

---

THE  
AFRICAN  
ASSOCIATION  
FOR  
THE  
STUDY  
OF  
RELIGIONS



---

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Chairperson:** Prof. Jacob Olupona, University of California, Davis, African-American and African Studies Program, Davis, California, 95616, U. S. A.

### Regional Representatives



**East and Central Africa:** Mary Getui, P. O. Box 52979, Nairobi, Kenya. Fax. 254- 2- 726976

**North America: Dr.** Simeon Ilesanmi, Wake Forest University., Department of Religion, Winston-Salem, NC 27109, USA

**West Africa:** Dr. Dan Fulani, University of Jos; Prof. Friday Mbon, University of Calabar, Nigeria.

**Southern Africa:** Prof. Abdulkader I. Tayob, Dept. of Religious Studies, University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch 7700, South Africa.

**Europe:** Prof. Gerrie ter Haar, Dept. of Anthropology, Utrecht University, P.O Box 80140, 3508 TC Utrecht. The Netherlands.

The editors of the newsletters welcome any contributions and comments. Please submit entries to Gerrie ter Haar or Abdulkader Tayob, or any of the regional representatives who will pass them on. We would prefer, wherever possible, your contributions on computer disk format. E-mail messages may be sent to [tayob@socsci.uct.ac.za](mailto:tayob@socsci.uct.ac.za). The information supplied in the Newsletter is accurate to the best of our knowledge. We, however, do not take responsibility for errors and omissions.

## **CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS**

Jacob K. Olupona

This edition of our newsletter has much good-news and let me offer my congratulations to several of the members of the Executive Committee who have achieved significant feats in their academic career. Abdulkader Tayob's book *Islam in South Africa* has recently been published by the University of Florida Press in association with the AASR. Simeon Ilesanmi has been offered a Rockefeller Fellowship at Princeton University, New Jersey. Gerrie te Haar has been appointed to a professorship of Religion, Human Rights and Social Change at the Institute of Social Studies, the Hague. I also congratulate Ulrich Berner for successfully supervising two Nigerian students, Afe Adogame and Justus Akin Omoyajowo, both of whom have completed their Ph. D. dissertations at the University of Bayreuth, Germany. Adogame's work on the Celestial Church of Christ published by Peter Lang is mentioned in this newsletter. These are signs that the AASR is making significant progress.

My visit to Nigeria in December 1998 was a great success. The highlight of the visit was a one day symposium organized by the AASR and held at the Institute of African Studies, Ibadan. One of the several key issues that came out of this meeting is the need to develop centers of excellence in religious studies research in African Universities. There is no doubt that facilities for post-graduate training are lacking (books and journals). Such centers of excellence, attached to departments of religious studies, humanities and social science programs, will house a library, documentation room, and other research facilities such as computers, etc. The center will also sponsor research and teaching fellowships for scholars to engage in short and long term visits in Africa.

The French Institute for Research in Africa attached to the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan is a good example of such a center. The French Institute was set up by the French government to support research in the Social Sciences and the Humanities and to promote collaboration between scholars in France and English-speaking Africa. I look forward to the time when the AASR will also be able to sponsor summer teaching programs in African Universities. Such programs, organized by senior scholars from our association will provide opportunities for the post-graduate students and junior scholars in African Universities to interact with AASR senior scholars, to learn innovative methodologies and theories, and discuss new publications that may have positive impact on their works. Let me hear from you on how best to go about achieving these new goals.



## **PUBLICATIONS**

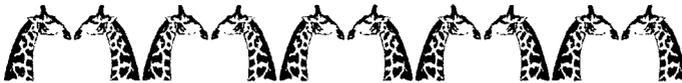
David Westerlund

The fourth volume in the AASR series Religions of Africa, *Islam in South Africa: Mosques, Imams and Sermons* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999) by Abdulkader Tayob, has now appeared. Focusing on two different regions of South Africa, the Cape in the south and Transvaal in the north, Tayob studies the Islamic institutions of each, surveying their history, placing them in context and tracing their development over the last 200 years, from the first European colony to the first democratic elections. Tayob analyses the sermons of South Africa's imams as expressions of the country's Islamic faith. He argues that the sermons function both as symbols of the Word of God and as venues for contextual interpretations of the Quran. The unusual character of South Africa, he maintains, has shaped the country's Islamic

institutions and helped define its Muslim identity. Tayob interprets the symbols of Islam, the overly politicized dimensions of South African Islamic life and the sacred spaces within each community.

Some complimentary AASR copies of Tayob's book will be distributed to Africa. In the autumn of 1999 another AASR sponsored publication on Islam in southern Africa will be published. This is James Amanze's research report *Islam in Botswana: Past and Present 1882-1995*. Amanze reconstructs the history of Islam in Botswana from its inception in 1882, but focuses primarily on the post-independent period. During this time Muslims engaged themselves more actively in the task of spreading their faith, particularly in Gaborone. Among other things, the study provides detailed accounts of Muslim organisations, including women's associations, and the socio-economic programmes they have initiated.

Amanze's work will be published in a European research report series, but a good number of copies will be distributed in Africa, especially in Botswana, too. Hopefully, it will also be possible to publish an edition of this study in that country. Considering the limited attention that research on Islam in Africa has previously paid to the southern part of the continent, these two volumes are particularly welcome.



## **MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 1998/99**

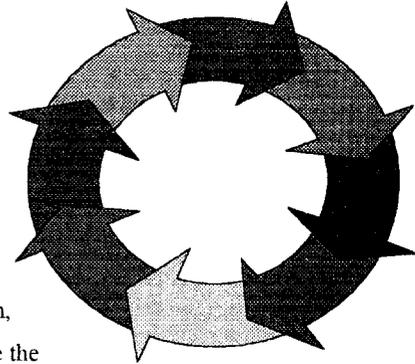
Simeon Ilesanmi

I am using this medium to remind all AASR members in general, and those in North America in particular, to pay your membership dues for the 1998/99 academic year. The current amount for faculty members is \$50.00 and \$25.00 for students. These

dues help defray the cost of printing and publishing the newsletter as well as support the travel and publication funds for our colleagues in Africa. Please make your check or money order payable to "AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS" care of your regional treasurer/representative. Those in North America should send theirs to: Simeon O. Ilesanmi, Department of Religion , Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC 27109, USA. My new address after August 1999 is: The University Center for Human Values, Princeton University, Louis Marx Hall, Princeton, NJ 08544-1006, USA.

