AASR EXECUTIVE
2010-2015

President: Elias Bongmba, Associate Professor of African Religions; Managing Editor CSSR; Dept. of Religious Studies, Rice University, 6100 Main St MS-156, Houston, TX 77005, USA. Phone: +1.713.348-2759. E-mail: bongmba@rice.edu. Webpages:
http://reli.rice.edu/Content.aspx?id=62
http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=318

Vice President: Ezra Chitando, Professor, Dept of Religious Studies, Classics & Philosophy, University of Zimbabwe, PO Box MP 167, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe. Phone: +263 (1) 303.211, Ext 1248; Fax: +263 (1) 333.407. E-mail: chitsa21@yahoo.com

Secretary General: Afe Adogame, School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, New College, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LX, UK. Phone. +44 (0) 131 650 8928; Mob. +44 (0) 7784 118 732; Fax. +44 (0) 131 650 7952. E-mail: A.Adogame@ed.ac.uk. Webpages:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/divinity/staff-profiles/adogame

Treasurer: Abel Ugba, Senior Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Media & Cultural Studies, University of East London, Docklands Campus, 4-6 University Way, London E16 2RD, UK. Phone: +35 208 223 73683; Fax: +353-1-6771300. E-mail: A.Ugba@uel.ac.uk. Webpages:
http://www.uel.ac.uk/hss/staff/abel-ugba/index.htm
http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=353

Assistant Secretary General & Webmaster:
Melissa D. Browning, 3550 Ennfield Lane, Duluth GA 30096, USA. Phone: +1 404 865-1447; E-mail: mbrowni@luc.edu. Webpages:
http://www.melissabrowning.com/mb/Home.html

Continued on inside rear cover, p. 71
FROM THE PRESIDENT

This issue of the Bulletin goes out as many of you are carrying out your research and other university related assignments away from your institutions. We share several developments with you as you enjoy the rest of your summer sessions and research.

First, our web specialist, Dr. Melissa Browning with the assistance of Wes Browning redesigned the website and has made it interactive. It is beautifully designed and we trust that you will visit it regularly and share information about your research, events at your institutions and other organizations. This is a remarkable achievement and I thank Melissa, Wes, and Jan Platvoet who has continued to work with Melissa and Wes, on these issues.

Second, the conference committee under the leadership of Professor Abdulkader Tayob of the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Professor Madipoane Masenya of the University of South Africa (UNISA) have completed initial arrangements for the 6th AASR Conference in Africa that we will hold at UCT from July 30 to August 3, 2014, at the conference facilities of the Business School of UCT at Breakwater Lodge on Cape Town’s waterfront. At this conference we will revisit the theme Religion, Ecology, and Environment in Africa and the African Diaspora, which was first considered at the Ile-Ife Conference. Following our tradition and the raison d’etre of our association, the study of religions will receive attention in the presentations, but we are also looking for a broad conversation on these issues as they affect Africa in many significant ways including the effects of climate changes which have caused food shortages, desertification, lack of good drinking water, conflicts over land resources, and an increase in weather related catastrophes. The conference committee and the co-chairs are working with our web experts to simplify online submissions of abstracts and conference registration.

Third, ASSR Secretary General, Dr. Afe Adogame, has completed discussions about our relations with *The Journal of Religion in Africa* and I am happy to report that we continue to maintain a working relationship with Brill, the publisher of the journal. We want to congratulate our members, Professor Robert Baum who has been appointed editor of the journal, and Afe Adogame, who has also joined the editorial board as one of the assistant editors.

Fourth, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, The Most Reverend Desmond Mpoki Tutu was named the 2013 Templeton Prize winner for his many accomplishments in Religion and public life. I sent an email on behalf of AASR to the Archbishop to congratulate him on this achievement. This is the second major award for Archbishop Tutu, who
early in the year received the Mo Ibrahim Foundation award for his distinguished service. We congratulate Archbishop Tutu for these well-deserved awards.

Finally, in other developments that affect our work and colleagues, we are pleased to note that the Kenyan elections concluded successfully and President Uhuru Kenyatta was elected and has been sworn in as Kenya’s President. We congratulate President Kenyatta on his election. Egypt is back in the news again because the military has removed the president and suspended the constitution. We note with regret that so many people have been killed because of the violence that has followed the actions taken by the Egyptian military. The members of the AASR continue to condemn violence as a political tool and call on all parties to sit down and find peaceful ways of achieving the dreams and visions of the Arab Spring.

Elias K. Bongmba
President

**The New AASR Website**


I write to report that the AAR website has been overhauled and upgraded and it looks wonderful and inviting. It is a site that all of you will enjoy visiting and sharing the links to your colleagues and friends around the world. A few months ago I asked Melissa and Wes if we should work with an independent website creator in Africa to improve our own website. She advised me against such a move not only because of cost, but also because she wanted to continue the tradition of paying personal attention to the needs of our association in designing our website which Jan Platvoet started with the help of his son Radboud, and Radboud’s friend Martijn Elzinga. I am glad I listened to her advice on this matter because what Melissa and Wes have accomplished is amazing. In addition to redesigning the website, they have also created an email system for the executive to make our communication faster.

Additional features will be added to the website in the coming months. We will keep you updated as the features are implemented.

Please visit the website at: [http://www.a-asr.org/](http://www.a-asr.org/)

I want to thank Melissa and Wes for their hard work.
Dear AASR members,

I hope this message finds you well. It follows on the ones that I sent out in January and April this year about the new procedures for the collection of AASR annual membership fees, and the reminders from our President about the same issue. I am writing to remind you to pay your annual fee and to confirm that direct payments/donations through the AASR website are now possible. I also wish to inform you that the de-registration process that we agreed at our meeting in Kenya will be implemented from August this year. I would like to remind you of these requirements/processes.

Minimum fees
The minimum annual fee for members in North America is $60, Europe is €50 and the United Kingdom is £45. The minimum fee for members in Africa and other non-western regions is the equivalence in local currency of US$10. Applications to pay the minimum fees should be made to the Executive through the Treasurer. Students and the Unwaged will continue to pay 50% of the fees that have been approved for each country or region.

Payment into central account
You are encouraged to pay your fee directly through the AASR website, except in cases where it is not economical to do so or technically impossible. To make a direct payment, please log on to AASR Membership Dues payment page:
http://a-asr.org/membership

Direct transfer into the AASR central account
You can also make a direct transfer into AASR’s account through your bank by using the following details:

African Association for the Study of Religions
Bank of Scotland
Branch Code: 80-20-00
Account No. 00208442
BIC: BOFSGB21168
IBAN: GB05 BOFS 80200000208442
Please contact the Treasurer (a.ugba@uel.ac.uk) or your national representative if you are not able to make direct payment either into the account through your bank or through the website.

Deregistration procedure
The motions we adopted in Kenya in 2012 called for the de-registration of non-paying members. In line with the de-registration process approved by the Executive in December last year, members who still have not paid their fee by August 1st will be sent a notice of de-registration before the end of August 2013.

As planning for our 2014 Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, has started in earnest, your financial support is needed more than ever. I thank members who have already paid their fees and those national representatives who have worked tirelessly to collect fees.

Frans Wijsen
AASR Representative for Europe

CONCLUDING FINANCIAL REPORT
AASR-EUROPE 2009-6.06.2013

In January 2011 there was a conversation between the General Secretary, the AASR Representative for Europe, the previous and the present AASR Treasurer about the dues to be paid into the central account. The arrangement reported at Ile-Ife (see AASR Bulletin 32, May 2010, p. 4-5) was reconfirmed.

In AASR Bulletin 34 (May 2011, p. 6) it was announced that from now onwards dues would be collected directly into the central treasury Assuming therefore that dues would be collected by the central treasurer, the European Representative no longer collected dues in (continental) Europe. When this assumption proved to be premature, AASR dues were collected again as usual in Europe.

At the 5th AASR Conference in Africa, at Egerton University, Kenya, the following report was presented (19-07-2012):

A general overview of dues collected in Europe (excluding the UK) looks as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Members (full)</th>
<th>Members (reduced)</th>
<th>Subscribers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The number of subscribers has decreased because the AASR Bulletin is no longer printed as a hard copy and soft (electronic) copies are available only through the Members’ Only area in the AASR website.

On 8 April 2010 the AASR Representative for Europe transferred 1000 Euro into the central account for covering various costs (e.g. printing of AASR Bulletin). On 25 June 2012 the AASR Representative for Europe transferred 1850 Euro into the central account to cover costs of the AASR conference in Kenya.

By 10 July 2012 the financial situation of AASR Europe is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>31-12-2009</th>
<th>10-07-2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank account</td>
<td>738,27</td>
<td>320,90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current account</td>
<td>840,43</td>
<td>178,01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>1578,70</strong></td>
<td><strong>498,91</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The European AASR representative proposed to close the European AASR account. Its function can be taken over by the central account which is also based in Europe (UK).

The European AASR representative continued to build up an AASR group in Tanzania, linked to the Religion and Society Research Centre of the University of Dar es Salaam.

The European AASR representative continues to act as editor of Brill’s Studies of Religion in Africa (SRA). He and co-editor Benjamin Soares discussed market discontent about high book prices with the publisher (Brill). The publisher offers the possibility of publishing cheaper paperback editions or e-books and the possibility of co-publishing with African Publishing Houses. The SRA editors welcome book proposals for consideration in this international academic series.

**Concluding financial report of the AASR Representative for Europe**

At the 5th AASR Conference in Africa, at Egerton University, Kenya, it was decided that from 2013 onwards annual dues will be collected by the AASR central treasury. For this reason there is no longer a need to have an independent AASR-Europe account. Consequently the AASR Europe representative suggested to close the AASR Europe account and to transfer the remaining money to the AASR central account in the United Kingdom.

Since my report on 10 July 2012 one member paid her annual dues of 50,00 Euro to the AASR Europe account. But the account paid 33,55 Euros to the bank for maintaining the account. This shows that it was no longer profitable to have the account. Without regular income we pay more to the bank than we earn interest from the savings. On 20-05-2013 the remaining **524,61** Euro were transferred to the AASR central account and the AASR-Europe account was terminated.
6TH AASR CONFERENCE IN AFRICA

RELIGION, ECOLOGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

University of Cape Town, South Africa, July 30-August 3, 2014

CALL FOR PAPERS

The African Association for the Study of Religion (AASR) invites proposals for individual papers, panels, roundtable, and poster presentations for its biannual conference to be held at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, from July 30 to August 3, 2014. The AASR returns to the theme: Religion, Ecology, and the Environment in Africa and the African Diaspora to underscore its commitment to the growing environmental crisis and the impact it has on all areas of life and society in Africa and the African Diaspora. As scholars of religion, we have an important responsibility, in collaboration with other scholars in other disciplines, to study religion, ecology, and the environment. This conference offers participants the opportunity to present research, engage in dialogue, develop relevant curricula and inform public policy on this vital and critical issue.

Religion and the study of religions, ecology, and the environment in Africa are a major concern for reasons that include radical climate change; the disappearance of vegetation and wetlands; extensive exploitation of natural resources; frequent and severe draughts; the impact of climate changes on population density in major cities; water and food crises. The field of religious studies offers a variety of methodological and theoretical approaches to understand and interpret such phenomena and developments. The academic study of religions as a field provides an opportunity to examine these issues on different levels: theoretical, methodological, experiential, pedagogical, and the pragmatic. We believe that unique insights will emerge if religion(s) and the academic study of religions are deliberately made a lens through which to unlock the reality of the preceding themes within the context of the African continent and its Diaspora.

We invite papers from scholars of religions, the social sciences, the natural sciences, interdisciplinary research groups, and institutes focusing on ecological and environmental issues that will address, among other things, the state of knowledge and science on ecology and environment, ecological and environmental degradation, management and sustainability, and ways of establishing scholarly dialogue on ecological balance. Pa-
Papers and round tables could also study and analyze current and past projects on the continent that relate to religion(s), ecology, and the environment. Examples of these would be the tree planting and ecological ministries of the Christian wing of the Zimbabwean Institute of Religious Research and Ecological Conservation (ZIRRCON), or large national initiatives like the Green Belt Movement. Papers might explore the aims of the projects, current status, their finances, as well as the environmental challenges that may be posed by the projects themselves and the prospects for sustainability.

Sub themes and related topics to be considered include the following:

- Climate change and the debates on climate change
- Nature, nature religions, and sacred spaces and environmental challenges
- Religious authority and environmental challenge
- Eco-feminism and religious dialogue
- Religion, the environment, and food security
- The environment and the crisis of safe drinking water
- Ecology and economics in religious perspective
- Religious, philosophical, and ethical perspectives on ecology
- Comparative religious view of environmental action
- Theology, ecology, and environmental challenges and promise
- Environmental ethics
- Faith Based Organizations and sustainable development
- Ecology, environment, and political responsibility
- Religion and the economics of climate change
- Religious perspectives on pharmacopeia, health, medicine and the environment
- Religion, biodiversity, and global bio-politics
- Religion and environmental pollution
- Religion Education and the Environmental Crisis
- Critical Religious Terms (rituals, myths, spaces) and Ecology

Abstracts
We invite abstracts of proposed panels, papers, and poster presentations of two hundred and fifty (250) words. Abstracts should include the title of the presentation, indicate if audio-visual equipment will be needed for the presentation and include the author’s contact information (institutional affiliation, email address and phone number). All ab-
Abstracts should be submitted online by November 30, 2013 and full papers and power point presentations should be submitted by March 30, 2014 on the following:

Online Abstract Submission

Papers submitted for publication after the conference will go through a peer review process when the editors find a publisher.

Accommodation, Registration and Meals
The Conference will be held in Cape Town at the Conference Facilities of the Breakwater Lodge. A number of rooms have been set aside for the Conference at this hotel at preferential rates. A booking form will soon be uploaded.

There are also numerous hotels around this site. Further options will be posted here soon.

Registration for the Conference: US$200.00
Please note this amount includes daily lunches and teas - but excludes accommodation.

Looking forward to your participation in Cape Town

Abdulkader Tayob: abdulkader.tayob@uct.za
Madipoane Masenya: Masenmj@unisa.az.za
Elias Bongmba: bongmba@rice.edu

Corey Williams & Shaheed Tayob

IN Volving Students and Junior Scholars in the AASR

In an effort to continue the momentum ignited by Damaris ParsitaU and her wonderful group of students at the Kenya 2012 conference, we are brainstorming about ways to involve both students and junior scholars in Cape Town 2014.

