

Jacob Olupona  
AASR-President

## FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings! – Here we are with another issue of our biannual newsletter. Since you received the last issue, several events, both good and bad, have passed. I begin with the sad news of the death of our friends and colleagues, Professor Adrian Hastings, Editor of the *Journal of Religion in Africa*, and Professor Hannah Kinoti of Nairobi University. Their obituaries are fully covered in the newsletter. I would like to place on record the work of Adrian in Africa, especially his many contributions to the academic study of religion. Through the *Journal of Religion in African*, Adrian remarkably promoted the scholarship of religion and provided avenues for youthful and more established African scholars to publish their research. We will surely miss him. We also lost another dear friend of the Association, Professor Ninian Smart. Though not an Africanist by profession, Ninian was a towering figure in the History of Religions. I am sure many of you have used his books on world religions. He was indeed a friend and a colleague. May the souls of our departed colleagues rest in peace.

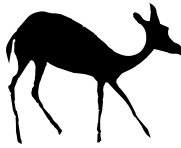
Last summer I was in Nigeria to do some research, and I seized the opportunity to establish a series in the study of Nigerian religion, culture, and society—to be edited by Professor Kenny of the University of Ibadan. The purpose of this series is to publish good monographs written by Nigerian scholars in Nigeria. I am still looking for funding to enable the editorial committee produce, at least, the first three numbers, after which subsequent issues will be produced through a revolving sequence as the first monographs are sold. I am confident that the project will be quite successful. We look forward to starting similar sequences in other African countries, if there are not already existing publishing programs in Religion.

The University of Bayreuth, Germany, hosted two successful meetings in October in which I was very privileged to attend and present papers. A good number of African scholars attended these meetings. As we speak, similar conferences are taking place in Holland that our colleagues from Nigeria, Kenya, and Ghana will be attending. The Bayreuth visit was a good occasion to hold our executive meeting. The report of the meeting and the confe-

rences are contained in the newsletter. I encourage you to send your comments on our deliberations to any of us.

I am glad that this newsletter contains a lot of information relating to the work this Association. We still welcome news items from Africa. We do not want the Newsletter to be just about our members who are outside the continent. May I remind you that the Association was set up primarily for the purpose of assisting our colleagues in Africa. To make this dream a reality, we need the contributions of our colleagues in African Universities. Notice of conferences, seminars, books, and articles published should be sent to the editor to publish.

I wish you a Happy New Year!



James Cox  
AASR-Secretary General & Treasurer

## THE AASR AIMS & FINANCES

It was indeed fortunate that so many members of the African Association for the Study of Religions were able to gather during the first week of October in Thurnau Castle, Germany, to consider European approaches to the study of religions in Africa in a conference organised by Professor Frieder Ludwig and Dr Afe Adogame of Bayreuth University. Such opportunities to exchange ideas and to reflect on our field of study with scholars from Afri-

ca, Europe and North America are rare. The conference also enabled the AASR to hold a general meeting, the Minutes of which are printed in this Newsletter. Numerous important issues were discussed during the meeting that are relevant to the organisation of the AASR and to academic research on religions in Africa.

It has become apparent to me since becoming Secretary General and Treasurer that the aims of the AASR are entirely worthwhile, but two of them in particular pose stiff challenges to being realised. One of these refers to the pressing need to publish scholarly works by Africans, to make them available throughout the continent at affordable prices and to disseminate them throughout Africa and beyond. Since the establishment of the AASR in 1992, this has defined one of the primary aims of the Association, but it has proved one of the most elusive to achieve. A second important, but difficult, objective relates to the organisation and funding of conferences in Africa on topics relevant to scholars of African religions. Although this aim is ambitious, two such conferences have been held: the founding conference in Harare in 1992 followed by a conference held in Kenya in 1999. A West African conference is projected for 2003 pending successful fundraising.

