell us much. Instead, we suggest that the concept of framing can provide us with more insight into the why of coverage. Coverage of AIDS disproportionately deflects to the political battles and blunders that have accompanied the disease’s spread. When it does break with that frame, the crisis is often defined very narrowly as a health issue rather than an issue of socio-economic inequality. We suggest that President Mbeki’s framing of the crisis has a censoring effect on the media, while TAC’s complex relation with the media means there is often a disconnect between what TAC is saying and how its demands are being represented in the media, resulting in little effort having been given to reporting and analyzing AIDS’ devastating political economy.]


[This article makes the case that current conceptions of sexual health literacy have limited relevance to the Ugandan context because they assume that knowledge of unsafe sexual practices will lead to changes in behavior and lifestyle. Drawing on a longitudinal case study with 15 Ugandan schoolgirls in rural Uganda from August 2004 to September 2006, this study argues that despite being well-informed about the risks and responsibilities of sexual activity, poverty and sexual abuse severely constrained options for these young women. Although many believed in the value of abstaining from sexual activity until marriage, they engaged in transactional sex to pay for school fees, supplies, clothing, and food. Further, fear of sexual abuse, early pregnancy, and HIV-AIDS compromised attempts to embrace sexuality. The article concludes with implications of the study for research and policy on sexual health literacy in Uganda and other poorly resourced regions of the world.]


[This paper focuses on debates over morality and the health of the community which have emerged in urban settlements on the outskirts of Durban in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It highlights positions taken by different AICs.]


[Twenty-five years since the onset of HIV/AIDS, young people aged 15-24 now make up half of new HIV infections. This paper advocates comprehensive sexuality education to reverse this, with teachers stepping up and embracing their role as sexuality educators. The exploration of this challenge is informed by a small-scale participatory study of teacher responses in a rural primary school in Nakuru district, Kenya. Dialogue was held with 18 teachers (11 females, seven males) on the challenges they faced in teaching sexuality education. Teachers emerged as disorientated and embarrassed in conversations about sexuality issues with the pupils. Because sexuality education lacks a curriculum, teachers have found it challenging to integrate it into regular subjects. In the study, the need for them to teach sexuality education emerges among the participants. Participatory and dialectical interventions are required that prepare teachers and develop their confidence in teaching sexuality education.]


[HIV/AIDS is the single most serious socio-economic and health problem affecting Kenya presently. The rapid spread of the epidemic resulted from the failure of government to recognise it as a problem early enough and institute necessary measures to counter it. Today, there are efforts from various stakeholders to slow down the spread of the epidemic. Some of these efforts have caused much debate and controversy, sometimes taking a political angle. Hardly any agreed steps are accepted by national institutions and even individuals on how to tackle the epidemic. This diversity of views and standpoints may be healthy especially when it comes to finding concrete solutions to the problem. However, this is only so if unity in diversity is achieved within a certain time-frame before the problem gets out of hand. This paper tries to assess the efforts and methods suggested in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Kenya and the resultant controversies, debates and chances for unity in diversity.]


[This article examines the way in which the Mbeki government in South Africa has proceeded in its policy-making on HIV/AIDS and some of the ways in which people have responded to the epidemic. The President’s embrace of dissident science and his more recent silence on the AIDS issue have contributed to the creation of a climate of suspicion and mistrust. In this context of polarisation, ordinary people have responded by adapting some common ways of thinking and behaving to deal with the exigency of an epidemic that is now impacting on all facets of their lives. Not all popular responses to AIDS, however, resonate with universal principles of human rights. Some are clearly regressive and others destructive in their effects. The idea that strategic responses by all sectors of society should help to promote a sense of inclusion and a human rights culture, is the central argument of this article.]


[By 2002, the cumulative number of deaths from the disease in Africa had been estimated to be 19 million, almost 30 million Africans were estimated to be HIV positive, and by 2010 some 6 million of the then total deaths will have been in South Africa alone. These figures considerably exceed those of around 11 million often (conservatively) estimated to have been transported during the Atlantic slave trade. As with slavery, HIV/AIDS also primarily claims...
adult victims where the impact on economic production is greatest - another recent estimate is that between 1985 and 2020 over 20% of adult farm workers in the nine hardest hit African countries will have lost their lives because of AIDS. While the impact is likely to be similar in many respects, two obvious differences from slavery are that the perpetrator is less easy to identify and moral judgements more readily confused, producing many examples of politically loaded policy decisions and value-laden interventions. Moreover, debates about ‘being faithful’ to one partner, possibly in marriage, and postponing teenage sex are institutional camouflage over the fact that a primary means of transfer of this disease in Africa has been through a physical activity as natural as eating and drinking, and which often involves great emotional and affectionate intimacy between two people. It can also of course be a violently imposed act by men on women and girls. In either case, there is the heightened pathos of human tragedy to which we as commentators should not lose our sensitivity and potential for empathy as a result of excessive intellectualising.