## CONFERENCES TO BE HELD

The Association for the Study of Religion (Southern Africa) will be holding its annual Congress on 29-30 November 1999 (Monday & Tuesday) at the University of Cape Town. Papers are invited on any topic, but it is the intention of the organizers to plan sessions on topics relating to the end of the millennium, migration and globalization. The congress will precede the meeting of the WORLD PARLIAMENT of RELIGIONS, Dec 1-8. Cape Town Good Hope Centre. It will serve as a useful "curtain raiser" for the meetings of the World Parliament, in which a number of ASRSA members will also be involved. Abdulkadar Tayob, our host at Cape Town University, has made arrangements for hostel accommodation (B & B) at R121 per person per day, provided that there are 15 or more persons. Please contact him directly before September 1, 1999, at (<tayob@socsci.uct.ac.za>). For general information on the congress, please contact the secretary, Dr I. Chetty at <ichetty@pan.uzulu.ac.za> or Prof. A. Song (president)



at <asong@pan.uzulu.ac.za> or fax: 0351-93159. Please visit ASRSA's website for updates: <http://www.uzulu.ac.za/the/bibs/sys/asrsa.htm>

The **OTSSA and OTW** (Dutch Oud Testamentische Werkgeselschap) Congress will take place from 25-27 August 1999 at the University of Pretoria in the Theology building. Papers will be presented in English, Afrikaans and Dutch. The congress fee is R180-00 payable before 1 August 1999. Cheques should be made payable to: OTWSA/OTSSA - UP. For more information, contact: DEPARTMENT OF BIBLICAL STUDIES Nina Grundlingh, E-mail: [ngrundli+AEA-ccnet.up.ac.za](mailto:ngrundli+AEA-ccnet.up.ac.za)

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NEW AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES: AFRICA, AUSTRALASIA, & THE WIDER WORLD AT THE END OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY PERTH, AUSTRALIA, 26-28 Nov. 1999** 22nd Annual & International Conference of the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (**AFSAAP '99**). Conference WEB site:

<http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/ASCWA/conference99/>

Taking place at the end of the 20th century, "The Age of Extremes," this international conference offers an excellent opportunity to look critically at the African encounter with the twentieth century and with the wider world. Occurring when the nature of African studies is itself under review, it is also a suitable time to take stock of the past and present study of Africa, and its future prospects. The conference will be held at St. George's College, University of Western Australia (UWA), Perth, from Friday 26th to Sunday 28th of November 1999. It will also constitute the 22nd Annual Conference of the African Studies Association of Australasia & the Pacific (AFSAAP), and be opened by the Vice-Chancellor of UWA,

Professor Deryck Schreuder, himself a major contributor to African historiography and a past President of the Association. Papers are invited on any aspect of Africa, as well as on comparative approaches. The overall conference theme is broad, but there is ample room for specialized contributions, with papers reflecting the different disciplines and wide-ranging interests of academics, professionals, and postgraduates, as well as the wider diplomatic, government, aid/NGO, media, cultural, labor/business, and African communities.

Conference panels confirmed or foreshadowed [this list is not exhaustive)

African Art;	African Churches;	African History;
African Literatures;	Africans in Australia/Australians in Africa;	Anti-Apartheid Movements;
Anthropology;	Archaeology, African and Comparative;	Australasian-African Relations;
Cultural Studies;	Education	Environmental issues;
Gender Issues;	Globalization;	Human Rights/Indigenous Rights;
Literary Genres and Oral Literature in Africa;	Medicine, and Public Health;	Media, Information, Libraries and Publishing;
Missions;	Postcolonialisms;	Religions in Africa;

Papers are welcome in any of these, or other pertinent areas. Titles due 15 June; abstracts by 31 August, to either of the co-organizers:

Professor Cherry Gertzel, School of Social Sciences and Asian Languages, Curtin University of Technology', GPO Box U1987, Perth, W.A. 6845.AUSTRALIA.. E-mail: [gertzel@spectrum.curtin.edu.au](mailto:gertzel@spectrum.curtin.edu.au); Dr. Peter Limb (In Africa July 8 - August 5), Reid Library, University of Western Australia., Nedlands, W.A. 6907, AUSTRALIA. E-mail: [plimb@library.uwa.edu.au](mailto:plimb@library.uwa.edu.au); Fax: +61 08 9380 1012

## NEWS

REPORT OF THE **AASR**  
**SYMPOSIUM** AND  
WORKSHOP HELD AT THE  
INSTITUTE OF CHURCH AND  
SOCIETY, IBADAN, DECEMBER  
15, 1999.



On Dec. 15, 1998, a one-day symposium on "The Academic Study of Religion in Nigeria" in conjunction with a workshop on the role and activities of the AAAR and the IAHR was organized under the auspices of the AASR at The Institute of Church and Society in Nigeria. In attendance were scholars and graduate student members of the AASR in Nigeria, especially those from Western and Northern Universities. There were 43 participants from 13 Universities and institutions of higher learning: the University of Ibadan; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife; Ondo State University, Ado-Ekiti; Nigerian Baptists Seminary, Ogbomosho; Ogun State University, Ago Iwoye; the University of

Ilorin; the University of Jos; the Dominican Institute, Ibadan; the United Missionary Theological Seminary, Ilorin; and the University of Uyo. Professor Jacob Olupona from the University of California, Davis, convened the meeting organized by Dr. Deji Ayegboyin and Mrs. Banke Akintunde of the University of Ibadan.

The symposium began with a keynote address, "The Academic Study of Religion in Nigeria: Past, Present and Future," delivered by Professor S. O. Abogunrin, Head, Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan. In the first plenary session chaired by Dr. Sola Olukunle, Director of the Institute of Church and Society and Senior Lecturer at The University of Ibadan, papers were presented by Dr. Andrew Igenosa, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, on Religious Studies Curriculum and a second paper by Dr. M. Y. Nabofa, University of Ibadan, "Post Graduate Studies in Religion." Moderated by Professor Joe Kenny, University of Ibadan, the second session consisted of four presentations: (1) Dr. Chris Manus, "Re-reading Androcentric Religious Language of the Sacred Tales of Judeo-Christian, Islamic, and African Traditional Religions with Insight from Gender Studies," (2) Dr. N. Y. Nabofa, "Current Issues in the Study of African Traditional Religion," (3) Dr. Matthew Ojo, "Current Research Interest in African Christianity," and (4) Dr. A. Dzugba, "Current Issues in the Sociology of Religion and Social Ethics."

In addition to these papers, brief presentations were given on a variety of topical issues, including: African Feminism by Dr. Oyeronke Olajubu, University of Ilorin; "The Need for Christian Scholars of Islam" by Professor Joe Kenny, and "Tension between Religion and Theology" by Dr. Olukunle and Professor Olupona.