Other aims of the Association to foster links among scholars of African religions, to establish exchanges of information and to encourage multilateral communications are being met through the hard work of the regional representatives and particularly through the publication and dissemination of the AASR-Newsletter. Since its inception, the AASR has relied on the Newsletter to maintain links of communication among members. The current editors, Jan Platvoet and Patrick Maxwell, have maintained and expanded the Newsletter. By the end of this year they should have completed a directory of members, which will be published as a separate handbook.

As I have reflected on the aims of the Association over the past year, it has become clear to me that central co-ordination is vital for communication to flow smoothly. Fortunately, this is assisted today by electronic communications, but still the ability to assimilate information from a vast continent poses a formidable challenge. This becomes clear when regional representatives have begun to discuss membership fees in various countries within their regions. It is extremely difficult for a regional representative to accomplish this beyond the actual country in which the representative is working. This makes membership lists also difficult to compose with equity and accuracy. Moreover, it creates particular challenges to central financial report-

ing and to the records required for presenting an accurate annual budgetary report.

Each of these issues was discussed at length at the meeting in Germany with the result that those of us on the Executive Committee, under the leadership of Jacob Olupona as President, are committed to working towards more effective communication and to thinking creatively about ways to implement better the goals of the Association. The President appointed a Think Tank at the AASR General Meeting held in Durban last year, and has authorised it to begin its work under the convenership of Jan Platvoet. The Think Tank should generate fresh ideas about how the Association can meet its objectives, including suggestions for fundraising and how best to establish an electronic archive.

As Secretary General and Treasurer, I am charged with the task of working closely with the Executive Committee and with the Regional Representatives in facilitating communication about the Association and its finances. I am grateful for the support provided by the members of the AASR and for their patience in the light of the magnitude of the tasks we face. At the conclusion of the next eighteen months, by which time I hope we will have met somewhere in West Africa, I anticipate substantial progress will have been made in addressing many of the challenges we discussed at Thurnau and which have been identified by members and the Executive Committee over the years in other contexts.



James Cox  
AASR-Secretary General & Treasurer

## MINUTES OF THE AASR-MEETING

AT THURNAU CASTLE, GERMANY,  
5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2001, 8:30 P.M.

NB.: This meeting was held on the occasion of the Conference entitled 'European Traditions of the Study of Religions in Africa', 4-7 October, 2001, organised by the University of Bayreuth and held in Thurnau Castle, Germany. Members of the Executive Committee present included: Professor Jacob Olupona (President), Dr Grace Wamue (Vice-President), Dr James Cox (Secretary General & Treasurer), Dr Umar Danfulani (West Africa Representative), Dr Jan Platvoet (Newsletter Co-Editor), Professor Ulrich Berner (Ex-officio member), Professor David Westerlund (Ex-officio member). Members of the Association attending the conference, and those at the conference interested in the Association, were invited to attend.

### *Welcome*

The President, Professor Jacob Olupona, welcomed members and interested persons to the meeting. He expressed particular thanks to the organisers of the conference on 'European Traditions in the Study of Religions in Africa', which brought together so many scholars from Africa and Europe to examine the history of the study of religions in Africa.

## REPORTS

### *President's Report*

The President announced that he had written a letter to all AASR members in North America suggesting that the North American region conduct a membership drive. He added that there is a pressing need for all AASR regions to co-ordinate their membership lists, to make decisions regarding membership fees and for the association to centralise financial accounting.

Professor Olupona reported on a visit he had made to Nigeria in September 2001 with the main purpose of establishing a publication series under the theme 'Religion and Society'. Many Nigerian colleagues have manuscripts to publish, but they are difficult to place in a series. Father Kenny, editor of

the Ibadan-based journal *Orita*, has agreed to be the editor of the series with Professor Olupona acting as the fundraiser for the series.

The President reminded the meeting that a Think Tank had been established at the last meeting of the AASR held in Durban in August 2000, with Dr J.G. Platvoet as convener. One of the issues the Think Tank was to consider problems related to publications, in particular those affecting African scholars. The President authorised Dr Platvoet to begin work with members of the Think Tank that had been appointed in Durban, initially by e-mail.