[Southern Africa has both a rapidly growing HIV epidemic and high levels of population mobility. The common assumption about the role of migration in the spread of HIV is that migrant men become infected while away and return home to infect their rural partners. However, at this late stage of South Africa’s epidemic, the role of migration is more complex. There is evidence for the bi-directionality of HIV transmission within couples.]


[The struggle against the HIV/AIDS pandemic is one of the most serious challenges South Africa faces today. Great efforts have been and are being made to create awareness of the disease, utilizing a variety of strategies that range from straightforward educational messages in magazines, billboards, and radio/TV broadcasts, to more creative or artistic approaches in media such as film, drama, music, art, and crafts. In this article, I will investigate three creative visual art/craft initiatives that have been employed in South Africa in the past few years to create HIV/AIDS awareness: HIV/AIDS community murals, sponsored by the Department of Health and painted primarily in townships and on university campuses throughout the country; a print portfolio/billboard project, involving local and international artists whose “fine art” prints are enlarged to billboard size and placed in high traffic areas in cities and townships; and a craft project employing rural women in KwaZulu-Natal who produce beaded dolls, badges and wire baskets (*imbenge*) with an HIV/AIDS awareness message.]


By the late 1990s South Africa became known as having the highest HIV/AIDS infection rates globally, with the worst hit province being KwaZulu-Natal, the focus of this article. Studies that probe the medical, social and economic implications of this disease have dramatically increased over the past decade. However, what remains under explored are general continuities and changes within African women’s lived experiences, which are being informed by their changing experiences of physical and spiritual uprootedness, economic and existential survival, constancy of death experiences and the desire for intimacy in a highly strained everyday that continues to be shaped by this epidemic. In addition to exploring these mundane aspects of young women’s lives, the paper aims to broaden concepts of agency under limit conditions by emphasizing the role of young women’s flawed agency, as they attempt to remake their social worlds under conditions where historical violences still resonate but now with an encounter with AIDS. I will also show how this creates opportunities to tease out how meanings are generated in times of socio-cultural breakdown.


[HIV/AIDS is disrupting household livelihood security in Tanzania’s rural communities and contributing to rural impoverishment by claiming the lives of the most productive young adults who make up the bulk of the labor force in those areas. This article presents results of a case study based on a survey of 119 households conducted in three villages of Rungwe district in Tanzania. The results reveal that households with HIV/AIDS deaths spend less on food than those without AIDS deaths, and that households with HIV and AIDS-related deaths are more likely to fall below the poverty line.]


[Natrass addresses South Africa’s contentious AIDS policy from both an economic and ethical perspective, presenting: a history of AIDS policy in South Africa; an expert analysis of the macroeconomic impact of AIDS; a delineation of the relationship between AIDS and poverty and the challenges it poses for development, inequality and social solidarity; an investigation into how a programme preventing mother-to-child transmission would be less expensive than having to treat children with AIDS-related illnesses; an exploration of the relationship between AIDS treatment and risky sexual behaviour; and an economic and social case for expanded AIDS prevention and treatment intervention.]


[This article shows that life stories contain valuable lessons for understanding masculine sexuality at a more general theoretical level. I discuss the life story of a thirty-eight year old male resident of Bushbuckridge, South Africa, focusing specifically on his experiences of sexual socialisation, schooling, initiation, labour migration, marriage, divorce, unemployment and sexual violence. I suggest that this life story offers several analytical advances over theoretical models of African sexual culture. It is more likely to reveal the interplay of different dis-
courses on sexuality; to highlight the impact of institutions such as schools, migrant compounds and drinking houses on sexual behaviour; and distinguish between what people say and what they honestly believe, and between what they aspire to and what they are constrained to do. For these reasons cultural models are not accurate predictors of actual sexual behaviour. Therefore, biographies may accord insights of strategic importance in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

[This article explores some of the social and cultural factors that have undermined effective treatment and care for persons living with AIDS in South Africa. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Bushbuckridge, I observe that AIDS stigma has been both pervasive and intense. However, contrary to conventional wisdom, I argue that the association of AIDS with sexual promiscuity has not been the major source of its stigma. Instead, I suggest that denial, silence, fear and fatalism have stemmed from the construction of persons living with AIDS as ‘dead before dying’, and from their symbolic location in the anomalous domain between life and death. This article also challenges the notion that older cultural practices in the folk domain impede an effective biomedical response to AIDS. I see the construction of persons with AIDS as ‘dead before dying’ as an outcome of the manner in which biomedical discourses have articulated with religious and popular ones. In this process the notion that AIDS is a fatal terminal illness carries as much symbolic weight as the popular association of persons suffering from AIDS with lepers and zombies.]