The afternoon workshop was devoted to AASR history and activities. Professor Olupona who conducted this workshop observed that the IAHR, under whose auspices AASR functions, took a bold step in Harare in 1992 to form a permanent association

to encourage the academic study of religion in Africa and to establish strong partnership between Africans and non-Africans studying religions in Africa. He expressed disappointment that the Association has not been able to function as expected in Nigeria. One of the problems that the association must grapple with is the lack of an effective communication network.

Presided over by Dr. I. S. Aderibigbe, Lagos State University, a general business meeting followed Professor Olupona's discussion. At the end of the meeting a number of decisions and suggestions were made. To facilitate communication among AASR members, Nigeria should be divided into three zones, with separate coordinators for each zone. Consequently, three coordinators were appointed: Dr. Dan Fulani, University of Jos, Coordinator of the Northern Zone; Dr. Deji Ayegboyin, Coordinator of the Western Zone; and Professor Friday Mbon, University of Calabar, Coordinator of the Eastern Zone.

It was suggested that a membership drive should be vigorously pursued and that there should be a journal of religion in Africa, based in Nigeria, because the existing journal in England is not within the reach of scholars in Nigeria and Africa. Participants expressed the need to explore avenues in Europe and America for sabbatical leaves for members and opportunities for postgraduate training for junior scholars. Finally, it was felt that the Association should explore the possibility of organizing annual conferences in Nigeria. Professor Olupona promised to discuss these concerns with AASR members abroad. The symposium and workshop ended with a vote of thanks to AASR members in Europe and America whose donation of \$1,000 made the symposium possible.

Report from the **African Religions Group** of the American Academy of Religion meeting, held in Orlando, FL, November 21-24, 1998. The group

organized two different sessions at the AAR meeting. The first session was entitled "Reinterpreting Gender in African Religions: Women and men in Conversation." Four papers, addressing this general theme, were presented. Madipoane Masenya (University of South Africa) spoke on "Redefining Womanhood in an African Context"; Elias K. Bongmba (Rice University) on "On Love: Literary Images of a Phenomenology of Love in Ngugi Wa Thiongo"; Deidre Crumbley (North Carolina State University) on "Holy Power-Woman Power: Gender Roles in Three Indigenous African Churches"; and Julian (University of Arizona) on "Where are the Women?: African Religious Scholarship and Gender Consciousness." Three scholars addressed the theme of the second session "Dimensions of the Yoruba Orisa Osun." Jacob K. Olupona (University of California, Davis) focused on "Orisa Osun: Sacred kingship and civil religion in an African City"; Mei Mei Sanford (Drew University) on "Living Waters: The Orisa Osun in the lives of contemporary Nigerian Christians"; and Joseph M. Murphy (Georgetown University) on "Yeye Ciachita: Osun as Saint in Cuban Santeria." Both sessions were well attended and all the presentations received rave reviews from several participants at the meeting.

## **THE AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY**

**PROJECT:** UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH by Dr James L Cox,  
Coordinator (1993-1998)

At the end of 1998, the African Christianity Project (ACP), a major research project located in the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, University of Edinburgh, came to its conclusion. Since its inception in 1992 through funds provided by the Pew Charitable Trusts in Philadelphia, ACP addressed specifically the need for thorough and competent academic studies into Christian life and communities in sub-Saharan Africa and their subsequent impact on world Christianity. During the seven years of its life, ACP comprised a growing consortium of departments and institutions of theology and religious studies in Africa and Europe.

In 1993, when Dr James Cox was appointed as full-time coordinator, the University of Edinburgh forged links with the Universities of Malawi, Zimbabwe and Botswana in southern Africa, and with the University of Sierra Leone and the Akrofi-Christaller Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology in Ghana. In 1994, the Religion Programme of the University Twinning Project in Utrecht University in the Netherlands, with Dr Gerrie ter Haar as coordinator, became a participating institution, and brought with it the Department of Religion and Theology in the University of Namibia and the Centre of African Studies in Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique. In 1996, when major funding for a further three years was provided by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Department of Religions in the University of Ghana, Legon, joined the consortium as a partner institution with the Akrofi-Christaller Centre.

Between 1992 and 1999, the Project, although maintaining its principal coordinator in Edinburgh, evolved toward a program centered in and developed by African institutions. In 1996, an International Committee was formed consisting of representatives from all of the participating institutions to monitor and oversee the overall Project and to become the body with which the coordinator worked closely. During the same period, ACP developed seven major programmatic areas: 1) regional conferences in Africa and in Edinburgh; 2) seminars in Edinburgh and the link institutions on African Christianity; 3) research fellowships in Edinburgh for academics working in any African university or theological institution; 4) research fellowships in African universities by members of staff in the linked institutions in Africa; 5) an African theology lectureship in Edinburgh; 6) a major cumulative bibliography and resource sharing program (for a full accounting of this project, see the report below by Mrs Elizabeth Leitch, ACP librarian); 7) publications.

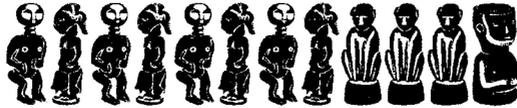
Conference themes during the life of the Project included: Peace and development in southern Africa (Malawi 1993); Rites of passage in contemporary Africa (Zimbabwe 1994); Christianity and nation-building in West Africa (Ghana 1994); Assessing research on African Christianity (Edinburgh 1995); Christian encounter with traditional culture (Sierra Leone 1997); and Christianity and gender issues in African traditions (Harare 1998). Publications of four books directly attributable to the Project's conferences have resulted or are in press. In addition, scholarly monographs, journal articles and teaching resources have resulted from academics participating in the Project's activities. In addition to promoting research on Christianity in Africa, the Project strengthened regional links among African universities, established a network for collaborative research in Africa and Europe and encouraged young African scholars to pursue in-depth studies.

A number of discrete research projects in Africa are being developed as direct spin-offs of the African Christianity Project. The University of Ghana at Legon has proposed a series of research seminars examining Christian-Islamic relations in West Africa. The Universities of Zimbabwe and Malawi are considering plans to develop a major research project on the religious dimensions to the AIDS pandemic in southern Africa. Research into the phenomenon of witchcraft is now underway in a co-operative project between the Utrecht University, the University of the North in Pietersburg, South Africa, the University of Botswana and the University of Namibia. In addition, the sharing of resources through the cumulative bibliography and scanned archival materials is being coordinated in Edinburgh in co-operation with partner institutions in Africa.