#### *Secretary General's Report*

The Secretary General and Treasurer, Dr James Cox, drew attention to the substantial work being done by Dr Jan Platvoet on compiling an accurate membership list, which would include information on the research interests of members and be published with the AASR-Newsletter. Dr Cox indicated that co-ordination between himself and the regional representatives needs to be improved and that he would be writing to each of them to establish regular communication. Issues relating to the regions could then be circulated through the other regions and to the executive committee. Some of the co-ordinated information would then be transmitted to Dr Platvoet and Mr Patrick Maxwell as co-editors of the AASR-Newsletter.

*Action:* Dr Cox is to write to each of the Regional Representatives to co-ordinate activities and to receive information on membership, including fees and finances.

#### *Financial Report*

Dr Cox reported that he had received financial reports from Dr Gerrie ter Haar, the European AASR Regional Representative, from Dr Simeon Ile-sanmi, formerly the North American Representative, and from Prof Jacob Olupona, who had reported on the current financial status of AASR accounts in North America. The current AASR financial report is attached to these Minutes. Dr Cox particularly drew attention to the outstanding bills due, which, he emphasised must be resolved immediately.

Dr Cox noted that he has not received information about membership fees being collected in the various regions of Africa, but he knew that the representatives in the regions were considering ways of doing this. The main issue being confronted by the Treasurer, he reported, was setting up a system whereby regular financial reports could be received from the regional

representatives and outstanding bills could be authorised for payment. He will include this in his communication to the regional representatives.

#### *East African Report*

Dr Grace Wamue, although not the East African representative, presented for the meeting an up-date of activities in East Africa. She reported that an East African Conference was being planned to be held in Uganda, but no dates had yet been established. The AASR-Newsletter no 14 had been received and the East African Representative, Dr Adam Chepkwony, had been distributing them.

Dr Wamue reported the sudden death of Professor Hannah Kinoti, one of the keynote speakers at the 1999 AASR East African Conference held in Nairobi. Members of the AASR in Kenya had managed to visit her family.

Dr Wamue also noted that the book containing the papers from the East African Conference is long overdue. She indicated that if the book is delayed much longer, it will be well out of date.

In response to the report from Dr Wamue, the President, Professor Jacob Olupona, expressed regret at the death of Professor Kinoti.

*Action:* The President asked that Dr Wamue, or an appointed representative from the East African region, write an obituary to appear in the next AASR-Newsletter.

Dr Jan Platvoet noted that he, Dr Mary Getui and Dr Jesse Mugambe had proposed themselves as editors of the East African Conference book, to which Dr Wamue had referred. He indicated that he had heard the book was in its final stages, but that he had not been involved in the editorial work on the revised papers. Dr Platvoet indicated that substantial funds have been put into the organisation of the conference and the publication of the book.

*Action:* The Secretary General is to write to Dr Getui and Dr Mugambe on behalf of the AASR to determine the status of the East African Conference book and to receive an up-date on the editorial process.

#### *West African Regional Report*

Dr Umar Danfulani, West African regional representative, indicated that he could only speak about what had been going on in Nigeria, not the rest of

the region. He reported that he had written letters to members of Departments of Religious Studies in Nigeria to determine the condition of the departments in the current situation in Nigeria. Some responses he had received were encouraging; others were not. People are attending conferences. The AASR-Newsletter is being distributed through representatives of the Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions in some cases, and in other cases through the Departments. The distribution seems not be reaching all members. No membership fee has been introduced in Nigeria, which means that membership lists are inadequate and there is little commitment to the Association by members. Dr Danfulani suggested that in the improved financial situation in Nigeria, members could now afford to pay a fee. Another issue that has been raised in various parts of Nigeria is the need to encourage universities to employ female members of staff.

In response to Dr Danfulani's report, the President, Jacob Olupona, noted that on his recent visit to Nigeria, no copies of the AASR-Newsletter had reached the departments in Ibadan or Ife. This suggests that a re-thinking of the distribution process in Nigeria is needed, and perhaps in other regions of Africa. The President announced that he will be attending the next meeting of the Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions to give support and to work on the various issues raised in Dr Danfulani's report.