At this point, ideas have ranged from a one-day pre-conference seminar, to the launching of an AASR Junior Award, to simply following the formula set in 2012 by intentionally encouraging students and junior scholars to get involved in the organisation of the conference and/or present a paper.

If you have any suggestions or want to get involved in this discussion, please contact us:
Corey Williams, C.Williams-12@sms.ed.ac.uk
Shaheed Tayob, stayob@gmail.com
ANNOUNCING A NEW SERIES
‘RELIGION IN MODERN AFRICA’
PUBLISHED BY ASHGATE

Ashgate Publications announces the launching of a new series entitled ‘Religion in Modern Africa’. Series editors are James L. Cox, Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies in the University of Edinburgh, and Gerrie ter Haar, Emeritus Professor of Religion and Development in the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam.

The editors invite proposals containing innovative research relevant to the diverse and changing religious situation in contemporary Africa. One of the principal aims of the series is to facilitate the dissemination of research by young African scholars. ‘Religion in Modern Africa’ is fully interdisciplinary and will include books from a range of disciplines, such as: the academic study of religions, anthropology, sociology and related disciplines in the human and social sciences.

In the first instance, authors should send a one-page proposal outlining the main content of their manuscript to the editors at the emails noted below. If the editors consider the proposal appropriate to the aims of the series, they will invite the author to complete a full proposal, which will be reviewed and submitted to Ashgate for final approval.

Please direct initial proposals or questions regarding the series to:

James L. Cox (J.Cox@ed.ac.uk)
Gerrie ter Haar (terhaar@iss.nl)
REVIEWS

Jan G. Platvoet

A PUGNACIOUS BOOK¹


Context

The numerous Mami Wata cults, found all along the coast of West Africa from Senegal to South Africa and in the Atlantic African diaspora, constitute a fascinating field of study for the anthropology and iconography of the indigenous religions of Africa, as Drewal’s survey demonstrates (Drewal 2008). The anthropologist and filmmaker Sabine Jehl-Bahlsen also contributed a chapter to Drewal’s volume (Jehl-Bahlsen 2008). She is also known for the four documentary films she produced, one of which is about Mami Wata worship and healing in Southeastern Nigeria (Jehl-Bahlsen 1989/1991), as are six of her articles (Jehl-Bahlsen 1985, 1995, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2000). The book reviewed is the outcome of the author’s attempt to ‘bring together my numerous, scattered articles [and papers read at conferences] on different individual aspects on this research to arrive at a conclusive and complete portrayal’ (9n4) of the cult of the goddess of Oguta Lake at Orsu-Obodo and Oguta in the Niger delta. That goddess is variously known as Uhammiri, Ogbuide, and Mami Wata.

Content

The book consists of an introduction and twenty-five chapters. It is difficult to detect an order in them, but I may summarise them as follows. Chapters 1, 3, and 17 deal with Oru-Igbo traditional society, its three annual festivals and their integration with Oru-Igbo water based ecology. Chapters 9, 10 and 11 deal explicitly with gender, and especially with the position of women in patrilineal, male-dominated Oru-Igbo society. This gender issue, however, crops up in all her chapters. The introduction, and chapters 1 to 8 and 12 to 22 deal with aspects of the cult of the lake goddess, traditionally held to provide women with children and wealth. Chapter 23 and 24 are on ‘religious colonialism’. And chapter 25 is about the famous Igbo novelist, Flora Nwapa, and how she portrays Ogbuide in her novels.

The author’s claim to ‘prolonged and repeated in-depth field research […] and an ongoing relationship with the people of Orsu-Obodo and Oguta over more than twenty years, 1970-1994’ (1) caused another reviewer to credit her with ‘twenty-five years of

¹ This review was published also in in *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 6, 4 (September 2012): 527-529
research in southeastern Nigeria’ and to praise her book on that account as ‘by far the most comprehensive and carefully researched work to date on the female water deity known as Ogbuide in the town of Oguta, Nigeria - more popularly known throughout sub-Saharan Africa as Mami Wata’ (Carwhile 2008: 172). Actually, the author documents herself in endnotes to the chapters that she spent less than a year and a half in fieldwork at Oguta – from November 1978 (30n8) tot June 1979 (103n29); from October (31n19) to mid-December 1988 (318n22); from late March (187n8) to mid-April 1989 (126n1) -, which she supplemented by three brief visits in 1991, 1992, and 1994 (167n18). And she writes that she was taught only the ‘basics of Igbo language’ (XIII).

For a number of reasons, detailed below, I disagree with Carwhile’s praise. The book, however, has at least one virtue: it insists on the indigeneity of the cult of lake goddess, as is apparent from the fact that Ogbuide also has a few male priests who have inherited that office (301, 350; figs. 1, 5). It is, therefore, older than the Mami Wata cult, with which it fused only in the 20th century. At the time of the author’s fieldwork, however, Ogbuide mainly had priests, and especially priestesses, by ‘vocation’ – that is by being possessed – rather than inheritance (161-162).

The paradigmatic example in the book of such a priestess by vocation is Mrs. Martha Mberekpe of Orsu-Obodo (fig. 2), whom the author reveres as her ‘spiritual mother’ (1). After eleven miscarriages (132, 283n21) and a mental breakdown, Martha had been ‘healed’ by initiation, through spirit possession, into the priesthood of the local female and male water deities (267, 287-289). As Eze Mmiri, ‘water-queen’, she had begun to treat clients with physical, mental and social problems (291-315) in her compound – ‘which was then like a mental hospital’ (313) –, and to lead a small congregation of ‘water people’ (Ndi Mmiri) of mainly women (351) that met regularly for worship at her home, or on the waterside, or on the lake, or in secret groves ‘under a giant tree, deep inside a thicket of smaller trees and wild bush’ (107-111). These cult groups are now ‘popularly known as Mammy Water’ (72) through the fusion of the Ogbuide with ‘the white temptress of foreign origin’ (205-207) – depicted either as a mermaid with the fishtail or as the seductive Polynesian snake handling girl with long curly hair – and with a male, tri-headed Hindu god (347-351).

The author greatly deprecates these ‘foreign icons’ (347) for two reasons. One is that these ‘20th century accretions’ caused academic (346-347), literary (385-395) and popular views (347-350) to become dominant of Ogbuide/Mammy Water as the goddess who grants wealth in return for sexual abstinence (349, 389, 392), and as one who takes children away (36). These views conflict fundamentally with that of the author who maintains that Ogbuide is first and foremost a goddess who grants fertility to women and provides them with both children and wealth (117-128, 387, 391) – though she does admit that Ogbuide is regarded also as a ‘killer-beauty’ who may take children away (129-136). The author therefore terms Flora Nwapa’s depiction of the lake goddess in her novels as providing women with wealth at the expense of their childlessness, ‘preposterous’ (389).

The other reason is her great enemy: ‘religious colonialism’ (6). The author laments that the Mammy Water ‘accretions’ expose the cult of water-goddesses to the ‘vicious’ (346, 369, 391) attacks of ‘fanatic’ Christians (6, 34, 125, 187, 193, 287, 303, 364-367, 369, 372, 373, 374, 391) and ‘aggressive churches’ (244, 317, 350, 360-366, 369-375). It provides them, she says, with fuel for derision, demonization and cultural rape (204,
and it causes scares that Mammy Water abducts children (132, 135n8, 362-363, 387). Throughout her book the author conducts a running war with ‘the onslaught of the monolithic power structures fuelled by [male] monotheism’ (357), under which label she indiscriminately groups Christians of every hue as well as Muslims. She regrets that a hereditary priest of Ogbuide ‘caved in’ (350) to religious colonialism by becoming a Catholic. Thereby he sided, she says, with ‘the crusade of death and destruction [of] fanatic Christian evangelism’ (6) against African indigenous beliefs. Says the author: ‘These conflicts […] run like a trail of poison […] in contemporary […] life in Oguta – reflecting the painful tensions spread by fanatics who inject their venom into almost every home and family, sparing nobody, and no social level in contemporary Oguta’ (374). The worship of the goddess Ogbuide, ‘that was once basic to the local people’s very existence was [thereby] relegated to the margins of society and into the realm of psychic disorders’ (375).

Chapters 3 and 17 are on ecology, natural resources and sustainability and seem more especially of interest to the readers of Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture. The author is again quite outspoken. She maintains that views that ‘recognise the divine in nature [are] diametrically opposed to the dominating, materialistic, instrumental, and commercial thinking of the Western industrialized world’; and also that ‘behavioral codes based on spiritually sanctioned ethics [such as imposed by Ogbuide] are most effective for protecting all of nature’ (250). However, the upshot of these chapters is that although Ogbuide’s rules might objectively (251, 259, 260, 261, 262; also 275, 276, 277, 281) result in some benefits for the environment if the were obeyed, they do so now at most only accidentally and unwittingly (276, 277). The author admits, regretfully, that their observation does not result ‘subjectively’ (251, 281) in behaviour that aims to consciously maintain or restore biodiversity, as is clear from the violation of ‘spiritual wildlife sanctuaries’ (257) by her worshippers building two temples of concrete, steel and corrugated iron for Ogbuide in groves sacred to her (109-113, fig. 46b).

Appreciation

This is a book by a pugnacious Marxist anthropologist who does not look dispassionately at religious developments in Igbo-Oru society but explicitly takes sides in them. To some extent one may condone that, and look for what is revealed by such polemical, biased analysis. The book, however, is also poorly organised, far too long, and excessively self-referential. The publisher has done her a disservice by publishing the book as it stands.

Recommendation

Even so, the book is of interest to scholars of the Mammy Wata cults for the peculiar position taken by the author, and perhaps also to scholars interested in religion-nature-culture interactions in an African context, as I have indicated above when discussing chapters 3 and 17.
References


ONTO THE GLOBAL SCENE


**Context**

The rich and complex religious history of sub-Saharan Africa and its Diaspora has received but scant attention from Euro-American scholarship in religions despite its depth of many millennia through rock art, the histories of its thousands of indigenous religions and of its immigrant religions, Christian, Muslim, Jewish and many others, and its centres of ancient Christian literate culture in Ethiopia, and of medieval Muslim scholarship in the Sahel. African diasporic religions comprise both those that emerged from the transatlantic slave trade (and across the Indian Ocean) in the past four centuries, and those African migrants have founded in recent decades. The religions of preliterate African societies and those slaves continued to practise secretly across the Atlantic were regarded as savage and without history, and relegated to anthropology, the discipline of the exotic and barbaric at the service of European colonialism. When Christian missions became a resounding success in Africa after 1900 by providing schools and hospitals, their expansion was studied by merely a handful of missiologists because of the ‘problem’ of their indigenisation. Western islamologists were never interested in the history of the spread of Islam in Africa.

Likewise scant attention has been paid to African scholarship on these religions in the sizable Departments of Religious Studies in Anglophone African public universities since the 1950s. No note was taken of their publications for the reasons detailed, and because their publications where regarded as out of touch with developments in global scholarship in religions after the steep devaluation of African currencies caused Euro-American academic journals and books to become prohibitively expensive, causing a severe book famine after the 1960s that isolated African scholars from developments elsewhere.

**Content**

However, African scholars of religions are producing important research on the religions of Africa and its Diaspora, for the African as well as for the global academic market. The volume reviewed, and its companion, proclaim in their very titles the entry of African scholarship in religions onto the global academic scene. They are dedicated to Jacob K. Olupona, the Nigerian paragon of modern African scholarship in religions who is now a professor in African and Afro-American religions at Harvard. He and many other ‘diasporic’ African scholars of religions keep in close touch with colleagues in

---

African universities, particularly through research and publication projects. Olupona does so more especially with colleagues at the universities of Ile-Ife and Ibadan in SW Nigeria, Yorubaland. That is reflected in the volume reviewed: ten of the fourteen contributions are by Nigerian scholars of religions. As a result, the volume deals mainly with religious developments in Nigeria, and especially with those in Yorubaland.

The volume has a preface, an introduction and two parts. In the preface (XIII-XIV), Ulrich Berner notes the ties between Olupona and Bayreuth University. In the introduction (1-9), the editors urge female African scholars of religions to continue to storm the strongholds of male-dominated departments of Religious Studies in African universities, because ‘they have provided a promising foundation for the Africanization of the discipline’ (1) by ‘engendering’ it (3), i.e. by tackling existential issues such as violence, HIV/AIDS and gender. The editors add two more avenues for Africanising Religious Studies in Africa: by rehabilitating African indigenous religions through empathetic, ‘value-free and accurate descriptions’ (4), a methodology that will decolonise their study and demonstrate their continuing vitality and relevance; and by being ‘at the cutting edge of research on African [diasporic] religions’ (6). African scholars must develop African traditions in the study of African religions in Africa and worldwide. They must no longer regurgitate methods and theories develop elsewhere (8).

Part one examines how religion(s) affect society and are affected by them. In chapter 1 (14-23), Lucas Nandih Shamala (Metropolitan State College, Denver) proposes that the barbaric brutalities through advanced modern weaponry that are tearing pastoral societies in East Africa apart be curtailed by reinstating traditional peacemaking ceremonies, such as those of the Abaluyia of Western Kenya, that served to terminate feuds and wars after cattle theft and murder in pre-colonial times. They will promote *obuntu*, he says, ‘a Bantu communitarian way of existence’ (13) of societies that ‘seek to bind people together’ (17). Danoye Oguntola Laguda (Lagos State University) proposes in chapter 2 (25-33) a market model of religion in order to demonstrate that Nigeria is secular only in the sense that its tense inter-religious competition ‘allows for the appropriation of the values of more than one religion in the making of government policies’ (30). Olutayo Charles Adesina (University of Ibadan) uncovers in chapter 3 (35-46) the materialism pervading the Nigerian religious scene: ‘In Nigeria, there is now a thin line between God and Mammon’ (39). As a result, ‘religion, politics, and the economic adjustment programme became insidious weapons […] for selfish goals. [They] balkanise the country’ (36). He urges that ‘the nexus of religion, economy and politics’ be thoroughly explored (43). Musa Barnabas Gaiya (University of Jos) pleads in chapter 4 (47-59) that a civil religion ethos be inculcated in schools, because the essential ingredients for a civil religion fostering national cohesion are lacking in Nigeria despite efforts of past Nigerian governments to promote cohesion (48). This is particularly so since the born-again President Obasanjo triggered the proclamation of *sharī‘a* in eleven northern states in 1999. Which proclamation is in blatant contravention of section 10 of the Nigerian constitution that prohibits the federation and its states to adopt a state religion (53). Jacob Kehinde Ayantayo (University of Ibadan) argues in chapter 5 (61-70) that ancestor veneration may provide a model for education in civil religion. He suggests that the politicians, who led the struggle for independence, be ‘immortalised’ as national ancestors and venerated through such national symbols as the national flag, the national anthem, etc. Their veneration will foster the patriotic feelings that are dire-
ly needed for national integration. Samson Adetunji Fatokun (University of Ibadan) compares in chapter 6 (71-81) the concept of expiatory sacrifice in the early church with that in Yoruba indigenous religion.