The continued life of the African Christianity Project can be witnessed by these creative projects which have resulted directly from the connections established by ACP among the linked institutions. This continues the devolution of the Project to its

---

logical conclusion where research on Africa is originated in Africa and designed by those closest to the conditions there. That ACP has made such research possible by creating networks for co-operative research through conferences, research exchanges, consultations, shared resources and publications testifies to its value and justifies the enormous energy so many dedicated people have put into it.



## **AFRICA BIBLIOGRAPHY PROJECT** by

Elizabeth Leitch

From 1992 to 1998 the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World (CSCNWW) of the University of Edinburgh coordinated the African Christianity Project, a major research project aimed at enhancing global research on the understanding of Christianity in Africa. A Joint Documentation and Archives Programme formed part of this project. Although the African Christianity Project finished in November 1998, it leaves lasting resources for the use of researchers into African Christianity.

There were three strands to the Joint Documentation and Archives Project: the creation of a bibliographic database; sharing of duplicate resources; electronic scanning of unpublished documents

A computer database was created in Edinburgh, holding bibliographic records for books, pamphlets and journal articles, together with unpublished documents such as theses and seminar papers, on topics related to African Christianity. Although this is called the African Christianity Bibliography, its coverage is much wider than the title

might indicate, as it also includes material about the social, political and cultural environment in which Christianity sits. Subjects covered include, History of Mission, African Theologies, African Independent Churches, Women in Society and the Church, Church-State Relations, Islam, Primal Religions, Education, Healing, Liturgy, and Justice and Human Rights. Over 10,000 items are listed on the database, mainly books and pamphlets together with student theses and dissertations, some periodical articles and archive material. The database not only lists material held at CSCNWW, but also includes records contributed by ACP link institutions in Africa for material in their own institutions and in other centers within their countries. Currently the database holds records from eight countries and forty-eight individual collections. The success of this part of the project owes a great deal to the enthusiasm and commitment of the local contacts in each area, who not only provided bibliographic records for titles in their own collections, but also took the responsibility for gathering information from other libraries and collections in their countries.

A printed version of the Bibliography, containing 4000 items was published in January 1996, and the database can also be searched on the Internet. It can be accessed via the African Christianity Project Web page at <http://www.div.ed.ac.uk/centre/african.htm>, or directly via Telnet. In either case, users should register with CSCNWW to obtain a password. The database was also published on CD-ROM in late 1998. Copies were distributed to all the link institutions, and it is now available for sale. (Please see below if you are interested in purchasing a copy.)

In addition to providing information about resources for research, the Programme also sought to make some of the resources themselves more widely available. This was accomplished through the sharing of duplicates and through the electronic scanning project. Duplicates in the CSCNWW collection were listed on a database from which

lists were regularly printed and sent to the link institutions and others expressing an interest. Almost 1000 books and pamphlets were made available in this way. No charge was made for this service to link institutions, but others were expected to pay for postage. As some books are still available, anyone interested in seeing a duplicates list should contact CSCNWW.

During 1996 and 1997 I visited link institutions in Africa in order to scan unpublished documents in their collections on to computer. In all 2448 pages of information were scanned. The better quality English language documents were converted to text files, while the remaining documents were retained as image files. Two hundred and twenty documents were copied onto the same CD-ROM which holds the African Christianity Bibliography so that each link institution could have a copy of the documents scanned in its own and the other institutions. From Ghana there are the letters of a missionary working on an Islam in Africa project, documents from the Afrikania religion, documents about traditional religion, and documents from the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. From Zimbabwe there is a small collection of student dissertations on Christianity and traditional culture. From Malawi there is a larger collection of shorter papers by students and researchers covering topics such as the history of Christianity in Malawi, Christianity and culture, Church and state, traditional religion, and Islam in Malawi. From Mozambique there is a collection of letters and communications from the Catholic bishops, spanning the period from the 1970s to the 1990s, some government documents, and some secondary material about history of mission, church and state, and traditional religious practices. From both Namibia and Sierra Leone there is a very small number of documents, reflecting the fact that the visits to these countries related principally to gathering bibliographic information. From Namibia there are papers of the Christian Centre in SWA/Namibia, examples of student work from a seminary, and two dissertations about traditional practices in

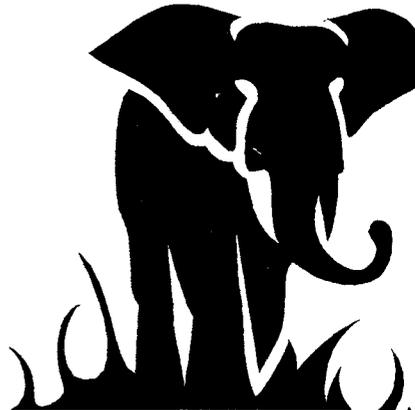
Uganda by a Ugandan working in Namibia. From Sierra Leone there are short papers dealing with the role of Christianity in national reconciliation and some examples of Bible college students' work.

If you are interested in searching the African Christianity Bibliography on the Internet, in the duplicates list, or in purchasing a copy of the CD-ROM\*, please contact me, Liz Leitch, at CSCNWW, New College, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH1 2LX, Scotland, or by E Mail at [l.leitch@ed.ac.uk](mailto:l.leitch@ed.ac.uk). I would also be very happy to share information about my work on the project with anyone contemplating or engaged in a similar undertaking. The African Christianity Project CD-ROM is for sale at a special introductory price of £30 including post and packing. Cheques, in sterling, should be made payable to African Christianity Project.

## PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

The University of Namibia has promoted Associate Professor, Christo Lombard, to the position of a full Professor and Dr Paul John Isaak, a Senior Lecturer, has been promoted to Associate Professor.

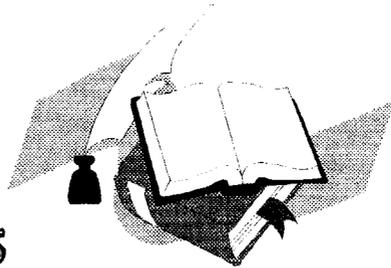
Dr. Gerrie ter Haar has been appointed Professor of Religion, Human Rights and Social Change at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. This is a new and unique Chair which is funded by two of the main NGO's in the Netherlands and the international World Conference on Religion and Peace.



Professor Jacob K. Olupona will be Dividson Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Humanities at Florida International University, Miami, in the Fall term of 1999. He will convene an International conference on 'From Local to Global: Rethinking Yoruba Religion for the next Millennium', in Dec 6-12, 1999.

Simeon O. Ilesanmi won the Laurance S. Rockefeller fellowship for 1999-2000. He will be a Rockefeller fellow at the University Center for Human Values, Princeton University, from September 1999 to June 2000. He has also been awarded tenure and promoted to the rank of Associate Professor by Wake Forest University.