[This article investigates HIV/AIDS as a cosmological problem among Northern Sotho and Tsonga-speakers in the South African lowveld. Based on in-depth interviews with 70 informants (35 men and 35 women) we show how the attribution of blame for HIV/AIDS articulates gendered concerns. I suggest that women blamed men and envious nurses for spreading the virus and that these discourses expressed women’s ideological association with the domestic domain. By contrast, men invoked conspiracy theories, blaming translocal agents - such as Dr. Wouter Basson, Americans, soldiers, and governments - for the pandemic. We suggest that these theories are informed by men’s humiliating experiences of job losses and deindustrialization in the global labour market. Our discussion highlights the need for HIV/AIDS interventions in order to address not only women’s oppression but also men’s gendered concerns.]


[A phenomenological study that was carried out among five ethnic groups of Botswana revealed the importance of taking into account culturally situated sexual realities when prevention policies for HIV/AIDS are considered and implemented. Furthermore the study threw light on the ineffectiveness of the current national HIV/AIDS prevention strategy of ‘Abstain, Be faithful, or use a Condom’ (ABC), a strategy that has been externally imposed on communities, without sufficiently engaging the behavioural practices and values of the communities themselves. This paper therefore advocates educational strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention that take into consideration localised social relations and value systems. Devising policies that engage with the discourses that are dominant in each ethnic group can make a difference in a country that has been hard-hit by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.]

[This study focuses on the practice of coercing female students to engage in sexual relations with male lecturers (‘phallic attack’) as a condition for scoring good grades. The research drew its sample from female students selected from 14 faculties in two Nigerian universities.
The study finds that there is a relatively high prevalence of sexual harassment in these universities and this affects female students adversely. This contributes to widening the gaps between men and women in Nigeria. The study also finds that lack of adequate high-quality sex education in Nigeria increases the vulnerability of younger female students to sexual harassment. It recommends strengthening the penal system in the universities with powers and resources to fight the menace; and the formation of a network by women staff in various universities to work with potential and actual victims in order to expose the culprits, obtain justice and curb the trend.


*Duol* is a term used in reference to traditional Luo life to signify unity and solidarity within a lineage under the authority of the elders. This authority was most prominent in the pre-colonial period, and continued up to independence. It declined steadily under the impact of modernity during the post-independence period. Consequently, the institution of *duol* fell into disuse. The emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has renewed the need for unity and solidarity in finding community-based solutions. The original principles of *duol* are now manifested in a transformed version of *duol* and similar collaborative community initiatives. This article suggests that efforts to assist communities adversely affected by HIV/AIDS pandemic should base their interventions in the various community-based collaborative initiatives. Traditional institutions, it is argued, may be re-invented in times of turmoil as new forms of relatedness through which human agency is focused to counter serious challenges to rural communities.


Research was undertaken to assess the role of primary school teachers with regard to the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria. The findings show that the teachers have a reasonably high knowledge of the modes of HIV transmission, the behavioural risk factors and modes of prevention. The teachers, however, are reluctant to teach this because of socio-cultural and religious factors, lack of teacher training in delivery of sex education as well as poor motivation. The motivation and participation of primary school teachers in the prevention of HIV in Nigeria are very low. This calls for serious and urgent policy intervention to remedy the situation and increase the role of primary school teachers in combating the spread of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria.


Rakelmann, Georgia A... 2001, ‘“We Sat There Half the Day Asking Questions, but They Were Unable to Tell where AIDS Comes from...”: Local Interpretations of AIDS in Botswana’, in *Afrika Spectrum* 36, 1: 35-52


also at: [http://asrs.ukzn.ac.za/Uploads/9b5b2e1-5550-47ed-91db-787f0398548d/HIV.pdf](http://asrs.ukzn.ac.za/Uploads/9b5b2e1-5550-47ed-91db-787f0398548d/HIV.pdf)

[HIV incidence in the study population aged 2 years and older was 1.4% per year, with 571,000 new HIV infections estimated for 2005. An HIV incidence rate of 2.4% was recorded for the age group 15-49 years. The incidence of HIV among females peaked in the 20-29-year age group at 5.6%, more than six times the incidence found in 20-29-year-old males (0.9%). Among youth aged 15-24 years, females account for 90% of the recent HIV infections. Non-
condom use among youth, current pregnancy and widowhood were the socio-behavioural factors associated with the highest HIV incidence rates. The HIV incidence estimates reflect the underlying transmission dynamics that are currently at work in South Africa. The findings suggest that the current prevention campaigns are not having the desired impact, particularly among young women.]


[In *Witches, Westerners, and HIV* Alexander Rödlach draws on a decade of research and work in Zimbabwe to compare beliefs about witchcraft and conspiracy theories surrounding HIV/AIDS in Africa. He shows how both types of beliefs are part of a process of blaming others for AIDS, a process that occurs around the globe but takes on local, culturally specific forms. He also demonstrates the impact of these beliefs on public health and advocacy programs, arguing that cultural misunderstandings contribute to the failure of many well-intentioned efforts. This insightful book provides a cultural perspective essential for everyone interested in AIDS and cross-cultural health issues.]