Part II (83-188) is on research of African diasporic religions and on gender. In chapter 7 (85-98), Abel Ugba describes the methodology he used in his PhD research between 2001 and 2005 on some of the odd-forty African-led Pentecostal churches in Dublin, Ireland. He reflects critically on his ‘outsider within’ position in that research. It generated in him the ‘double consciousness’ of ‘the stranger [who is] simultaneously near and remote, concerned and indifferent, […] looking “both from the outside in and from the inside out”’ (90). Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké Okome (City University of New York) and Elisha P. Renne (University of Michigan) – she is the only white contributor to this volume – examine in chapter 8 (99-114) the leadership roles of women in Aládúrà churches in Nigeria and the USA. They find that leadership opportunities are fewer for women in the USA because ‘the cultural ideas associated with women’s power in Nigeria are not held by the majority population in the USA’ (112). In chapter 9 (115-131), the Afro-Jamaican scholar of religions Janice McLean (City Seminary, New York) compares the place of second-generation youths in West Indian Pentecostal churches in London and New York. They are confronted in both metropoles with exclusion by white society, stigmatising stereotypes, and ‘gendered racism’ demonising black males (120). In this predicament of ‘ubiquitous racial oppression’ (121), Afro-Caribbean Pentecostal churches must provide second-generation youths with a home in which they may develop the ‘hyphenated’ identities of Black-British or Black-Americans they need for surviving in their new ‘home’ societies. For some youths they do. But their ‘failure to engage with the “real” issues [these youths] face within the society […] has resulted in the exodus of some second-generation youths’ (127), particularly in New York (126-128). Ezra Chitando (University of Zimbabwe) pleads in chapter 10 (133-146) that African scholars of religions free themselves from subservience to Euro-American theories and methods and develop African traditions in the study of the religions by focusing on ‘African realities’, such as African male-dominated gendered societies. African female scholars of religions already do so. They have cured Religious Studies in Africa from its gender-blindness by applying gender analysis to the religions of Africa in order to achieve gender justice. They focus on the impact HIV/AIDS has on women and girls in Africa. Their pioneering work must be complemented, however, by research into ‘the social construction of men’ in African societies, and into the role African religions play in the construction and promotion of aggressive masculinities (137). They must do so in order to transform African death-dealing masculinities by effective interventions (141) that ‘change African communities for the better’ (143). Male African scholars of religions need to ‘grapple with how religion often sponsors destructive masculinities’ (143). Bolaji Bateye (University of Ile-Ife) examines in chapter 11 (147-161) how the notions of earth, nature, and purity in Yoruba traditional society affect women. She finds that ‘gender specific […] taboos [generally] discriminate against women’ (156) and quotes the ‘murderous’ stigmatising remarks made against women infected with HIV/AIDS in songs of insult, satire, and ridicule (158-159). In chapter 12 (163-173), Dorcas Olu Akintunde, Acting Head of the Dept. of Religious Studies of the University of Ibadan till her premature death on 15 March 2011, examines the impact of Christian Women organisations in Nigeria on their churches, education and health care and their
several philanthropic activities such as prisoner visitations. But she also notes the fields they have not been active in: the exorbitant bride prices; prostitution; wife battering; the war on HIV/AIDS; the reproductive rights of women and the number of children they can properly raise; and the battle about abortion and early marriage (170-171). Lastly, Oluwakemi Abiodun Adesina (Osun State University) examines in chapter 13 (175-188) the plight and coping strategies of Muslim women in the twelve northern states where they are caught between economic crisis, patriarchy, booming trade in prostitution, religious puritanism and *shari’a* condemning two women, Safiya and Amina, to death by stoning for adultery (*zina*). She compares the rigid attitudes in the Muslim north to the relaxed attitudes of Yoruba Muslims in the southwest. There ‘the *hijab* [veil] is about the only seclusion [women] experience’ (184).

**Appreciation**

This volume and its companion are milestones in the history of African scholarship in religions. The editors are to be congratulated for bringing to notice of the global academic community the self-conscious Africanisation of the study of the religions of Africa and its (new) Diaspora by African Religious Studies scholars. They do so by contextualising African religions on the continent and in the Diaspora in the often harsh – political, economic, social, etc. – realities of African, and African-diasporic, societies, past and present; *i.e.*, by an approach that is both hardnosed and empathic, factual and reformist, independent by focusing on African solutions for African issues (159), yet mindful that ‘universities necessarily have an international dimension’ (159).

The latter, however, seems a rather minimalist concession in view of the several assertions that African scholars of religions need to free themselves from all (post)colonial intellectual dependencies. Though this need for an explicit, self-conscious, well articulated African approach to the often highly complex and problematic realities of African societies – continental and diasporic – and religions is greatly to be applauded, I sense a danger here that it will be used for cultivating isolation from the scholarly contributions the present-day descendants of the former (political and intellectual) ‘overlords’ are making to the very same contextualising description and social-scientific analysis of African societies and religions in, *e.g.*, modern Anthropology of Religions, which is so far unfortunately mostly a Euro-American affair. Precisely the contextualising turn calls for a dialogue – on equal footing – with, rather than isolation from, Anthropology of Religions. Isolation would, I fear, rather harm the march onto the global academic scene by African scholars of religions that these two volumes exemplify and proclaim in their very titles.

Five more remarks may be added. Shambala seems to me to indulge in romanticising precolonial pastoral societies in Africa when he asserts that ‘in the final analysis […] war in the Abaluyia context, as in other African societies, was sanctioned […] in the interest of *obuntu* […] and] was never indulged in for jingoistic interests’ (18). Laguda seems to propose a quite narrow, distinctly Nigerian view of religious pluralism when he defines it in terms of competition and strife, and as forestalling that a particular religion impose its beliefs and practices on a society (25-27). Therefore they compete in the religious market. He ignores that there are lots of non-competitive religions, also in Nigeria. I wonder whether Ayantayo’s proposal for a national ancestral veneration (65-67) is compatible with Nigerian Islam. Fatokun correctly states that ‘original
sin’ is a Christian notion that is foreign to Yoruba and other African indigenous religions (75, 79). ‘Sin’, however, is also a notion that is foreign to them.

Lastly, Bolaji Bateye makes too sweeping a statement when she asserts that ‘the image of woman as the primeval temptress and destroyer […] arrived in Africa with colonialism, Christianity and Islam’ (145). She assumes incorrectly that the biblical story of Eve seducing Adam in Paradise and being the cause of the death of humans by ‘the fall’, and the dismissal of Adam and Eve/Hawa from Paradise, is reduplicated in the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān, however, never mentions Hawa (Eve) by name. She is referred to only as Adam’s wife. Only in the hadith, sayings attributed to Muhammed, is she identified as Hawa. As for the ‘fall’, the Qur’ān states explicitly that Adam and his wife together were seduced by Iblis/Satan (sura 7: 19-25), and that they both ate the fruit of the forbidden tree (sura 20: 121). In the Qur’ān, therefore, Iblis/Satan did not first seduce Hawa and then Adam through her. In the Qur’ān, Hawa is therefore not the ‘primeval temptress’ who tempted and seduced Adam: ‘their disobedience was a joint venture. Islam rejects the idea that women are wicked temptresses, or cursed with the burden of menstruation and pain of childbirth’, as in Genesis 3: 16 Eve – and all women – were ‘cursed’ by Jahweh. This should alert us to the many other significant differences between the protologies of the Bible and the Qur’ān. One is that Allah/God did punish Adam and his wife by sending them ‘down to earth’, and by creating enmity between humans there (sura 7: 24). But he is also said to have forgiven them their transgression of his command after their dismissal from paradise, to have shown them his mercy, to have conducted them into the right way, and to have told them to wait for his guide (sura 20: 120-123). There is, therefore, no doctrine of original sin in Islam, nor a need for the collective redemption of humankind through the vicarious suffering of a Redeemer sent by God, as there is in Christianity. Another major difference is that Islamic notions of ‘paradise’ are fundamentally different from the biblical/Christian ones.

Recommendation

Despite these remarks, this volume and its companion are of great interest to all AASR members, for their content as well as for their symbolic value, for they exemplify a milestone in the history of African academic scholarship in religions. Copies of them should be in all libraries of African universities and departments of Religious Studies. The prohibitive prices of these hard cover and e-book editions, however, forbid that. The publisher should therefore either reprint them speedily as paperbacks, and drastically reduce their e-book prices, or team up with publishers in Africa for editions affordable in the African markets.

3 Quoted from www.almasjied.com/content/story_adam_and_eve (accessed 25.2.2013)
Adriaan van Klinken has been appointed Lecturer in African Christianity at the University of Leeds (UK) as from February 2013. His mail address is: Dept. of Theology & Religious Studies, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT, UK. His new e-mail address is: a.vanKlinken@leeds.ac.uk

Gay L. Byron, Ph.D., has moved from Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, at Rochester, NY, to Howard University School of Divinity (1400 Shepherd Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017), at which he has been appointed Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity. His email address is gay.byron@howard.edu; and his phone: +1. 202-806-0714.

Matthews A. Ojo (Dept of Religious Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria) has been appointed the first Vice Chancellor of Bowen University. His e-mail address is: matthews_ojo@yahoo.com. Bowen University at Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria, is one of the several recently founded private universities in Nigeria. It was founded by the Nigerian Baptist Convention, obtained government approval in 2001, and opened in 2002. It currently has some 5,000 students but aims to expand to some 20,000. For further information, cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bowen_University, and http://www.bowenuniversity-edu.org/

Oyeronke Olademo delivered her inaugural address as Professor of Religious Studies at Ilorin University, Nigeria, on Thursday 27th June. Its title is: The Paradox of Love: Women and Religion in Society. She reports it was a success.
NEW AASR MEMBERS

Ezenweke, Elizabeth, PhD
2. Senior Lecturer
3. Department of Religion & Human Relations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, P. M. B. 5025, Awka, Anambra, Nigeria
4. Phone: +2348034539558
5. E-mail: bertoivy@yahoo.com; eo.ezenweke@unizik.edu.ng
7. Religion and Society; African Traditional Religion
8. African Traditional Religious Issues
9. 2006 – Date: Member, Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria (CATHAN).; 2009 – Date: Member, Religious Research Association (RRA). USA; 2012 – Date: Member, Association of Third World Studies (ATWS) USA; 2012 – Date: Member, International Association for African Philosophy and Studies (ISAPS); 2011- Date: President, Organization of African Traditional Religion & Philosophy Scholars; Member, editorial board of the Journal of Religion and Human Relations, UNIZI,Awka.; Member, editorial board of Journal of Gender, Information and Development, South Africa ; Member, editorial board of Journal of Culture and Mobility, South Africa

Mtata, Kupakwashe, MA
2. PhD Student, Bayreuth University
3. Lippacherstr. 8, 95445 Bayreuth, Germany
4. Phone: +4992116812017
5. E-mail: kmdlodlo@yahoo.com; webpages: http://www.bigsas.uni-bayreuth.de/en/members_of_BIGSAS/junior_fellows/mtata_kupakwashe/index.htm
   1; http://www.bigsas.uni-bayreuth.de/en/JF_research_projects/religion_mtata/index.html
6. BA Theology (2005, University of KwaZulu/Natal); MA (2011, University of Bayreuth)
7. Religionswissenschaft
8. Religion and Nature; Religious Encounters; Missionary Anthropology
9. –
10. –

Sanusi, Oluwatoyin, PhD, Mrs
2. Senior Lecturer
4. Phone: +2348033579960
5. E-mail: sanusi.oluwatoyin@yahoo.com
6. BA Ed (Hons) (1995, University of Ilorin); MA Christian Studies (2002, University of Ilorin); PhD (2012, University of Ilorin)
7. Women Theology; Christian studies
8. Women Leadership Role
9. Nigerian Association for the Study of Religious Education (NASRED)

Akande, Lydia Bosede, PhD
2. Lecturer; Sub-Dean, Students Affairs, Kwara State University, Malete
3. Dept. of Islamic, Christian & Comparative Religious Studies, Kwara State University, Malete, PMB 1530, Ilorin, Nigeria
4. Phone: +234 0805 6712 854, +234 0813 5448 801
5. E-mail: lydia.akande@kwasu.edu.ng
7. Church History; Interaction of Religions
8. ‘Religious Interaction in Ilorin Metropolis: A Case study of Sobi Hill’
9. Member, Nigerian Association of Biblical Studies (NABIS); Member, Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions (NASR); Member, Local Societies Initiative (LSI); Nigerian Association for the Study and Teaching of Religions and the Natural Sciences (NASTRENS); Member, Association of Women in Colleges of Education (WICE); Member, Religious Forum-Academia (REFA)
Awajiusuk, Finomo Julia, PhD
2. Lecturer
3. Dept. of Religious & Cultural Studies, University of Port Harcourt, East-West Road Choba, PMB 5323, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria
4. Phone: +234-08037055379, 08055859761
5. E-mail: juliafinomo@gmail.com
7. Christian Environmentmetal Ethics; Christian Ethics; Gender Studies; Eco-Tourism; Cultural Tourism
8. Environmental issues in the Niger Delta; gender issues; religious and cultural practices in Obolo (Andoni)
9. Member, Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions; Nigerian Association for Biblical Studies; Nigerian Environmental Society; International Center for the Study of African Environmental Ethics
  = 2012, 'Ethical Perspective to Environmental Sustainability: A Case of the the Niger Delta', in Journal of Nigerian Environmental Society 7, 1: 154-173

Adasi, Grace Sintim, Mrs.
2. Lecturer
3. Accra Polytechnic, PO Box AH 1224 Achimota, Accra, Ghana
4. Phone: +233-243326490
5. E-mail: ograsoa@yahoo.com
6. BA Hons (1994, Cape Coast University); M'Phil (2000, University of Ghana); PhD (in view, University of Ghana)
7. Study of religions; English; African Studies
8. Ordained women ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana: roles and challenges
9. Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, Ghana Chapter
10. -
Wepener, Cas, DTh
2. Associate Professor of Practical Theology, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria
3. Department of Practical Theology, University of Pretoria, Private Bag X20, Hatfield, 0028 South Africa
4. Phone: +27(0)124203157 (Office); +27847175723 (Cell)
5. E-mail: cas.wepener@up.ac.za; webpage: http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=263
6. BA (1995, University of Stellenbosch); BD (1998, University of Stellenbosch); MTh (2001, University of Stellenbosch); DTh (2004, University of Stellenbosch)
7. Liturgical Studies and Homiletics
8. Liturgy, ritual, worship
9. Societas Liturgica; International Academy of Practical Theology; Society for Practical Theology in South Africa; Editorial boards: Studia Liturgica; Religion & Theology (Brill); Practical Theology in South Africa

[Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad al-Surkitti (1876-1943) was an important figure in the Islamic reform movement in early twentieth-century Indonesia. He was born in the Sudan in 1876, studied in Mecca and Madina for fourteen years (1897-1911), and established his career as a school teacher and a celebrated reformist leader in Indonesia (1911-1943). The purpose of this article is to examine the early life and career of al-Surkitti in the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, and assess critically his contribution to the iṣlah and tajdid movements in the Malay-Indonesian world. His intellectual and religio-political discord and conflict with the Alawi traditionalists are investigated in the context of Hahdarmi identity and discourse between ‘orthodox Islam’ propagated by Surkitti and his followers and ‘popular Islam’ that gave the Alawi sayyids special recognition in their home society in Hadramaut and diaspora in Indonesia.]