Dr. Andrew S. Oyalana of the University of florin, Nigeria, will be a Visiting Associate Professor at Wake Forest University in the Fall of 1999. Professor Ogbu U. Kalu has been a visiting professor at the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, since the beginning of Fall semester, 1999.



## **PUBLICATIONS**

Adogame, Afeosemime U., *Celestial Church of Christ: The politics of cultural identity in a West African prophetic-charismatic movement.* Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1999.

Amanze, J.N., *African Christianity in Botswana: The case of African Independent Churches.* Gweru: Mambo Press, 1998.

- Chakanza, J.C., *Voices of preachers in protest: The ministry of two Malawian prophets: Elliott Kamwana and Wilfred Gudu*. Blantyre: CLAIM, 1998.
- Chakanza, J.C. & Kenneth R. Ross, *Religion in Malawi: An annotated bibliography*. Blantyre: CLAIM, 1998.
- Du Toit, C.W. & J.S. Kruger (eds.), *Multireligious education in South Africa: Problems and perspectives in a pluralistic society*. Pretoria: UNISA, 1998.
- Kane, Ousmane & Jean-Louis Triaud, *Islam et Islamismes au sud du Sahara*. Paris: Karthala.
- Kasanene, Peter, *Religious Ethics in Africa*. BNS, Uganda, 1998.
- Spear, Thomas & Isaria N. Kimambo (eds.), *East African expressions of Christianity*. Oxford: James Currey, 1999.
- Verstraelen, Frans J., *Zimbabwean Realities and Christian responses: Contemporary aspects of Christianity in Zimbabwe*. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1998.
- Peter B. Clarke (ed.), *New Trends and Developments in African Religions* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998).
- Harvey J. Sindiam, *Religious and Political Ethics in Africa: A Moral Inquiry* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998).
- Audrey R. Chapman and Leonard S. Rubenstein (eds.), *Human Rights and Health: The Legacy of Apartheid* (Washington, DC: The American Association for the Advancement of Science and Physicians for Human Rights, 1998).

Deji Ayegboyin and S. Ademola Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: A Historical Perspective* (Lagos, Nigeria: Greater Heights Publications, 1997).

Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1997).

Pat Caplan, *African Voices, African Lives: Personal Narratives from a Swahili Village* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

David Hollenbach, S.J., "Solidarity, Development, and Human Rights: The African Challenge," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 26, 2 (Fall 1998): 305-317.



The **Journal of Religious Ethics** (JRE) assists in shaping and locating the advanced edge of scholarly work in religious ethics. The JRE is committed to publishing the very best scholarship in religious ethics, to fostering new work in neglected areas, and to stimulating exchange on significant issues. Neither a tradition-specific journal of social ethics nor a tradition-neutral journal of philosophical ethics, the JRE offers serious ethical reflection set in the context of specific religious traditions and communities. The journal seeks to publish essays in three domains: studies in comparative religious ethics, considerations of foundational conceptual and methodological issues, and historical studies of influential figures and texts.

Members who are interested in publishing in this journal should send their manuscripts to Professor Diane M. Yeager, General Editor, Theology Department, Georgetown

---

University, Washington, DC 20057-1135. Her email is [yeagerd@gunet.georgetown.edu](mailto:yeagerd@gunet.georgetown.edu). Manuscripts must represent original work that has not been previously published. Articles sent to the JRE should not be simultaneously under consideration by another publisher. .

*Now and in the Next Millennium, 199s-3000 CE: Assessing Africa's Scholarly Publishing Needs and Industry* - Updated and enlarged edition (1999). Edited by Peace Habomugisha, Dziedzorm R. Asafo, L. Njinya-Mujinya, Senyo J. Afele and Sope Maithufi. Published by the Journal of African Religion and Philosophy (JARP), Kampala, Uganda and RA-Global Communications, Ho, Ghana.

The book is a 240-page collection of articles from diverse scholars who are concerned about the publishing industry in Africa. The central argument in the whole book is to draw attention to the pitiable condition of the book and publishing industry in the developing world and particularly in Africa. This is framed in the context of the over-dependence of the African continent on external sources for its supply of reading matter. The authors take issue especially at the slow pace at which the dissemination of information through modern technology is advancing. They also lament the gradual speed at which the mind-set of much of Africa's intelligentsia is changing by looking to greener pastures in Europe and the Americas. The rate at which Africa is disadvantaged in terms of modern technology exacerbates its already awful situation. Much of the publishing about Africa by both indigenous Africans and foreign scholars is done outside the continent for the sheer crave for recognition.

An equally important issue also touched upon is foreign aid as it relates to publishing and its intended objective of development of the book industry. In a nutshell the book in its entirety throws a challenge to Africa, and to all others who have something to do with researching, writing and publishing about and in Africa.

This edition deals with current publishing issues relating not only to religion but also in any other field. The enlarged and updated edition comes with a fresh foreword by Habib Zaidi and preface by Kofi Anani. It includes new titles like 'African Women, Writing and Publishing: Problems and Prospects'; 'Landing in Rejectsville instead of Publishville'; and 'Economic and Behavioural Foundations'. It also includes expanded and improved versions of former articles such as 'Politics the Kingpin Africawide', and 'Strategies for Reshaping Africa 's Literary Publishing Industry'.

The book is an essential reading for all interested in the publishing concern about Africa. For orders please contact:

Dziedzorn R. Asafo, Uppsala University, Dept. of Theology, Box 1604, S-751 46 Uppsala, Sweden. Tel. +46 471 2294. Fax+46 126875 E-mail: Reuben.Asafo@teol.se

Leuben Njinya-Mujinya, Uppsala University, Dept. of Theology, Box 1604, S-751 46 Uppsala, Sweden. Tel. +46 18 12 75 23; Fax +46 12 68 75; E-mail: L.Njinya-Mujinya@teol.se



## FOCUS ON INSTITUTIONS

The **Institute of Social Studies** (ISS) is an international post-graduate school of policy-oriented, social science teaching and research whose diverse activities include teaching, interdisciplinary research and advisory work in the field of development studies. The establishment of this new Chair on Religion, Human

Rights and Social Change is expected to add a new dimension to the academic life and work of the Institute.

The Institute was founded by the universities of the Netherlands in 1952 and is one of the world's leading centers of academic learning, training and research in this field. Among its students are many Africans from a variety of countries. The ISS generates, accumulates and transfers knowledge on human aspects of economic and social change, with a focus on development and transition. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Institute is its interdisciplinary, pluralistic and comparative approach to the analysis of global and local issues in development. Academic staff are drawn from around the world, with 30% from developing countries and more than 50% from outside the Netherlands. Research at the ISS is directed towards key areas and topical issues in development studies. The Institute publishes research by staff and students. Publications include books, working papers and monographs. Its quarterly journal "Development and Change", published by Blackwell, is one of the field's top-ranking international journals.