[This paper situates Community Music Therapy within the socio-political narratives of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa. Two narratives are selected, one political and the other academic. The first is embodied in a 2004 Unicef document that explicitly sanctions the linking of music and HIV/AIDS. It states that youth groups need to be organised to ‘use drama and music to encourage HIV prevention, and compassion for people living with AIDS, their families and orphans’. The second is the notion that music affords social identity and social cohesiveness, as well as social collaboration. This paper attempts to knit together these discursive fields through the applied discipline of Community Music Therapy. Its first part outlines the socio-cultural construction of HIV/AIDS with particular reference to the psycho-social needs of HIV/AIDS orphans. Its second part suggests that community music therapy may be useful in repairing the ‘spoiled identity’ that results from the double status of being orphaned, and especially being orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS.]


[Uganda has the one of the oldest recognised AIDS epidemics. The first people found to be sick with AIDS in 1982 in southwestern Uganda became infected in the mid-1970s. For several years, Uganda has been widely recognised as the first and most dramatic African success story, with estimated national HIV prevalence falling from about 15 per cent in 1992 to 5 per cent in 2001. This is truly good news! As the epidemic proceeds through its third decade, many observers suggest that Uganda’s prevention efforts are a model to follow. What is the situation there, and what can we learn from Uganda?]


[The book is divided into three sections. In the first section, titled ‘Under Western Eyes’ a new discourse on sexuality and gender in Africa is constructed in opposition to the ‘dark continent discourse’. In the second called ‘Problems of Pleasure and Desire’ areas of investigation rendered invisible by mainstream thinking comes under scrutiny. African male and female desire and lust, constructed from Africans’ own points of view become the object of analysis.
This analysis takes place in a context in which moral condemnation or judgement is suspended. In the third section on ‘Female Agency’ socio-economic changes and gender power relations and their interpretation are investigated. How do sexual beings cope in the face of growing poverty, soaring HIV/AIDS infection rates and the growing impact of globalization?


The disparity between people’s knowledge about HIV/AIDS and the extent to which they take measures to protect themselves is one of the most vexing issues for public health workers and social science analysts. This paper aims to explain some of this discrepancy, using survey and ethnographic data collected among young rural-urban migrants in Aba and Kano, two cities in Nigeria. The paper argues that many young Nigerian migrants do not perceive significant personal risk because they construct the risk of AIDS in ethical and moral terms, projecting immorality and danger onto imaginary others. To understand the way young Nigerians interpret risk, the paper focuses on four related issues: (1) the organization and meaning of sexual relationships; (2) the intersection of gender and ideas about reproduction; (3) the perception of AIDS as a disease without hope; and (4) the importance of religion in young people’s framing of moralities and ethical choices about sexuality and HIV/AIDS.


This book explores how young people in the Ethiopian town of Dessie express their sexuality and are experiencing the HIV/AIDS epidemic in their daily lives. It also considers how poverty and other related structural factors are linked to HIV/AIDS infection and other processes affecting the sexuality of young people, how young people and key informants receive, interpret and evaluate ongoing interventions, and what can be done to reduce infection rates. The book provides insights into the role and interrelationship of the underlying structural, social and cultural factors in the context of HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention.


This article considers the impact of AIDS on women’s roles and responsibilities within the household ‘care economy’. It emphasizes that all interventions aimed at reversing the AIDS epidemic need to take into account the excessive work-load that members of the household, usually women, shoulder in responding to the needs of sick family members. Most notably, gender equality and care economy issues need to be identified by development programmes. There is also a need to implement policies that focus on issues such as treatment, prevention, education, economic empowerment and violence against women. The article argues that unless the care economy and the relations of gender inequality within the household are included in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such interventions, results will be compromised.


[The Xhosa ethnic group are one of several ethnic groups in southern Africa that practise the ritual of circumcision as part of a rite admitting boys to manhood. Recent years have seen a rise in casualties among those participating in traditional circumcision rites. Since 1995 more than 6,000 boys have been admitted to Eastern Cape hospitals, more than 300 have died and 76 have had their genitalia amputated due to botched circumcisions. The state has responded by putting in place a variety of mechanisms to regulate the practice, most recently in the form of the 2005 Children’s Bill which gives male children the right to refuse circumcision and makes those who circumcise a child against his will guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment. Traditional rituals seem to suggest alternative loci of authority and alternative conceptions of the production and maintenance of social order. As a result, they can be seen as threatening to the liberal democratic version of order. This article examines how these conflicting conceptions of authority and order have played themselves out with regard to traditional circumcision in South Africa.]


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