[The last three decades have witnessed a rapid proliferation of African Christian communities, particularly in the European and North American diaspora, thus remapping old religious landscapes. This migratory trend and development bring to the fore the crucial role, functions and import of religious symbolic systems in new geo-cultural contexts. The trans-national linkages between African-led churches in the countries of origin (Africa) and the ‘host’ societies are assuming increasing importance for African immigrants. The links and networks that are established and maintained between these contexts are of immense religious, cultural, economic, political and social importance. This suggests how African Christianities can be understood within processes of religious transnationalism and African modernity. This book maps and describes the incipience and consolidation of new brands of African Christianities in diaspora. It demonstrates how African Christianities are negotiating and assimilating notions of the global while maintaining their local identities.]

Adogbo, Michael P., 2010, Comparative Historical and Interpretative Study of Religions. Lagos: Malthouse Press, 129 pp., ISBN 9789788422235 (pbk), £18.95 ; full text at:
Comparative Historical and Interpretative Study of Religions is a historical and interpretative study of religions. It provides a methodological discussion on specific themes, historical figures and movements in Religious Studies. It delves into themes such as the concepts of God, spirits, mysterious forces, pollution, and ritual symbolism. The reference to the Urhobo is a clear demonstration of current efforts by scholars in this area of study to deemphasise the old forms of generalisation to greater differentiation. This approach provides new impetus for meaningful interpretation and comprehensive examination of the various themes in the light of current scholarship. It also analyses the methodological problems in the study of African traditional religions and provides remedies which open new avenues for researcher.


Hadith, as a colophon of the Qur’an, attracts divergent comments. Its oral transmission over a century, in particular, is a subject of academic polemics. The main objection of some critics is that the Ahādīth could not have been orally transmitted over a century with great accuracy.
The two opposing views attributed to the Prophet, as far as the recording and the preservation of *hadith* is concerned, also generate heated debate. This paper argues in favour of the conservation of the *hadith* during the Prophetic era by lending weight to the great enthusiasm that was displayed by the Sahābah, individually and collectively, in the recording and the preservation of *hadith*. It is this effort by some curious Sahābah, that forms the kernel of this paper.


[This article addresses the usefulness of the comparative method. By introducing two case studies specific to Southern Africa, the comparison of the Zulu and Lembu to the ancient Israelite practice of Judaism, the author explores the dynamics of power relations, politics and space.]


[In this paper I argue that the religion and spirituality of Basarwa, also known as Bushmen, is closely associated with the environment in which they live. The environment is very important for their understanding of the nature of God, the ancestors and other spiritual beings. Their spirituality finds meaning in so far as their religion is practised in their ancestral land, which is, for all practical purposes, their spiritual home. To relocate them to other places outside of the Central Kalagari Game Reserve has a detrimental effect on their religion and spirituality.]


[This book introduces the study of Biblical studies, theology, religion and philosophy from an African perspective. The book comprises twenty-six chapters divided into four sections. The first section deals with Biblical studies, the second with theology, the third with religion and the fourth with philosophy. The contributions are twenty eminent scholars from African and Caribbean universities.]


[It has been maintained that the secular nature of modern human rights makes them incompatible with the religious orientation of African and non-Western societies. However, in view of the resilience of religion in the global and local public sphere, it is important to explore how religion can contribute to the promotion and enjoyment of human rights. Based on fieldwork conducted in Ghana, Abamfo Ofori Atiemo here establishes a convergence between human rights and local religious and cultural values in African societies. He argues that human rights represent universal ‘dream values’. This allows for a cultural embedding of human rights in Ghana and other non-Western societies. He argues that ‘dream values’ are usually presented in religious language and proclaimed, for example, by prophets and seers or expressed in certain forms of taboo, proverbs or legal norms. He employs the concept of inculturation, adaptation of the way Church teachings are presented to non-Christian cultures, as a hermeneutical tool for developing a model to understand the encounter between universal human rights and local cultures. Offering a new model for explaining the relation between religion and human rights, the book offers a novel perspective on the links between global trends and local cultures underpinned by strong currents of religious ideas.]


[The Arewa House Arabic Manuscript repository, the National Jos Museum Arabic Manuscript Collection, and the Gidan Dan Hausa Arabic Manuscripts Collection in Kano maintain great collections of ancient Arabic manuscripts on diverse subjects. The repositories are in jeopardy due to poor storage systems, lack of capacity building on the part of the staff, and above all laxity on the part of policy makers. However, there is now a definite consensus among researchers and other stakeholders in this field on the urgency of the matter and, happily, a decisive change of attitude towards the fate of the Arabic/Ajami Manuscripts in most of the repositories of northern Nigeria. A spate of conferences and workshops were organized in quick succession in the last two years and an impressive number of research publications were presented for serious discussions on virtually all aspects of the problems facing the Arabic manuscripts repositories.]


Beg, Rashid, 2012, ‘Cult-Church Dynamics within the Nation of Islam’, in Haron 2012: 191-201

[Begg, Rashid, 2012, ‘Cult-Church Dynamics within the Nation of Islam’, in Haron 2012: 191-201


the fact that they are necessary for the enjoyment of something else, we are poised to examine it from the pre-figurative, configurative and post-figurative stages of development in Africa. This enterprise anchors on the belief in cosmothean drisation of human rights in Africa: cosmos, ‘earth’, theos, ‘God’, and anthropos, ‘human’. Through this approach, this article shows that the positive approach to human rights is majorly declarative without corresponding pragmatic manifestation.


Different renderings of Paul’s use of harpax in 1 Cor 5:10 by biblical interpreters have suggested different meanings. Harpax and pleonektēs are syntactically and semantically related. Both essentially denote the attitude of greed. It is argued that once greed (pleonektēs) is cultivated, the act of taking forcibly what is not one’s own (harpax) becomes a natural development. Since harpax is listed among certain vices practiced by unbelievers and Corinthian believers are to dissociate themselves from such people, Ghanaian believers are urged to actively and passively dissociate themselves from those who forcibly take what is not theirs.


This article describes how Christian Sotho from the township of Mohlakeng in Randfontein, South Africa, know, understand, trust and believe in Jesus Christ according to the title of Great Ancestor. This article discusses what the meaning of the concept of ancestor entails and determines whether Jesus can indeed be referred to as Ancestor. There are different answers to this question.


This monograph was submitted at the University of Zimbabwe in Harare as a PhD thesis. It deals with millenarianism, a movement the author sees as developing from biblical times onwards. He connects two contemporary movements in Zimbabwe, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Johnane Masowe, with prophetic and apocalyptic movements in the Bible.


Bonate, Liazzat J.K., 2010, ‘Documents in Arabic Script at the Mozambique Historical Archives’, in Islamic Africa 1, 2: 253-257

This volume brings together a team of international scholars to create a single-volume resource on the religious beliefs and practices of the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa. Thereby it offers broad coverage of issues relating to the academic study of the religions of Africa and its diaspora by considering experiences in indigenous, Christian, and Islamic traditions across the continent. The volume offers multidisciplinary perspectives by drawing its contributors from a variety of fields and by exploring methodological approaches to the study of the religions of Africa from anthropological, philosophical, and historical perspectives. In addition, it provides insights into the historical developments in African religions, as well as into contemporary issues such as the development of African-initiated churches, neo-traditional religions, and Pentecostalism. Lastly, it discusses important topics at the intersection of culture and religion in Africa, e.g. the arts, health, politics, globalization, gender relations, and the economy.


[After reconstructing the career of a legendary calligrapher of Kano city and looking at his works as well as those of other contemporary calligraphers of the northern Nigerian metropolis, I argue for the existence of a specific “Kanawī” script used today for the realization of Qur’āns and decorative copies of religious books and characterized by a maximization of the thickness of the traditional styles of the Central Sudan. The contemporary Kanawī, in fact, is only an extension of a style that was known in the rest of West Africa as Hausāwī already in precolonial times. Nigerian calligraphers consider this style, in its turn, to be an offshoot of more ancient scribal traditions that had their center in Borno (northeastern Nigeria/southwestern Chad). If the script of Borno is certainly the oldest form of Central Sudanic script, more research on the origins and development of the Borno scribal traditions and their Hausa offshoots will be necessary in order to shed light on the position of the Central Sudan within the wider family of western Arabic scripts.]

[Shaykh Ja’far Mahmoud was one of the most popular voices of the Salafi/Wahhabi mission (da’wa) in contemporary West Africa. This article reconstructs his career, from his studies in Nigeria and Saudi Arabia through the time of his teaching and preaching in Kano and Maiduguri, until his dramatic assassination in April 2007. After detailing the many conflicts and debates that accompanied his career as a public preacher and surveying the several hypotheses that have been advanced so far to explain his murder, the article considers the career of Ja’far Mahmoud in light of the rise of Wahhabism in the densely populated West African nation through the last three decades (1980s-2000s).]


Bunza, Mukhtar Umar, & Abdullahi Musa Ashafa 2010, ‘Religion and the New Roles of Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Hausa and Ebira Muslim Communities in Northern Nigeria, 1930s-

[This paper is a comparative study of two northern Nigerian Muslim societies (the Ebira in central Nigeria and the Hausa in the North-west) in which the youths contested religious traditionalists in the 20th century and in the process brought about transformation in their societies. In the religious sphere, which was hitherto considered an affair of the elderly, the youth have come to assume a dominant place by their assertive activist posture. Among the Ebira, for instance, the youth subscribed to the religion of Islam, and converted their parents who largely professed African traditional religion to Islam. In Hausaland on the other hand, the youth, unlike the elderly, subscribed to “modern” rather than the “traditional” Islam that the latter do. In both cases therefore, the young engaged the elderly in a struggle to change their conception and practices of Islam. The process has had a tremendous impact on the relationship between the groups.]


[Capone foregrounds the agency of Candomblé leaders. She demonstrates that they successfully imposed their vision of Candomblé on anthropologists, reshaping in their own interest narratives of Afro-Brazilian religious practice. The anthropological narratives were then taken as official accounts of religious orthodoxy by many practitioners of Afro-Brazilian religions in Brazil. Capone draws on ten years of ethnographic fieldwork in Salvador de Bahia and Rio de Janeiro as she demonstrates that there is no pure or orthodox Afro-Brazilian religion. Challenging the usual interpretations of Afro-Brazilian religions as fixed entities, completely independent of one another, Capone reveals these practices as parts of a unique religious continuum. She does so through an analysis of ritual variations as well as discursive practices. She focuses on Exu, the sacred African trickster who allows communication between gods and men. Following Exu and his avatars, she discloses the centrality of notions of prestige and power—mystical and religious—in Afro-Brazilian religions. She emphasizes the agency of practitioners and their political agendas in the re-Africanization movement, an attempt to recover the original purity of a mythical and legitimizing Africa.]


[This article attempts to frame a discussion on Islam, prophetic voices and geographical spaces in Africa as territorial canvases for sketching out Islam’s sacred history. This way of thinking or conceptualizing about Africa is not as fashionable among Muslim Qur’anic scholars as it is among black Biblical theologians. Yet, this is not to suggest that the approach of this study is grounded in the Afro-centered methodology. Such an approach has its own place and serves certain ideological and cultural functions especially within a given African American diasporic scholarship. Rather, the aim of this research is two-fold: first, to critique Afrocentric thought and, second, to re-state Africa’s position within Islam’s civilizational and spiritual narrative.]


[This paper discusses social and spiritual activities that demonstrate that the Cua, like other Khoisan people, have a religion and spirituality. Their religion is ancient and is based on belief systems that require personal and community practices that are exercised through the medium of ancestors. Essentially, this is an animist religion whose elemental manifestations are in the system of veneration of spirits in nature. The spirits are those of the ancestors, but
others are malevolent and pestiferous because of past experiences that the living and the dead have traversed. The appeasing of spirits and the exorcism of evil spirits is the core of the religious activity of the Cua. Divination is the main medium of interrogating the unknown and listening to the oracles.


Cheyeka, Austin, 2012, “‘Zambia, a Christian Nation’: An Incentive for Muslim Identity and Christian-Muslim Dialogue”, in Haron 2012: 45-71

In 1991 President Chiluba declared Zambia a ‘Christian nation’ because a new Islamic vitality and influence in the country was perceived culminating in the formation of an ‘Islamic Party’. The ‘decree’ bordered on denying Muslims their constitutional rights of religious and political freedoms of affiliation, association, speech and identity. A Shia imam from Iran working in Zambia noticed its implications. When in 1993, the Zambian government closed the embassies of Iran and Iraq for ‘meddling in the internal affairs of the country’, he stepped up the dialogue between Muslims and Christians he had earlier initiated because some Muslims claimed that Christian fundamentalists had blasphemed Islam after the decalration that Zambia was a ‘Christian nation’.