## **UPDATES IAHR CONGRESS IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA, 5-12 AUG 2000**

18th QUINQUENNIAL CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS 5-12 August 2000, Durban, SOUTH AFRICA

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CONGRESS ACADEMIC PROGRAMME  
COMMITTEE, by Rosalind I. J. Hackett (rhackett@utk.edu).

Over 70 panels, symposia and roundtable proposals have been received to date. Several more are in the pipeline. Individual papers are currently being received and will be arranged into panels in the course of the next few months. A draft program will be available at the beginning of 2000.

The quality and range of academic contributions are extremely pleasing, and many relate well to the Congress theme: "History of Religions: Origins and Visions". Many renowned scholars in religious studies, as well as anthropology, sociology, art history, cultural studies, philosophy, archaeology, education, theology, church history, biblical studies, history, and legal studies have committed to attending the Congress. They will be coming from all over the world. Many are determined to take advantage of the IAHR's first Congress in Africa and are keen to show their support for the efforts of the South African organizers.

For the 18th Quinquennial Congress in Durban, we opted for a more open-ended structure than in previous years. Instead of relying on tradition- or area-specific categories, we wanted to encourage more multi-disciplinary, cross-cultural, comparative and thematic approaches. So far the experiment seems to have worked

wonders! A number of topics have emerged as strong focus areas in the panel and paper submissions:

religion and nature/ecology	religion and hunting
diasporic religion	religion and law/ human rights
indigenous peoples, indigenization	syncretism
visual religion, iconography, material culture/archaeology	religion and locality
gender and religion	religion and cognition
sacred vows	religion and advocacy, conversion
globalization	religion and conflict/ war
millennialism	religious education
religion and healing	cyberspace
religion and identity	philosophy of religion
mysticism/esotericism	comparativism, Eliade
history and enterprise of history of religions in varying contexts	

Several strong panels have been organized which pertain to religion in Africa. In addition to the more cross-cultural sessions, there are also panels on Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism, Taiwan, and Latin American religions. There will be a series of panels

organized by the South African Academy of Religion, and a panel organized by the International Connections Committee of the American Academy of Religion.

Three keynote addresses are planned followed by plenary sessions. The topics chosen are History of Religions, Religion and Human Rights, Religion and Public Education/Policy in South Africa. There will be a final plenary session with panelists discussing their opinions about future trends in the academic study of religion.

Several publishers are responding well to requests for support. Some have promised to attend and a few have even offered financial contributions or sponsorship in kind.

Publicity has been good concerning the Congress, aided by the electronic age we live in. A number of associations, listservs and journals have carried announcements of the Congress. The Congress brochure has been sent out widely and distributed at conferences.

The Programme Committee has been a great support. Several members have helped considerably in creative and evaluative ways. It has been exciting having a rapid response team situated in many far-flung corners of the world!

Several people have asked about late proposals since the deadline for panels has passed and all paper proposals are to be in by end of April 1999. **YOU MAY STILL SEND IN YOUR PANEL AND PAPER PROPOSALS. WE WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PLACE THEM, BUT NO GUARANTEES.** We want to be able to circulate a draft program in early 2000 so as to showcase the offerings and attract participants.

Even at this mid-stage of the program planning, I feel that I can assure IAHR members and non-members that this will be one of the most varied, interesting and intellectually stimulating international conferences you have ever attended.

For more information, also contact: Prof. Pratap Kumar, Director of the IAHR Congress, PO Box 1376, UMHLANGA ROCKS, Durban 4320, SOUTH AFRICA. Tel: 027-31-562-9461, 027-31-562-9416, Fax: 027-31-562-9945 Email: [velia@iafrica.com](mailto:velia@iafrica.com). Further details on Durban and the Congress (e.g. accommodation, transportation, registration fees, tourism, etc.) may be found on the CONGRESS WEBSITE: <http://www.udw.ac.za/iahr>.

First **AASR Conference in Africa**, Nairobi, 27-30 July 1999. Jan Platvoet.

The First AASR Conference in Africa will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 27 to 30 July 1999. It will be hosted by the Department of Religious Studies of Kenyatta University. It has been organised by its AASR Conference Committee on which serve Dr. Mary Getui, Mrs. Grace Wamue, Dr. Jonathan Gichaara, and Mr. Tobias Opido. It will be held in the Amani Conference Centre, run by Benedictine monks, on Thika Road, adjacent to St. Benedict's church, in Nairobi. In the tradition of the Benedictine monks, it has a Guest Master. His name is Father Peter Meienberg OSB (*ordo Sancti Benedicti*). The mail address of the Amani Centre is: PO Box 32102, Nairobi. It may be reached by telephone at + 254.2.80.26.97.

The theme of the conference is 'The Religions of East Africa in the Age of Globalization'. It is a conference by invitation only. Over two thirds of its participants of its roughly sixty participants, all the twenty paper presenters and the five main respondents will be from East Africa. The first purpose of this conference is to bring scholars of religions from all academic disciplines in the universities of East Africa researching the religions of East Africa together for surveying the developments in these religions, and in the study of these religions, in this age of globalization. The second purpose is to produce a general textbook on the full range of East African religions for

use in the universities of East Africa. It should also serve to present East African scholarship on these religions to the global academic community.

The program is as follows. The conference will be opened on Tuesday afternoon, 27 July, with an opening address by the Vice Chancellor of Kenyatta University, Professor George Eshiwani, and the keynote lecture, which will be delivered by Professor J.N. Mugambi (University of Nairobi).

On Wednesday morning, 28 July, there will be four papers on African Traditional Religions by Prof. I.J. Ongong'a (Kenya, 'Ethnographic and historical development of ATR'), Prof. Anatole B.A.T. Byaruhanga-Akiki (Uganda, 'Incorporation of ATR into other religion'), Mrs. Grace Wamue (Kenya, 'New developments within the teaching of ATR'), and Dr. Adam Chepkwony (Kenya, 'The teaching of ATR in Tertiary Institutions in East Africa'), with Dr. Laurenti Magesa (Tanzania) acting as general respondent.

The Wednesday afternoon will be devoted to Christianity in East Africa with again four papers by Dr. John Waligo (Uganda, 'Mainline Christian Churches'), Mrs. Philomena Mwaura (Kenya, 'African Instituted Churches'), Dr. F.R. Mwombeki (Tanzania, 'Dynamism of Christianity in Contemporary East Africa'), and Dr. Guthbert Omari (Tanzania, 'The Charismatic Churches'), with Prof. Peter Kanyandago (Uganda) acting as general respondent.