[British imperial comparative religion entailed a triple mediation in which imperial theorists derived indigenous data through colonial middlemen. Focusing on the circulation of African religions, I examine the work of the Zulu philologist uNem (1865-1953), the Tswana historian S.M. Molema (1891-1965), and the Zulu dramatist and studentof anthropology H.I.E. Dhlomo (1903-1956). They intervened in imperial comparative religion by reversing the flow of knowledge production.]


[This paper explores the traditional psychiatric healing processes in Igbo land, Nigeria. It analyses the various concepts, processes, perspectives and dimensions of traditional psychiatric]
healing and argues for the integration of this aspect of psychiatry into modern system of psychological or psychiatric intervention and general health care.


[The paper investigated religious and social transformations within a specific religious tradition in South Africa. The basic question asked is how do these social transformations affect the religious transformations and vice versa? By making use of Mary Douglas’s concept of ‘the enclave’ it is proposed that a new enclave developed in the DRC after 1994, the characteristics of which are investigated in the paper.]


[This article examines the evolution of Religious Studies e-journals, and considers the factors inhibiting South African scholars from participating in publishing in open-access e-journals and from creating them.]


[This article questions modernist constructs that separate religion and health, and raises the question of translation as a shift between disparate epistemologies. Drawing on studies based on field research in Lesotho, this article focuses on Paul Ricoeur’s theory of translation, specifically the double difficulty he discerns of incommensurableness in meaning and of ‘welcoming’ the language of the other. At stake is not simply understanding but the practical efficacy—or failure—of particular health interventions to the extent that they seriously take into account the impact of religious worldviews on how health is understood and behaviour modelled. Here the concept of the “healthworld” helps to deepen our ability to design appropriate, acceptable, and sustainable health interventions.]


[It is often argued that the relationship between church and state, and the resultant freedom of religion, during 1652-1994 was determined by a theocratic model of the relationship between church and state. In a theocratic model it is religion and its teachings that determine the place and role of religion in society. This article argues that it was, in fact, a Constantinian model of the relationship between state and church which determined the place and role of religion in society between 1652 and 1994. In a Constantinian model it is the governing authority's understanding and application of religion that determines the place and role of religion in society as well as the resulting degree of freedom of religion. Examples from history are used to prove the point. The second part of the article discusses freedom of religion in South Africa after 1994.]

The religious life of the Tonga-speaking peoples of southern Zambia is examined over the last century. The author has drawn on diaries by research assistants, and field notes and research of fellow anthropologists, but above all from her own interaction with Tonga people since 1946. The older people gave first hand memories of Ndebele and Lozi raids, David Livingstone encamped near their villages in 1856 and 1862, the arrival of colonial administrators, traders, missionaries and European and Indian settlers, and in some cases, the end of colonial rule. Their experience and that of their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren provides the basis for understanding Tonga religious experience.

Dalen, Dorrit van, 2012, “This Filthy Plant: The Inspiration of a Central Sudanic Scholar in the Debate on Tobacco”, in Islamic Africa 3, 2 (Fall 2012): 227-247
[In the 17th century, tobacco was fiercely debated from England to Istanbul. Muslim scholars from Bornu and Baghirmi participated in this debate and maintained that smoking was forbidden by divine law, long after their counterparts in the heartlands of Islam allowed it. The question addressed here is why and how the adamant rejection of tobacco in central sudanic Africa was formulated. The study is based on a number of Arabic manuscripts from the region and focuses on a treatise, written around 1700, by Muhammad al-Wālī b. Sulaymān. It is argued that he was as much inspired by the popular opinion about tobacco in his home-environment as by the writings of scholars from the Middle East. In folktales, tobacco was literally demonised, and the rejection of ‘pagan’ smokers helped to mark new social boundaries. The dominant position regarding smoking was the result of an exchange between islamic learning and popular culture in the region.]
[The massive growth of Pentecostal Charismatic Churches (henceforth PCCs) constitutes a Pentecostal kairos in the global history of the Christian movement. In its current form Pentecostal movement spreads itself into politics, economics, cultural and social spheres, interacting with various disciplines all at once. Yet the massive growth and impact of PCCs has not attracted equivalent attention from scholars of religion in the African continent. This article...
highlights the PCCs’ kairos and the pentecostalisation of religion and society. It also challenges African scholars of religion to undertake interdisciplinary collaborative research projects in order to make meaningful contributions to the methods and theoretical implications for teaching religion in the PCCs’ kairos.


[Theology has been an integral part of the University of Pretoria since its inception and Church History has been taught since the establishment of the Faculty of Theology in 1917, when the Presbyterian Church of South Africa and the Nederduits Hervormde Kerk van Afrika (NHK) were partners. The Presbyterian link with the Faculty ceased in 1933. From 1938 the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) joined the NHK and this remained the situation until 2002 when the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa re-established its links with the Faculty. At the present time, the Department of Church History and Church Polity is staffed by representatives of all three partner churches.]


[The focus of this article is on the reasons that led to the establishment of theological training by the Dutch Reformed Church in the northern part of South Africa in 1938. Attention is given both to the major role players in Church and Faculty as well as to the developments that influenced both Church and Faculty. Whereas the Dutch Reformed Church of Transvaal eventually dissolved into four synods; the Faculty of Theology became one multi-denominational faculty in 2000. Cognisance is taken of the major tensions between faculty and Church during the course of time. Special attention is given to certain accusations regarding theological heresy during the last decade.]


[Female Genital Cutting (FGC) continues to be a prevalent practice in Africa. This is somewhat perplexing given the concerted efforts aimed at eradicating this practice. This article argues that the perpetuation of FGC is due to the unintended effects of marginalization experienced by individuals and groups of women as a result of the approach of some of the anti-FGC global discourses and policies put forward to eradicate the practice. This, we argue, happens when the social structure that provides such groups and individuals with a sense of identity and belonging breaks down. Therefore, the attack on what practicing communities consider to be of crucial cultural value causes a re-focus on the practice resulting in a re-formulation and re-invention of these practices in a bid to counter the feelings of alienation. FGC is thus reframed and reconstructed as a reaction against these campaigns. This article investigates the socio-cultural-symbolic nexus surrounding the practice of FGC, its meaning and implications with respect to its continued existence. The aim of this article is not to defend FGC’s continuation, but rather to explore the interplay between its changing socio-cultural dimensions as a counter-reaction to the eradication discourse and policies. In this way we will try to explore some of the factors that lay behind its perpetuation.]


[En nous appuyant sur les différents imaginaires qui concourent à l’interprétation de certains faits sociaux des peuples du Gabon, il apparaît que le bureau en tant que lieu de travail se nourrit d’un imaginaire. Celui-ci va de l’expression de la promotion sociale à une prétention à l’acquisition du pouvoir. Cet imaginaire semble trouver ses origines dans la période coloniale où le travail du bureau était la fonction des “Blancs” qui maîtrisaient l’écriture alors que le travail manuel était strictement réservé aux populations indigènes. Depuis cette époque, le bureau de travail fait l’objet de toutes les attentions et convoités. Et dès lors qu’ils sont installés, certains occupants s’efforcent, par tous les moyens, de le conserver. Les stratégies de conservation et de protection contre les agressions diverses sont visibles à travers les usages des fétiches. Ceux-ci sont souvent représentés par certains objets qui ont une importance culturelle sur le plan local. Ces éléments de défense et de protection dans l’espace de travail semblent le transformer en domaine d’appropriation au point de faire du bureau une zone interdite et avoir tendance à le confisquer pour soi.]


This article maps a brief history of Timbuctu and its manuscript collections. It discusses its intellectual heritage in the light of contemporary debates on the history of science in Muslim societies. It argues that Timbuctu’s premodern Islamic legacy emphasises the need for a clear articulation of the relationship between science and religion in Muslim societies.


[F] [This article argues that the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians was largely conceived as African, and that it addresses the issues of African women. The Circle approaches the issue of women’s liberation from an African perspective, and is not based on a Western concept. Mercy Amba Oduyoye experienced liberation in the African context. The men who formed part of her world (husbands, grandfathers and uncles), brought about the liberation of African women by reinterpreting oppressive African cultures. The ecumenical bodies within which the Circle was organized merely provided the structures. The influence of Western feminist theologies enshrined in the ecumenical bodies with which Mercy Amba Oduyoye was associated, only had a limited impact on the Circle.]


Folarin, George O., 2012, ‘How Valid are the Emerging Responses from Three Selected Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria to Poverty?’, in Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research #21 (January 2012); full text at: http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj21/Folarin.html


[The article attempts to correct the sexist interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34–36 by re-interpreting the text in the context of women founding new assemblies, preaching, teaching, and leading congregational prayers in the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), a Nigerian initiated Pentecostal denomination.]


[Most interpretations of the “living water” passages in John 4 & 7 exclusively apply historical-critical, textual or rhetorical criticism to the texts. Those approaches leave out the contexts of the contemporary interpreters. Building on the commonality of the figure of “living water” to both the Gospel of John and the Yoruba in Nigeria, the present work interprets the texts (Jn 4 & 7) in their biblical and contemporary readers’ contexts to fully elucidate the importance of the concept to the community of faith.]

[This article explores the making of gendered and religious identities among a group of Ghanaian Methodist women in London by bringing to the fore the complex and irreverent ways in which the women of Susanna Wesley Mission Auxiliary (SUWMA) negotiate their recognition within the predominantly patriarchal settings of the Methodist Church. On the one hand, the association and its members conform to Christian values and widely accepted Ghanaian constructions of womanhood. On the other hand, it flouts expectations of pious femininity, and claims a unique, elevated position within the church. Their transgressive hedonism asserts their claims to respect, recognition and leadership beyond the narrow parameters of gendered modesty. Many of the women are senior church leaders and respected members of the diaspora. All are successful professional career women and economically independent. Their association is simultaneously about promoting the Christian faith while being recognized as successful, cosmopolitan, glamorous middle-class women. The article highlights this duality.]


[This study details the development and disintegration of the Islamists’ Republic in the Sudan. The Islamists’ regime in the Sudan has propagated a distinctive ideology whose declared aim was to create a primary model of an Islamist state. The book places considerable emphasis on the theoretical development and growth of Islamism to address the profound transformations within political Islam.]


[This study compares the internal dynamics of religious change in the ‘post-evangelical’ Ikon community in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and a charismatic, multiethnic congregation in Harare, Zimbabwe. Although the theological ideas behind Ikon and the congregation vary widely, the processes whereby both groups manage change are broadly similar and have wider theoretical significance. Accordingly, this article analyses how people use the religious resources of their traditions to construct ‘havens’ in which change is facilitated. Havens are conceived of as safe spaces where people use religious resources to challenge ethnic boundaries and power structures. They can be seen to function as mechanisms for disrupting long-entrenched feedback patterns of opposition and conflict.]


Giere, S.D., 2011, “‘This is my world!’: Son of Man (Jezile) and Cross-Cultural Convergences of Bible and World’, in *Journal of Religion and Film* 15, 1 (April 2011); PDF at: http://www.unomaha.edu/jrf/Vol15.no1/Giere_MyWorld.html

[“This is my world!” is reiterated by the character of Jesus throughout Son of Man (Jezile), a telling of the story of Jesus set in a modern South African township. With dialogue and music primarily in the South African language of Xhosa, for people in the West and perhaps every-
where outside South Africa and Xhosa culture the film is a cross-cultural experience. The telling of Jesus’ story in this cultural setting paints a convergence of the biblical horizon of Jesus stories and the contemporary horizon of the world’s deep brokenness particularized in modern South Africa. This paper examines the film’s portrayals of Jesus’ baptism and crucifixion as cross-cultural translations of biblical texts that send the ‘reader’ back to the biblical text with new and otherwise unavailable insights.


[The existence of ‘African theology’ is no longer a subject of debate. This article reviews the content and perspectives of African theologians, particularly those from East Africa. It examines the positions of these theologians on issues of culture, modernity and the public sphere. On the whole, it recognises a certain romanticisation of the African past and an unconvincing dismissal of some positive contributions of modernity to the African civilisation.]


[From the earliest attempts to spread Christianity in Ghana, European missionaries used religious art as an important tool for spreading ideas about the Christian faith. This was particularly so for the Catholics and Anglicans who have long-established traditions of religious iconography. Initially this art was highly Eurocentric in that Christ and Christian personae were represented as Caucasians. In the 1960s the need for what was described as inculturation, ‘the ongoing and critical dialogue between faith and culture’, challenged this tradition, and there were a number of attempts to make religious art, especially in Catholic churches in Ghana, more Afrocentric. This article looks at how this switch from a Eurocentric religious art to an Afrocentric inspiration developed, and at the reaction on the part of Ghanaian Christians to what Afrocentric clergymen in the United States have described as an attempt to ‘dehonkify Christ’.]


[The increasing interest within development studies in religion is largely based on notions of ‘faith communities’ and ‘belief systems’: that people – especially ‘religious’ people – operate within discrete and coherent systems of belief. An emphasis on belief, however, is not universal, either across religions or across cultures. This paper draws on ethnographic data from a study of churches in rural Ghana to explore whether such frameworks are appropriate for understanding religious practices. Using insights from medical anthropology, it suggests that in this context the basis of ‘religious’ engagement is not belief as a conscious decision to adhere to a recognisably disputable notion. Rather, theoretical knowledge is preceded by practice, and continuity between the physical and the spiritual means that powers such as spirits are not ‘believed in’ (or disbelieved) but accepted as indisputable facts. Although people may identify with a particular religion such as Christianity, they live in a landscape of different ‘religious’ and ‘non-religious’ powers, with which they engage largely on a pragmatic level, entailing eclecticism, multiplicity and fluidity rather than full adherence to one discrete belief system. Thus, not only are assumed boundaries between religious groups and cosmologies challenged; but categories and oppositions used by development theoreticians and practitioners such as ‘religious/secular’ are also called into question.]


[Founded in the 1960s, the ‘Akan’ movement now has thousands of members in the US. Born from the encounter of an Afro-American musician and the chief priestess of a Ghanaian shrine, it reproduces the worship of Akan divinities in North America, and institutes genealogical links between Akan people from Ghana and Afro-Americans descendants of slaves. This paper describes the development and the current dynamics of the movement, and highlights the relationships between identities and ritual practices. The article also describes the multiple ritual spaces of the American “Akan” movement, and shows how, for Afro-American ‘A- kans’, the invention of Africa goes along with complex logics of identification, which allow the members to position themselves simultaneously as Akan, Panafrique, and Afro-Ameri cans.]

[In this paper, I question the validity of the blame of external forces for all the woes that Africa is going through now. I instead propose that a functional reconstruction theology should primarily tackle the evil that we commit against ourselves. When we deal with this evil we have a likelihood of bringing African people into a proper unified group that can stand together against foreign elements. I also take issue with the selection of Nehemiah as the model upon which we can do our reconstruction theology. It is in this context that this paper suggests the prophet Amos over and above Jesus as the right model needed to confront the sort of problems we face as Africans. There is need for the church in Africa to undergo a reconstruction of its own after which the church can lead in the African reconstruction. This paper brings to the fore the painful realities of internally perpetrated evils, which are bigger than has been appreciated in many earlier contributions.]

[This PhD thesis, defended at the University of Bayreuth, Germany, revisits homosexuality in Zimbabwe, a subject that attracted international notoriety in 1995 when the President, Mugabe, described homosexual persons as ‘worse than dogs and pigs’. His position was widely supported by Christians and Traditionalists alike, and the Bible was used as the final arbiter, because it is the ‘Word of God’. Homosexual persons and those sympathetic to them, however, also used the Bible. As a result, the Bible fought against the Bible. The book highlights the interconnection between homosexuality, religion and the socio-economic and political challenges from the 1990s.]

Gunda, Masiiwa Ragies, (ed.) 2011, From Text to Practice: The Role of the Bible in Daily Living of African People Today. Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 200 pp., ISBN 978-3-86309-004-3 (e-book); (= Bible in Africa Studies, 4); full text at: http://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-bamberg/frontdoor/index/index/docId/273
This volume contains papers presented at the International Bible Symposium 2009 in Bamberg (Germany) and additional contributions. They examine the relationship between the Bible and daily life of Christians in Africa.


[This volume consists of papers presented at IBS (International Bible Symposium) 2010 at Kloster Banz, Bad Staffelstein, Germany; and articles added by the editors to broaden the discussion and to also give a voice to those who could not be present at the symposium. The influence of the Bible on politics and political uses of the Bible is especially relevant in African societies as many of them ascribe a paramount role to the ‘Word of God’ and seem to use it as a handbook for political action. The contributors try to meet this special challenge for Contextual Biblical Studies with their critical analytical approach, which needs to be taken more seriously in academic research than it used to be.]


[The article explores the origin of the Free Protestant, or Unitarian, Church in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope. It was founded in 1869 by David Faure, who had studied Modern Theology at Leiden with J.H. Scholten from 1861 to 1866.]


[This article argues that there is no firm evidence of significant global correlation between national IQ levels and rates of disbelief in God.]
Many Nigerians saw 9/11 as part of a global confrontation between Muslims and Christians. As a religious event that involved worldwide communities, it could be replicated by actors in Nigeria. When news of the attacks in New York and Washington reached the citizens of Jos, Muslims and Christians engaged in a confrontation that may have claimed as many casualties as the ‘original’ events, for, according to the police, more than 3,000 lives were lost in the course of the riot and its suppression by police and army units. Yet news about the Jos catastrophe did not find their way into Western media. This article explores this local conflict, and particularly how the rival parties imagined it and how these images reshaped local antagonisms.

Contemporary South African Muslims are in the midst of transformation. This article reflects on the formation of ‘Muslim networks’ between South African Muslims and their counterparts in the Muslim heartlands. It demonstrates to what degree the local communities and their leaders have networked with theologians/scholars/activists from the Muslim heartlands. It shows how these external elements stimulated internal transformations during certain historical moments towards the late 20th century. This article provides a synopsis of socio-theological events by looking specifically at the formation and contributions of theological bodies. Before picking out selected case studies, I discuss the Muslim networks as a useful conceptual tool to understand the intellectual debates and discourses prevalent in the South African Muslim setting.

This essay analyses published texts and reports that offer statistical data about Africa’s Muslim population. Its focus is on the census surveys and statistics that deal with Southern Afr-
ica’s populations – most of whom are SADC members – in general and with its Muslim communities in particular.


[This book covers the history of Jews in Africa from the times of Alexander the Great and Caesar to Idi Amin and Nelson Mandela.


[“Umar b. Sayyid (or, more likely, Sa’id) was captured in Futa Toro in 1806/7, exported, and sold as a slave in South Carolina. Later he was bought by the brother of a subsequent governor of North Carolina and lived with both of them for some thirty years. ‘Umar had learned Arabic in Africa, but as an aging slave forgot some of the rules of the language. Nevertheless, in 1819 he wrote the Arabic document translated, in which he quotes many parts of the Koran and seeks return to his homeland in Africa. The Koranic passages surround his statement: “I
wish to be seen in our land called Afrika”. However, he was forced to stay in America until he died in 1864, long after writing an Arabic autobiography.


[The relationship between religion and the environment has been one of contest. But in African belief it is a rested argument, because the cosmos is conceived as a whole and subsumed under God, the creator. This traditional belief has come in contact with serious Western ideologies on the environment that calls for a re-evaluation of the role of the moral agency in African Religion, namely, the ancestors. It is argued that in spite of the Western influences that have vitrified the traditional belief in the place and potency of the ancestors, a transformative-ecozoic model, with its all-comprising moral, social, cultural and educational contents, provides African Religion with challenges it must rise up to in the context of the comity of global religions. Through analytical and contextual framework, the paper argues further that African Religion still has crucial roles to play in the maintenance of the environment in the 21st century, but that these roles are anchored on its ability to match academics with praxis.]


Jawoniyi, Oduntan, 2009, ‘Rethinking the Religious Education Curricula in Nigerian Schools’, in *Journal for the Study of Religion* 22, 2: 63-86 [In consonance with contemporary RE trends elsewhere, this article advocates that confessional, monoreligious RE in Nigeria be replaced with a non-confessional, multifaith RE curriculum in Nigeria’s publicly funded schools.]


[Following Barthes’ striking insights, this essay attempts an encounter with a portrait of an Akan court official on the Gold Coast taken in about 1890. The missionary photographer is given his due in the analysis, but Barthes is taken as urging us to take the signals from the photographed ‘object’ seriously when analyzing portraits, and as having liberated us to use the complex of visual perceptions which people with long experience in a region call up when they encounter someone unknown to them. This train of thought allows us to see the official as a representative of a functioning political community with reforming intentions and an ability to absorb many of the impulses a resident Mission brought into the area. The essay is also a by-product of the effort which has been put into getting the main body of historical photographs in the Basel Mission archive catalogued to a satisfactory degree of local precision, to serve the interest in African History among the Mission’s African partners, and the new Centre for African Studies at the University of Basel.]


[Using conceptual tools as well as sociological and theological critical analysis, African theologians need to take into account, and observe, ecological norms as part of the fulfillment of their world mission. The objective of this article is to promote environmental awareness and active engagement in assessing the environmental impact on all human activities.]


[Black South African theologians created South African Black theology during the late 1960s and early 1970s as a conscious and theological dimension of the liberation struggle against apartheid. They drew inspiration from African-American theology, biblical hermeneutics and the raw material of their own experiences and suffering, whilst simultaneously creating a new theological paradigm and political orientation to liberate Black South Africans from apartheid]
and European domination. Inevitably, South African Black theology was a liberation theology aimed at helping to eradicate the existing socio-political order. This article presents a missiological overview of Black theology and examined and assesses its relevance to contemporary postapartheid South Africa.


Kealotswe, Obed, 2012, ‘Botswana’s Muslims and New (Muslim) Religious Movements’, in Haron 2012: 127-137 [The paper explores whether Muslims in Botswana are affected by the NRMs that have emerged within the House of Islam as witnessed in other parts of the world. It examines also the extent to which Muslims in Botswana lose some of its members by them ‘reverting’ to the modern Pentecostal/Charismatic expressions of the Christian faith. The hypothesis of the pa-
per is that Muslims in Botswana cannot be affected and influenced by NRMs. The theoretical framework of the paper is the Weberian one that religion is a binding factor in society.


[KThe purpose of this essay is to introduce readers to the history and current status of the library of the Uganda Christian University, Mukono, Uganda.]


[Studies of gender in African Christianity have usually focused on women. This book draws attention to men and constructions of masculinity, particularly important in light of the HIV epidemic which has given rise to a critical investigation of dominant forms of masculinity. These are often associated with the spread of HIV, gender-based violence and oppression of women. Against this background Christian theologians and local churches in Africa seek to change men and transform masculinities. Exploring the complexity and ambiguity of religious gender discourses in contemporary African contexts, this book critically examines the ways in which some progressive African theologians, and a Catholic parish and a Pentecostal church in Zambia, work on a ‘transformation of masculinities’.]


[This article contributes to the understanding of the role of religion in the public and political controversies about homosexuality in Africa. As a case study it investigates the heated public debate in Zambia following a February 2012 visit by United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who emphasised the need for the country to recognise the human rights of homosexuals. The focus is on a particular Christian discourse in this debate, in which the international pressure to recognise gay rights is considered a sign of the end times, and Ban Ki-moon, the UN and other international organisations are associated with the Antichrist and the Devil. Here, the debate about homosexuality becomes eschatologically enchanted through millennialist thought. Building on discussions about public religion and religion and politics in Africa, this article avoids popular explanations in terms of fundamentalist religion and African homophobia, but rather highlights the political significance of this discourse in a postcolonial African context.]


[During the 1990s, migrants from West Africa developed New Pentecostal Mission Churches as they settled in European metropoles. These churches are characterized by intense transnati-
onal connections and aim to incorporate their members into a global Christendom. Focusing on the Christian Church Outreach Mission International (CCOMI), a church founded by Ghanaians in Hamburg, this article explores when and how transnational competences, and interactions beyond linguistic, cultural and ethnic boundaries, can be described as cosmopolitan sociabilities. It asks whether we can use the term ‘cosmopolitanism’ as an analytical tool, beyond ‘benign universalisms’, to shed light on cosmopolitan moments which can emerge as side-effects of Christian moral missions. It also asks how precisely Pentecostal churches create transnational ways of being and belonging, and how far the politics of locality play into the intensity of connections.


Kurgat, Sussy Gum, 2009, 'Gender, Religion and Human Rights: Kenyan Perspective', in BOLESWA: Journal of Theology, Religion and Philosophy 3, 1: 5-26


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 
\textit{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, in twelve of Nigeria’s 36 states, of full Shari’a law and the formation of a sometimes large corps of 
\textit{hisba} (wrongly called ‘vigilantes’) – this despite Nigeria having a constitution that both is secular and reserves to the federal government institutions like police and prisons. The article explores the various dimensions, past and present, of ‘security’ in Kano and ends with 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.


The Department of Old Testament at the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, has been in existence since 1938. Like human beings, a university department can also have a biography. This article briefly tells its life story. It describes the Department’s academic endeavours, and of the scholars who devoted their lives to the pursuit of Old Testament scholarship and the teaching of theological students from their first year to doctorate level. Over the years the Department had to adjust and re-adjust, but in the end it survived all kinds of pressures and established its place both here and abroad. One of the reasons for its endurance and survival has been its commitment to cutting-edge research, sound scholarship and excellent teaching. This story is told here by focusing on the physical contexts in which the Department had to exist, and then on the scholars who made things happen.


The Catholic Church has had to contend with dissenting voices within its own ranks around the use of a condom as a way of reducing the transmission of HIV and the spread of AIDS. The challenge has been how to balance the doctrinal and canonical rigors on one side, and the moral and pastoral considerations on the other. Her official position is that the conjugal act has meaning only within the context of marriage and that such an act should be open to the possibility of conception. Because condoms rule out such a possibility, they are rejected as
antilife. This present paper represents a responsible and loyal dissent. It questions the practicability of imposing a blanket ban on condoms even in cases where a couple is living with HIV or is discordant. Arguing from canonical, moral and pastoral perspectives, the paper concludes that there are cases where, on the basis of the moral principles of double effect and the lesser evil, a condom could be the best response to the immediate questions of people in such difficult situations as that of HIV&AIDS.


[This article investigates the perception the Basotho have on the issue of traditional purification. The aim of this article is to find out why the bereaved, that have not yet been purified traditionally, are not allowed to be part of certain activities, like going to the church and also performing certain community activities.]


[Since 2009, the radical Muslim movement in northern Nigeria known as Boko Haram has become widely known in Western media for both its militant actions and its ultra-fundamentalist programme. This analysis examines Boko Haram from a historical perspective, viewing the movement as a result of social, political and generational dynamics within the larger field of northern Nigerian radical Islam. The contribution also considers some of the theological dimensions of the dispute between Boko Haram and its Muslim opponents and presents the different stages of militant activity through which this movement has gone so far. The article shows that movements such as Boko Haram are deeply rooted in northern Nigeria’s specific economic, religious and political development and are thus likely to crop up again if basic frame conditions such as social injustice, corruption and economic mismanagement do not change.]


[This study presents Placide Temples’ way towards the “Philosophie bantoue” and the repercussion of the latter in the African discourse. Three decisive aspects are investigated: first the prehistory, i.e., the socio-political, scientific and religious contexts, which prepared him and put him in an estate to discover that Africans do have a Philosophy, second his purposefulness and his singularity, and finally the history of its reception and the reactions by the African scholars and sages.]


[Having dabbled with the metaphors of liberation, reconstruction and reconciliation, the time may have come for (South) African prophetic theology to seriously consider the metaphor of restitution. In this essay, the author outlines the contours of a theology of restitution. The starting point is the existing but mostly unspoken theologies for and against various forms of restitution. An exploration of the contours of a theology of restitution is conducted. In order to illustrate the tasks and challenges of a theology of restitution – the author refers to the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. For him a credible theology of restitution is a theology capable of restoring Lazarus before not after he dies.]


[The status of women in religion has come increasingly under scrutiny. In particular, Western radical feminists have charged that religion serves an ideological purpose: men use it to keep women in a subordinate position. However, they overlook the positive role played by religion in the emancipation of women. This article examines the status of women in Islam in Zimbabwe. It analyses how Islam in Zimbabwe contributes towards women’s identity formation. The article assesses first emerging debates on religion and gender, then presents an overview of Islam and women and focuses on women in Zimbabw.]


[This essay provides a brief history of Muslims in Malawi. It offers a historical background, lists the various Muslim organizations, discusses the education of Malawi’s Muslims, and it focuses on socio-political factors that facilitated their transformation.]