The subject of Thursday morning, 29 July, will be Islam in East Africa, with papers by Dr. David Sperling (Kenya, 'Historical development of Islam in East Africa'), Prof. Muhammad Bakari (Kenya, 'Islam and the Education System in East Africa'), Prof. Juma M.O. Mutupa (Tanzania, 'Relationship between Islam and Other Faiths in East Africa'), and Dr. Maria Walji (Kenya, 'New Developments in Teaching of Islam in East Africa'), with Dr. Dr. Anne Kubai serving as general respondent. Thursday af-

ternoon will be devoted, if the budget allows, to a conference outing, and/or to ASSR and other business meetings.

On Friday morning, 30 July, four papers will be presented on 'Oriental' (Indian and other Eastern) religions by Mr. Jacob Nandi (Kenya, 'Incorporation of Oriental Religions with Other Religions: the Case of Hare Krishna'), Dr. D. Misa (Kenya, 'Teaching Oriental Religions in Tertiary Institutions in East Africa'), Prof. Shashi Bali (Kenya, 'New Developments in Oriental Religions in East Africa') and Prof. G.P. Pokhariyal (Kenya, 'Ethnographic and Historical Development of Oriental Religions in East Africa'), with Prof. Douglas W. Wanita acting as general respondent to these four papers.

The subject of the Friday afternoon are 'religious' movements and developments which have recently emerged in East Africa with papers by Mr. Njuru Ng'ang'a (Kenya, 'Baha'i Faith in East Africa'), Dr. Alyward Shorter ('Emerging Religions in East Africa with Reference to Secularism'), Dr. Therese Tinkasiimire (Uganda, 'Emerging Religious Movements in East Africa with Reference to Ethics') and Dr. Waswa Mpaji (Uganda, 'The Lord's Army – Alice Lakwena') with Prof. Hannah Kinoti acting as general respondent.

The conference is meant to serve two more purposes. One is to assist the scholars of religions in East Africa to found an East African Association for the Study of Religions, that may promote scholarship in religions in East Africa and integrate it into the global community of scholars in religions by affiliation to the IAHR, hopefully in 2000 when the IAHR convenes for its first congress in Africa ever in Durban, South Africa. Prof. Armin Geertz, IAHR Secretary-General, will participate in this conference on behalf of the IAHR, which has granted this conference the status of Special Regional Conference and is also supporting it financially. The other purpose is for the

leadership of the AASR to meet and discuss policies for the coming period. The AASR Executive and some ten other AASR members have been admitted as participants. They will be mainly active as respondents to the papers presented.

Further information may be obtained from the two main organizers:

Dr. Mary Getui, AASR Regional Representative for East African and Chair-person of the Dept. of Religious Studies, Kenyatta University, P.O. Box 43844, Nairobi, Kenya.

Telephone: + 254.2.810.901-12. Fax: + 254.2.891.782. E-mail:

[getui@AfricaOnline.co.ke](mailto:getui@AfricaOnline.co.ke)

Dr. Jan G. Platvoet, AASR Vice President, Gildenring 52, 3981 JG Bunnik, The Netherlands. Tel./Fax: +31.30.656.2680. E-mail: [jgplatvoet@wxs.nl](mailto:jgplatvoet@wxs.nl)

## **IAHR AND NUMEN**

The African Association for the Study of Religions is affiliated to the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR). This information below brings readers up to date with significant changes.

At the IAHR Regional Conference held in May last year at Hildesheim Germany, a change has been announced of the managing editors of Numen, the official journal of the IAHR. The present managing editors, Prof. Hans G. Rippenberg (Bremen) and Prof. E. Thomas Lawson (Kalamazoo), act on behalf of an international editorial board consisting of the Executive Committee of the IAHR. The Editorial Board meets in conjunction with the annual Executive Committee meetings in order to receive a report from the managing editors and to discuss matters of policy.

The IAHR appoints the managing editors in agreement with the Publisher, E. J. Brill, for a period of five years, renewable for a second period of five years, after which new editors shall be appointed. The managing editors edit the journal and act as sole representatives of the IAHR in all dealings with regard to the publication of the journal. The managing editors are chosen for their knowledge of the activities of the IAHR and commitment to its stated goals; their scholarly standing in the field; a senior position which allows some flexibility, access to facilities, and time to travel; some possibility of delegating subordinate tasks; previous editorial experience; proven record of helpful collaboration with others; ability to work to deadlines; excellent command of English and some knowledge of other languages; and awareness of current debates in the study of religion.

The IAHR has attempted to introduce an alternate succession of editorial appointments to ensure that only one editor retires at the end of each five year period, and the present editors graciously agreed to extend their terms of office a number of years ago in order to make an alternate succession process possible. However, after careful deliberations between the Executive Committee, the managing editors and E. J. Brill, it was unanimously decided that both of the present editors will retire at the XVIIIth Quinquennial Congress of the IAHR in Durban, South Africa on August 5-12, 2000. By then, Prof. Hans G. Kippenberg will have given us twelve years of service and Prof. E. Thomas Lawson ten years. Their skill and editorial proficiency has left an indelible impression on the IAHR and has met with widespread acclaim. Numen is the flagship of the IAHR. It has a proud tradition of quality and international coverage, and both Prof. Kippenberg and Prof. Lawson have carried this tradition onward as well as kept the journal in tune with current developments in our subject.

The Executive Committee is happy to announce, the appointment of Professor Einar Thomassen, University of Bergen, Norway, and Professor Michel Despland,

---

Concordia University, Montreal, Canada as the new managing editors of *Numen*. Their formal period of appointment is for the five year period of 2000-2005 and during the coming two years up to the Durban Congress, the practical transfer of editorial procedures will be effectuated. All manuscripts and other matters that concern the issues appearing from 2000 (XLVII/3) should be sent to the incoming managing editors.