[During the centenary year of the University of Pretoria (2008), the Department of Science of Religion and Missiology took stock of its activities during the past 55 years. In this article, the
place of missiology among the other theological disciplines at the University of Pretoria is discussed, together with an analysis of the nature and the mandate of missiology and science of religion in South Africa in our day. This article discusses five specific challenges to missiology at the beginning of the third millennium: to maintain its theological roots; to operate in close relationship with the church; to focus on our African context; to concentrate on a relevant agenda; and to develop a responsible methodology.]


[In 1938 the Faculty of Theology Section B was established at the University of Pretoria. The aim of this article, coinciding with the centenary of the University of Pretoria, is to focus on the contributions of the Faculty of Theology towards university, church and society. At certain stages both lecturers and students made a huge impact, playing leading roles in Church and society. The voice of the Faculty was at times met by strong reaction, which was possibly one of the reasons for the murder of Prof. J.A. Heyns [5.11.1994]. In 2000 a new era dawned.]

[Tanzania experiences grim consequences by the entrenchment of witchcraft in the country including social exclusion, expulsion and even murder of alleged witches. The legal system copes inadequately with the challenges of witchcraft because it does not accept the reality of witchcraft and the colonial inherited law is a blunt instrument in dealing with the problem. This article charts the history of the law on witchcraft in Tanzania and concludes that witchcraft beliefs are too strong to be driven out by legal methods and instead advocates for the removal of ignorance by introducing a scientific view of the world through [mass] education.]

[By far, the greatest and startling religious news of this century from East Africa has been the unravelling of the complicated process towards canonization and possible papal declaration of Julius Nyerere, a Catholic saint. Both the political and religious worlds have joined ranks to make sure that the former president of Tanzania is beatified, an intriguing event surrounded by controversy. This paper reports in detail the core values and contribution to Tanzania’s nation building efforts of this exceptional African statesman but questions his proposed candidacy for sainthood.]


[Speech delivered to celebrate the centenary of the African National Congress during March 2012 in Cape Town. It basically highlighted the contribution of Muslims towards the struggle for freedom in South Africa.]


[This article addresses the challenges that confront the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) in reaching out to other groups of people in Zimbabwe. In reaching out to the Tonga people in]
the Binga area south of the Zambezi River and the Kariba Dam, their basic approach is described as a cross-cultural mission. The principles of intercultural mission, based on passages such as Acts 15, challenge this approach. The article deals with the implications in practice and the challenges that still confront the RCZ.


Mwandayi, Canisius, 2011, *Death and After-life Rituals in the Eyes of the Shona: Dialogue with Shona Customs with the Quest for Authentic Inculturation*. Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 378 pp., (= Bible in African Studies, 6); ISBN 978-3-86309-029-6 (pbk), € 21.00; ISBN 978-3-86309-030-2 (e-book); full text at: [http://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-bamberg/frontdoor/index/index/docId/295](http://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-bamberg/frontdoor/index/index/docId/295)


[This paper focuses on the contribution of the Swazi sacred dualmonarchy (the King and the Queen Mother) towards bridging the gap between Swazi Traditional Religion and Christianity]
in Swaziland. Drawing on my primary data pertaining to the Swazi Incwala and the Easter Royal Ceremony, I contend that in the religio-cultural sphere, the genius of the Swazi dual monarchy lies in its continuing capacity to integrate African Traditional Religion to Christianity without undermining the integrity of either religion.


[This article deploys Postcolonial conceptual and theoretical tools to analyse the complex religious encounters that unfolded in the region that was occupied by the Ndebele nation that was built by King Mzilikazi Khumalo prior to the Anglo-Ndebele War of 1893-4 and the subsequent colonisation of the Ndebele-speaking people by the white settlers in 1895. The religious encounters are read as a terrain of meeting of two worldviews- one informed by Victorian capitalist and colonial hegemonic ethos and the other by African communal but equally hegemonic Nguni ideas of assimilation and incorporation. What ensued were uneasy religious dualities, conversations, contestations, blending, interpellation and transformation of consciousness in which only direct colonial conquest resolved the encounter in favour of Christian missionaries. The Gramscian concept of hegemony and Jean and John Comaroff’s concept of cultural and colonial encounters are used to assist in teasing out deeper meaning in the encounter between the Ndebele and the early Christian missionaries prior to inscription of settler colonialism in the area lying between the Limpopo and Zambezi Rivers.]


[Despite the fact that Kenya is constitutionally a secular state, the country has faced strong, public opposition from Muslim and Christian leaders on a series of legislative and constitutional reform processes. Religio-political conflict has influenced state action because reforms were contested openly either by the country’s Muslim or Christian communities. I show why the Muslim resistance was vocal against the Suppression of Terrorism Bill 2003. Specifically, the rejection of the 2003 proposed anti-terrorism law forced the government to consider how it can address international terrorism without antagonizing its Muslim population. Similarly, some Church leaders were charged with frustrating constitutional reforms because of the inclusion of clauses protecting abortion and the Kadhi courts. Debates over the constitutionally-protected Kadhi courts exacerbated tensions between Muslims and Christians as well as between the churches and the state. This article illustrates how the state finds itself constantly engaging with religious groups, provoking rather than mitigating conflict with them.]


[Following the political liberalization of the early 1990s, Muslims in Kenya took advantage by increasing their political activities. During this period, an anti-government posture among Muslims was manifest, culminating in the creation of the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK). Perceived discrimination and marginalization by postcolonial regimes provided a forum for mobilizing Muslims to demand justice by resorting to politicized Islam. This article studies the politicization of Muslim organizations in Kenya, focusing on the emergence of the IPK upon the perceived failure of the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims (SUPKEM), and also the deterioration of the IPK because of ethnic divisions encouraged by the government. Due to the lack of a Muslim political party to articulate their grievances, a number of organizations were formed to provide Muslims with a platform for engaging in national politics, thereby increasing the politicization of Islam in the country.]

Because the literacy rate in French is very small in Senegal, especially among older people, Wolofal (the Wolof language) remains a major means of written communication among people who are illiterate in French and who have attended Quranic schools. It is used by these people to write letters, run their informal businesses and read religious poems and writings. This paper discusses the orthographic system of ajami Wolofal (compared to Arabic) and provides a sociolinguistic profile of communities in which it serves as major means of written communication.

[IMER, the Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research at the University of Pretoria was initiated in 1979, when the 20th century missionary movement in the Dutch Reformed Church had already started to unravel. IMER’s history gives us insight into these events. IMER focused on the missionary calling of the church and on guiding the church in its broad responsibility to Southern African society. As funding for the missionary movement diminished and the university had to cut down on expenses, funding for IMER dried up. IMER is now in the same position as DRC mission itself: it has to find new structures and new sources of funding to respond to the challenges of a new century.]

[After the tragic bombing of the USA embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the destruction of the 9/11 New York twin towers, the USA along with the European Union decided to adopt specific strategies to once and for all bring to an end Muslim terrorism. They targeted the Muslim communities’ jugular vein by intervening and reforming the Muslim educational systems in and outside the Muslim heartlands. This essay outlines and discusses to what extent the USA government convinced and influenced the Tanzanian government – which was singled out for special USA support – to bring about reform in Muslim education since this – from the USA perspective – may be viewed as the best defence against ‘bad’ Muslims who perpetrated and continue to commit terrorist acts. As a consequence, the Tanzania government effected change by disallowing the teaching of Islamic Knowledge, Arabic and Bible Knowledge in all schools and in their place it introduced the teaching of “Religion”, a subject that shall include “acceptable” teachings from all religions on earth.]
[Historical evidence shows that the Batswana had a belief in a single Creator or Supreme Being from time immemorial. The underlying pattern in their religious beliefs and practices associated with their belief provides a foundation upon which Batswana received Christianity. However, some missionaries gave the impression that no such religious tradition and heritage existed prior to their arrival on the African continent. This paper argues that Batswana had an absolute belief in a Supreme Being, they referred to as Modimo.]
[N] Arabic scripts employed in West African manuscripts have not been fully explored in scholarly literature. The aim of this paper is twofold: to discuss the literature available on this issue and to advance a classification of West African writing styles. This classification is based on the case study of the “de Gironcourt” collection of Arabic manuscripts, gathered in the modern states of Mali, Niger, and Nigeria at the beginning of the twentieth century.]
[This paper is restricted to the worldview of African Christians who have accepted certain erroneous readings of the Bible that have tooted humanity as the centre of creation and have therefore espoused values that deplete the resource that have been made available to humanity in creation. It seeks to pursue a reader centred reader-response reading of Genesis 6:5-8:22. It will take seriously our African setting and worldview. It is hoped that it will demonstrate that a careful reading of the Bible by African Christians who take seriously African religious and
cultural worldviews and values will enable us to be more responsible in the way we live. This paper shows that the “flood” is caused by human actions and floods that do occur today. It should remind us that we are to change the way we treat the earth and its resources that are available to us.]


[These findings of this study corroborate Horton’s theory of African Indigenous Religion as entailing a quest for achieving control of events in the current world, and for making an investment for eventual citizenship in the world of the ancestors. It is, therefore, essentially a pragmatic religion.]


[This work provides an overview of Nigerian Christianity. It covers issues such as Pentecostalism, Charismatism, gender dynamics, Muslim-Christian relations, and the arts and performance in Christian traditions as they are transforming contemporary Nigerian society. While focussing on contemporary Christianity, the essays also reflect on Nigeria’s history and cultural traditions.]


[The call for rebranding the society at the national level confirms the level of moral decay in Nigeria. The multi-dimensional moral problems and crises are seen in every sector of the nation. This has accounted for various forms of evil being committed by people in the nation. Unfortunately, those in the religious sector are not immune to these evils. In fact, some of these atrocities are directly or indirectly connected with religious leaders. Therefore, this paper examines the Biblical Josiah and his reforms as a model for religious and political rebranding in Nigeria. This is with a view to highlighting some principles that would help us as a nation in our rebranding campaign. A historical method is adopted. Thus, Josiah’s model of rebranding remains a yardstick for all religious and political leaders in Nigeria if the rebranding project will yield fruit.]


[When Indian women convert from Hinduism to Christianity, the effects of their conversion are not merely religious but affect also the cultural and socio-economic aspects of their lives, and especially their gender roles and identity, both in the household and in public life.]


[For long, the controversies over reincarnation have failed to be put to rest because the phenomenon is one that relates to many fields of study and thus can only be examined using a multidisciplinary approach. From Islamic point of view the failure to nip the concept in the bud lies in incognito {ignorance?, JP} of the relationship between mankind and Jinn. It has been established through this paper that what many have often termed as reincarnation of a deceased person can well be viewed in the light of the influence of Jinn on man for the former has the pow-
er to transform to or wear the face of a man, deceased or living. Besides, careful study reveals that reincarnation is common among the individuals that relate more with the world of spirits.


Oke, Ruth Oluwakemi, 2012 ‘We are all Children of God!: An Exegetical Analysis of Galatians 3:26-28 in Support of Women’s Participation in Active Governance’, in Ayantayo, Dada & Labeodan 2012: ???-??


[This book explores strategies and methods of the Protestant and the Roman Catholic missionaries in Igboland and the Igbo response during the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. Using oral traditions, primary sources, and the author’s own life experience both as a Christian convert and a missionary co-partner in the evangelization enterprise, the text examines the missions’ programs and missteps, as well as their impact on the people.]

Olabimtan, Kehinde, 2013, Samuel Johnson of Yorubaland, 1846-1901: Identity, Change and the Making of the Mission Agent. Oxford: Peter Lang, 347 pp., ISBN 978-3-0343-0809-0 (pbk), CHF 78.00 / €(D) 69.60 / €(A) 71.50 / £ 65.00 / US-$ 84.95 (= Africa in Development, 12)

[This study aims to understand how the nineteenth-century African agent of mission appropriated change without losing cultural integrity. Drawing essentially from the contexts that produced the man, from Sierra Leone to the Yoruba country, the study shows Samuel Johnson as embodying the opportunities and ambivalence that progressively accompanied Yoruba contact with Britain in the people’s war-weary century of change. Largely influenced by German missionaries in the British mission environment of Yorubaland, Johnson had confidence in the bright prospect the missionary message held for his people. This propelled him into a struggle to relieve the distressed country from its woes and to preserve the fading memory of its people.]


[Incapacitated by their past, Afrikaners were unable to respond positively during the critical stages of transformation and find themselves marginalized, at the edge of the ‘rainbow nation’. Evading confrontation with the past or constantly postponing it while waiting for the current crises to subside is no longer an option. This article attempts to identify unresolved issues from the history, culture and theology of Afrikaners that form obstacles in the way of positive development and progress.]

http://www.hds.harvard.edu/news-events/harvard-divinity-bulletin/articles/on-africa-a-need-for-nuance


http://www.afrrevjo.net/journals/multidiscipline/Vol_4_no_2_art_41_Omatseye%20&%20Emeriewen.pdf


[St. Thomas Aquinas lived between 1225 and 1274 but his thought permeated the succeeding centuries up to the twenty first century. The moment you talk of the philosophical postulations of St. Thomas Aquinas, scholars who belong to the analytic tradition immediately shelve his ideas as belonging to antiquity. We submit that Aquinas’ natural law theory is very relevant to contemporary ethical issues such as artificial birth control, mercy killing and abortion. Specifically we apply his natural law theory to the contemporary ethical discussions on euthanasia.]


[The evangelization of the Ogoja area of Cross River State, of which Yala is a part, began on May 15, 1921 with the arrival of Fathers Douvry and James Mellet. Within the period under
review, twenty-one different denominations were established in Yala. There were many odds: the local terrain was inhospitable, the level of infrastructure was low and it was during the period of imperial rivalries. In spite of these inauspicious beginning, a huge success was achieved. The difficult aspect of this study is that, it is based on a thin layer of literature. The lack of historical materials coupled with the facts that many of the pioneer and eye witnesses of most of the events of the early 1920’s are either aging or becoming senile or dying out make this present work important before it becomes too late. The present work covers the genesis of the Catholic mission and the other twenty denominations, their growth, consolidation and the impact of the missions in the area.]


[Christianity was introduced by Portuguese traders in the 15th Century. This was the first attempt at planting Christianity in Nigeria. The Gospel was preached then in Benin and Warri but the Portuguese traders did not succeed partially because their commercial interest superseded their evangelistic commitment. Although the missionaries were few and far between, support for them from Europe was erratic. The climate was too severe for their health and the political situation along the coast was extremely unstable. Nigerian rulers were apathetic, if not hostile to Christian doctrine. Being masters in their own domains, they did not allow any evangelistic penetration of the interior. It was in the 19th century that European and American missionaries succeeded in planting Christianity in Nigeria. The Wesleyan Missionary Society, the Church Missionary Society, and the Southern Baptist missionaries from America made efforts to plant their mission stations in the Western Region, while the United Presbyterian Mission started their own missionary activities from Calabar.]


[This paper addresses the issue of the reflection of religious affiliation in the use of language. It specifically sets out to ascertain whether the use any of the Ọlọrun/Ọlọhun variant, in reference to ‘God’ has any religious connotation. In addition it seeks to find out which of the variants correctly serves as the underlying form of the reduced form ‘Ọlọ́n’. The paper adopts a two-pronged methodological approach, first, through a phonological analysis of consonant deletion in Yoruba, and secondly, through a questionnaire based data collection. The phonological analysis focused specifically on the possibility of the deletion of [r] and [h] in Yoruba. The linguistic analysis showed that the reduced form could not have been derived from the variant with [r] but from that with [h]. The analysis of the questionnaire results shows that though the Ọlọrun variant is predominant in the language community, the Muslim origin of the Ọlọhun variant is not in doubt. The study found that Christians and Muslims use the reduced variant without regard to its decidedly Muslim origin. The paper concludes by observing that linguistics and language use are veritable instruments of breaking down the barriers of religious divide.]


[In this article we study the proverbs, songs and indigenous healing practices of a Zulu community in rural Inanda in order to find out if there is indigenous knowledge critiquing patriarchal practices from within African culture. We propose new models of knowledge for the promotion of life in the context of HIV.]


Pongo, F., 2006, La place de la théologie africaine. Kinshasa: IFTSA


[The missionary society of Moravian Brethren managed to create a prosperous Christian community of indigenous people in South Africa in the 19th century. Their mission station “Genadendal”, which came to be a flourishing center of economy and education in the Cape colony at that time, attracted many distinguished visitors from the Cape as well as from abroad. They witnessed the development of the settlement and observed the organization of life with its inhabitants. The missionary guests kept their own travel diaries, where they recorded their observations concerning their visits to Genadendal. The diaries of the travelers bring to light the whole process of cultural transformation of the Khoi people who inhabited the settlement. At the same time these accounts seem to differ from the missionaries memoirs in that they offer a new perspective from which to view the activity of Moravian Brethren in their most prominent South African mission station.]


‘Cult’ is a loaded term. It has positive, negative and neutral connotations. It has often been used not to describe a phenomenon but to classify groups that are not in line with the standards of society. This has lead to tension between such groups and churches, and members of society. This article reveals that the study of cults is a complex one and is to be pursued with caution. Measures are proposed for the study of cults in order to provide a balanced overview. One is that an information centre associated with an academic institution needs to be established.


[John Rangiah was the first Indian Baptist missionary who came to Natal (today KwaZulu-Natal). He was born in India in 1866 and died in 1915. He established the first Telugu Baptist Church on the African continent in Kearsney, Natal. This article provides insight into Rangiah’s early life and faith, and critically examines his understanding of the Bible and its themes, first from a conservative evangelical perspective and then by using elements of post-colonial hermeneutics.]


[This article examines the religious grounds of local Basotho in Lesotho against their resettlement because of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project aimed at harnessing water resources for Lesotho and South Africa. The source of the problem is their veneration of the graveyards of their ancestors, their dependence on their ancestors for their material welfare, and their traditional healers’ identification with some aspects of nature.]


Renne, Elisha P., 2009, ‘Consecrated Garments and Spaces in the Cherubim & Seraphim Church Diaspora’, in Material Religion 5, 1: 70-87


[Expanding Islamic education has been a primary objective of the reformist Islamic movement, Jama’atu Izalat al- Bid’a wa Iqamat al- Sunna (the Society for the Removal of Innovation and the Reinstatement of Tradition), also known as Izala. In the early 1980s, Izala leaders established classes for married women focusing on primary Islamic texts, particularly the Qur’an and hadith, which were taught in several quarters in Zaria City, in northern Nigeria. Although Izala teachers and students initially faced considerable resistance, many married women insisted on attending classes and eventually, these classes came to be widely accepted. By 2002, over twenty-six Islamiyya schools with classes for married women had opened in Zaria City, which reflects both the widespread approval of married women’s education and a broader acceptance of the Izala movement there. Women’s attendance at these classes not only contributed to the introduction of the Izala’s underlying concepts but it also relates to theoretical debates concerning women’s autonomy and authority within Islam.]


[This paper traces the origins of the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria (MSSN). It draws a picture of the religious climate of the country during the early days of the emergence of the Society and enumerates the various activities and programs through which the Society pursued its objectives. It describes stages through which the Society passed. Given the dearth of scholarship on the subject, the paper relies also on oral information collected from credible individuals who were both eyewitnesses and dramatis personae in the persecution that stimulated the formation of the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria. The paper also employs a historical analysis. It restricts itself to the first three decades of the Society's emergence. It concludes that the objectives of the Society were achieved in that period.]


[This article provides a historical account and analysis of the origin of the concept of citizenship from the Greek city states, the Roman republic, the Christian Empire, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance period, the Enlightenment, and from the age of Pope Leo XII to Pope John XXIII. Such an account and critical analysis will help appreciate what happened in the past in order to open up new understandings of the concept in the present.]


Samwine, Nathan Iddrisu, 2006, *The Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950 and its Effect upon Muslims and Muslim-Christian Relations*. Berlin, etc.: LIT Verlag


[This article addresses the overwhelmingly negative experience and feeling of some Setswana men who serve under female leaders in the church. They claim that their patriarchal culture and religion is defied by laws of equality that encourage female leadership. They substantiate their views by quoting 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 and 1 Timothy 2:12–14 in addition to a Setswana proverb, ‘Tsa etelwla pele ke e namagadi di wela ka lengope’ [those who are led by a female leader fall into dongas]. In the light of this situation an intensive study is paramount to people who have an androcentric concept of religion and culture regarding the need for an
egalitarian concept and constructive interpretation of Bible passages, Setswana proverbs and idioms regarding the inevitability of female leadership.


[There are Christians who consider bewitchment possible, despite a belief in God. This being the case, the question that arises is, ‘What does the Bible teach in this regard’? The most compelling evidence for the existence of witchcraft is its mention in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The interpretation of its teachings on witchcraft differ greatly. This article identifies from a historical-grammatical exegetical point of view biblical principles on witchcraft that could be set as guidelines for addressing witchcraft-related matters and to obtain a clearer picture on Scripture’s teachings regarding witchcraft.]


[The aim of this volume is to illustrate religion’s ambivalent power in Africa while suggesting new directions in the study of religion, conflict, and peace studies, with a specific focus on sub-Saharan Africa. The contributors adopt an ethnographic approach, often focusing on mundane manifestations of both conflict and peace, and in so doing draw attention to the ambiguities and ambivalences of conflict and peace in everyday life. The volume focuses on the extent to which everyday conflict contributes to subsequently larger and more highly visible clashes. The volume shows how peace is conceptualized and negotiated in daily life, often in ways that are counterintuitive and anything but peaceful. It uses African case studies to confront assumptions about the nature of the relationships among religion, conflict, and peace.]


[This paper studies the historical background of the order, its various sub-groups, discussing their peculiar characteristics as well as intra-relations within the groups.]


[This study presents extracts from three Arabic manuscripts amongst Ilorin Şūfī writers. It highlights major themes in the Şūfī literature generally and then specifically points out samples of works produced on some of the themes. The themes identified and briefly analyzed are Madh Nabiyy (Prophetic Eulogy), Madh r-Rijāl (panegyric of Şūfī Shuyukh and Masters), a’t-Tawassul wa’l-Istighathah (Fervent plea for help). The manuscripts studied are in both poetry and prose. The objective of the study is to bring into limelight the Arabic manuscripts of selected Şūfīs in Ilorin. The study is based on the analysis of manuscripts in circulation among Arabic scholars and on data collected from private libraries of Muslim scholars. The research reveals that Ilorin can be projected as a Şūfī city of great potentials.]


[Africa is a region where the Christian faith shows unprecedented growth and vitality. Yet it is also a place of unparalleled suffering. African believers must grapple with the awesome transformation presence of Christ and the frequently devastating conditions in which he appears. Their efforts to reconcile this seeming incongruity have initiated important theological discussions that have resonated around the globe. This book provides an introduction to the wealth of African theologies and the major questions they raise. Topics range from biblical interpretation to spirituality and ethics, from Pentecostalism and African Instituted Churches to evil and suffering, from feminist theory to Christian identity and ethnicity.]


[The author defines the term *avatar* and traces the origins and evolution of Hindu deities through the various Hindu scriptures. This study argues that there was a decline in certain Vedic deities, a rise to prominence of other ‘unimportant’ deities and the appearance of again other deities not mentioned in the Vedas.]


[Public Islam and Muslim publics provide a useful framework for understanding how technology and new social and political contexts have impacted discourses of religion in the public sphere. This article proposes that scholarly attention on Muslim publics has been guided by the different impacts of Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Jürgen Habermas. Smith’s theory of refraction has focused attention on the production of Islam(s), while Habermas’s work has focussed attention on the production of new values for democratic politics. Muslim publics in Africa and elsewhere point to a diversity of engagements that call for more critical reflection and analysis. This article suggests that politics and Islamization are the main preoccupations of Muslim public debates in Africa, and should be the focus of comparative and historical analysis.]


Wijsen, Frans, 2013, ‘“There are Radical Muslims and Normal Muslims”: An Analysis of the Discourse on Islamic Extremism’, in Religion 43, 1: 70-88

[In this article a multi-perspective and poly-methodical model for discourse analysis is developed and tested by analysis of the data generated through focus-group discussions on Muslim–Christian relations in Tanzania and Indonesia. By doing so, the author aims to demonstrate the use and usefulness of sociocognitive discourse analysis in religious studies. First he outlines and refines an approach to discourse analysis based on Norman Fairclough. Next he describes how he uses this approach in his fieldwork, focusing on discourses on Muslim extremists in Tanzania and Indonesia. Finally he concludes that the prospects of sociocognitive discourse analysis look promising and discusses some controversial issues that yet have to be resolved.]


[One Foot in Heaven conflates two main perspectives on women propagated by the Islamist government of Sudan since its inception in 1989: as mothers and wives within the walls of their compounds. Central are the biographic narratives of two working women in Kebkabiya, a town in Darfur, each belonging to a different class: low-class market women and highly esteemed female teachers. Based on anthropological research (1990-1995) the author analyses the narratives as part of the multi-layered context in which these were performed – and of which the author also formed part. She shows how these women constructed identities while negotiating the Islamist moral discourse on gender in a period of ethnic conflict, religious transformation and the waging of the first Gulf-war.]

Assistant Webmaster: Jan G. Platvoet, Gildenring 52, 3981 JG Bunnik, The Netherlands. Phone: +31 (30) 656.2680 E-mail: jeplatvoet@hetnet.nl. Webpage: http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=162

Bulletin Editor: Lovemore Togarasei, Dept. of Theology & Religious Studies, University of Botswana, PO Box 0022, Gaborone, Botswana. Phone: +267 712.22.543; Fax: +267.318.5098. E-mail: ltogarasei@yahoo.com. Webpage: http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=323

Bulletin Editor: Oyeronke Olademo, Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, PMB 1515, Ilorin, Nigeria. Phone: +234 -7060885824; +234 -8059233925 (home). E-mail: wuraolaanike@yahoo.com

Publications Officer: J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Trinity Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 48, Legon, Accra, Ghana. Phone: +233-21-500541 (office) +233-20-8151936 (Cell). E-mail: asagyadu@hotmail.com Webpage: http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=451

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

East Africa: Damaris Seleina Parsitau, Lecturer, Dept of Philosophy & Religious Studies, Egerton University, PO Box 536, Njoro, Kenya. Phone: +254 722 281 426; cell phone: +254-722-281-426; E-mail: damarisseleina@yahoo.com. Webpage: http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=404

Southern Africa: Pratap Kumar, School of Religion & Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000, South Africa. Phone: +27.31-563-8966 (home); +27.31-260-7539 (office); Fax: +27.31-260-7286 E-mail: penumalap@ukzn.ac.za Webpages: http://www.sorat.ukzn.ac.za/religion/kumar.doc http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=415

West Africa: David O. Ogungbile, Senior Lecturer, Depr of Religious Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University (O.A.U.), P. O. Box 1950. Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria 220005. Phone: +234 (0) 703.371.8844; +234 (0) 807.072.1710; Fax: +234.857 928.7724. E-mail: dogungbile1@yahoo.com ; Webpages: http://ogungbile.net/index.html ; http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=362


North America: Esther Acolatse, Assistant Professor of the Practice of Pastoral Theology and World Christianity, Duke Divinity School, Box 90968, Durham, NC 27708-0968, USA, Phone: +1 (919) 660-3573. E-mail: eacolatse@div.duke.edu Webpage: http://divinity.duke.edu/academics/faculty/esther-acolatse
THE AIMS OF THE AASR

The AASR was founded in 1992 for the purpose of promoting the academic study of religions in Africa, and the study of the religions of Africa worldwide, through the international collaboration of all scholars whose research has a bearing on the study of these religions. AASR is a regional affiliate of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) since 1995.

AASR aims to stimulate the academic study of religions of Africa, in particular in Africa itself but also globally, in the following ways:

• By providing a forum for multilateral communications between scholars of the religions of Africa;
• By facilitating the exchange of resources and information;
• By encouraging the development of linkages and research contacts between scholars and institutions in Africa, as well as between scholars in Africa and those overseas;
• By developing publishing opportunities particularly for scholars based in Africa;
• By establishing a travel fund to enable scholars to attend academic conferences both in Africa and overseas;
• By organising conferences in Africa on topics relevant to scholars of the religions of Africa and panels on the religions of Africa in IAHR and other conferences held outside Africa;
• By publishing a bi-annual AASR Bulletin and maintaining an AASR internet site (http://www.a-asr.org) as major means of communication between scholars of the religions of Africa around the world;
• By maintaining an online directory of scholars in the field of the religions of Africa who have joined the AASR at http://www.a-asr.org/index.php?id=252