Einar Thomassen is a graduate of Bergen and St. Andrews and has taught at the universities of Bergen, Uppsala and Oslo. In 1993 he became professor in the history of religions at the University of Bergen. Einar Thomassen served as secretary of the Norske Religionshistorisk Forening (NRF) 1990-94, and has been its president since 1994. He has served as head of the Institute of Classics, Russian and the History of Religions at the University of Bergen since 1995. His main fields of interest are early Christianity and gnosticism, and Islam, especially Islamic mysticism. He has published 'Le Traite Tripartite' (1989), 'Den filologiske vitenskap' (1990, with Odd Einar Baugen), and 'The Letters of Ahmad b. Idris' (1993, with Bernd Radtke). His interests also include hermeneutic theory, canonicity, orthodoxy and heresy, ritual theory, and religious education in schools. While committed to the continued importance of classical fields and methods in the history of religions, he is also an advocate of philosophically and sociologically informed theoretical awareness in the discipline. He is currently preparing a monograph on Valentinian gnosticism, a text book on Christianity for history of religions students, and a source book on the major religions for religious education teachers in Norwegian primary schools. Prof. Thomassen's address is Department of the History of Religions, University of Bergen, Sydnesplass 9, N-5007 Bergen, Norway (e-mail: [einar.thomassen@hf.uib.no](mailto:einar.thomassen@hf.uib.no)).

Michel Despland is a graduate of Lausanne and Harvard Universities and has been teaching at Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, since 1966. He has served

among things as president of a Societe quebecoise pour l' etude de la religion (SQER). He is the author of books on the philosophy of religion: 'Kant on History and Religion' (1973) and 'The Education of Desire: Plato and the Philosophy of Religion' (1985). His work on the history of the concept of religion ('La Religion en Occident: Evolution des idees et du vecu', 1979, 1988) led him to further studies on 19th-century France. One of its dimensions has been a plea for the use of literary evidence and for new strategies in writing modern religious history ('Reading an Erased Code: French Literary Aesthetics and Romantic Religion', 1994). Another dimension is the exploration of the history of the disciplined study of religion: together with Louis Rousseau, 'Les sciences religieuses au Quebec depuis 1972' (1988), and 'La tradition francaise en sciences religieuses' (1991). Another publication that is forthcoming is 'Les sciences religieuses sous la Monarchie de Juillet'. Prof. Desplan's address is Departement des sciences religieuses, Universite Concordia, 1455, boulevard de Maisonneuve guest, Montreal, Quebec, H3G 1M8 Canada (e-mail: [desplan@vax2.concordia.ca](mailto:desplan@vax2.concordia.ca)).

The Executive Committee formally recognized at its meeting in Turku in 1997 the need for a separate Reviews Editor. Since 1990, Dr. Brigitte Luchesi at the University of Bremen has done an excellent job in that capacity. Therefore, the Executive Committee formally appointed Dr. Brigitte Luchesi for a five year period as Reviews Editor (1998-2003) at its meeting in Bildesheim. Brigitte Luchesi was born in Vienna, Austria in 1943 and grew up in Fulda, Germany. After earning a degree in sociology at the University of Frankfurt/Main (1969), she moved to Berlin for further training in Jewish Studies, Religious Studies and Social Anthropology. She completed her Ph.D. in Social Anthropology in 1982. She taught at the Institute for Jewish Studies between 1970 and 1975 and at the Institute for Social Anthropology from 1980 until her move to Bremen in 1989 where she took up an appointment in the Department of Religious

Studies at the University of Bremen. Her fields of academic interest include Bindu Religions, Social Anthropology of Religion and Visible Religion. Since 1978 she has undertaken regular fieldtrips first to Bangladesh and then to North India to study local forms of religiosity, especially among Hindu women. Since 1990 she has assisted the editors of *Numen* in publishing the journal, and she has also served as treasurer of the Deutsche Vereinigung fuer Religionsgeschichte {DVRG}. Her address is Universitaet Bremen, Fachbereich 9, Postfach 330440, D-2800 Bremen, Germany (e-mail: [luchesi@religion.uni-bremen.de](mailto:luchesi@religion.uni-bremen.de)).

The final important announcement to be made concerns the appointment of a new treasurer of the IAHR. Since his election in Mexico City in 1995, Professor Donald Wiebe at Trinity College, University of Toronto, Canada has served faithfully as the treasurer of the IAHR. During the International Committee meeting in Hildesheim, however, he announced that he was retiring from that office for reasons of health. Donald Wiebe has been a leading figure in the IAHR and at IAHR events for several decades. His unwavering intellectual stature and his wisdom in organizational matters have long been sources of inspiration to all of us. We are all grateful for his service through the years. The sadness of his leaving the Executive Committee is, however, off-set by the fact that he will continue to be a source of inspiration and debate in future IAHR events.

The constitution of the IAHR states in article 4.c that in the event of the resignation of any serving officer, a suitable replacement may be nominated by the Executive Committee until the next quinquennial congress. After deliberating on the matter, the Executive Committee asked Professor Gary Lease at the University of California in Santa Cruz, USA, if he would take up the job as treasurer until Durban 2000. Because of his scholarly and organizational talents as well as his continued support of the IAHR, it is the considered opinion of the Executive Committee that Prof. Lease would

be a fitting officer of the IAHR. Prof. Lease graciously agreed to accept the appointment.

Gary Lease was born in Hollywood, California and is professor of History of Consciousness at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he has served as chair of Religious Studies, History of Consciousness and Environmental Studies. He has also served as Associate Chancellor and Dean of Humanities. Gary Lease took his doctorate in 1968 at the University of Munich in the history of theology. His extensive publications are concentrated in the history of religious thought in 19th and 20th-century Germany (editions of Barnack and Sohm; articles on religion and National Socialism; German Judaism, especially in his book *Odd Fellows in the Politics of Religion: Modernism, National Socialism, and German Judaism: Berlin 1944*; a book-length biography and study of Hans-Joachim Schoeps); late antiquity Mediterranean religious history (articles and essays on Mithraism; Egyptian monasticism, including the book *Traces of Early Egyptian Monasticism'* (Claremont 1991); Near Eastern archaeology); and theories of religion (articles and essays as well as a forthcoming book on religion and historiographical theories; religion and politics; religion as ideology and cultural artifact). Among other organizations, he is a member of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE); American Society for the Study of Religion (ASSR), of which he is its current secretary; International Association for Coptic Studies (IACS); and the North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR); of which he is current executive secretary. His address is Merrill College, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, U.S.A. (e-mail rebbock@cats.ucsc.edu).

**THE AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS** promotes the academic study of religions in Africa and the study of the religions of Africa more generally through the international collaboration of all scholars whose research has a bearing on the subject.

The **AASR** aims to stimulate the academic study of religions in Africa in the following ways:

- by providing a forum for multilateral communications between scholars of African religions;
- 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 African scholars to attend academic conferences both in Africa and overseas;
- by organizing conferences in Africa on topics relevant to scholars of African religions and panels on the religions of Africa in conferences held outside Africa;
- by establishing a newsletter as the major medium of communication between scholars of African religions around the world;
- by creating a directory of scholars in the field of African religions.