Dr Afe Adogame, currently of Bayreuth University, noted from the floor that if a financial commitment is forthcoming from Nigerian members, this will assist in the costs of distributing the AASR-Newsletter.

Dr Grace Wamue, Vice-President of the AASR, responded to the issue of too few women in Nigerian departments by drawing attention to the fact that the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians has many women members from Nigeria. She explained that it may be that most women who could be members of the AASR are not at the universities, but are teaching in tertiary colleges or schools of education.

*Action:* Dr Wamue is to send names of Nigerian women who are members of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians to Professor Olupona, who will try to put Dr Danfulani in contact with them as possible members of the AASR.



*Report from the Newsletter Co-editor*

The AASR-Newsletter Co-editor, Dr Jan Platvoet, reported that the AASR-Newsletter aims to include as much information as possible about what is going on in Departments of Religious Studies in Africa. He reminded members to send items for him to include in the AASR-Newsletter including notices of conferences and recent publications. He is currently working on the AASR-Register of Members, which will include information about their current academic posts, publications and research interests. He asked for members to contact him by email with the latest information so that the booklet can be as up-to-date as possible. He hopes to have the next newsletter, together with the AASR-Register of Members, reach the AASR-members before Christmas. This time, in order to expedite publication and shipping, he hopes to have it done in Utrecht. The last newsletter was delayed because the South African co-editor Patrick Maxwell was new to formatting, printing and shipping it. The number of copies printed was determined by the number of members with additional copies for use at conferences and distribution to libraries.

The President thanked Dr Platvoet and Mr Maxwell for the hard work they had put into producing the most recent AASR-Newsletter.

## FUTURE PLANNING

*West African Conference*

The President reported that he had not yet secured funding for the proposed AASR West African conference. He said he is aiming for the conference to be held in January 2003 with specific dates and venue still to be decided.

*Action:* The President and Secretary General are to investigate possible funding sources for the West African conference with a view to holding the conference in January 2003.

*Fund-Raising*

The President noted that fund-raising is an important matter for the Association, particularly since holding conferences, supporting research and enabling publications require more financial support than can be generated by members' fees alone. He noted that the Think Tank, headed by Dr Platvoet, has been assigned to develop ideas for fund-raising.

*Electronic Resources*

Dr Jan Platvoet commented that it would be extremely useful to have a dedicated website for the AASR in order to facilitate communication among members, to keep the membership list up-dated and possibly to have the newsletter in its full text available electronically. In addition, articles by AASR-members could be stored in an electronic archive and made available to AASR-members in Africa through the website.

Professor David Westerlund observed that it would be an excellent idea for the AASR to have its own website. He noted that if an electronic archive were deposited on the website, the organisation would have a complete programme available for consultation.

*Action:* The Think Tank is to investigate setting up a website and report to the members of the Executive Committee.

*Journal of Religion in Africa (JRA)*

The President drew attention to the fact that the AASR is one of the co-sponsors of the JRA. He recommended that in order to make this an active role, the AASR should edit one issue of the JRA annually. He also suggested that the JRA should include one official representative of the AASR on its editorial board.

Dr Kevin Ward, one of the editors of the JRA and a member of the AASR attending the meeting, indicated that he believed the editorial committee would welcome Professor Olupona's suggestions.

*Action:* The President is to write to the Chief Editor of the JRA, Dr David Maxwell, suggesting that the AASR edit one issue of the journal per year and that a member of the Executive of the AASR be appointed to the editorial board of the JRA.

*Any Other Business*

Since there was no further business, the President thanked those who had attended the meeting for their participation and suggestions. The meeting was declared closed at 9:55 p.m.

Submitted by  
Dr James Cox, Secretary General  
22 October 2001

AFRICAN ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

AASR-FINANCIAL REPORT  
2001

(all figures in US\$)

EUROPEAN ACCOUNTS

Current account:	\$ 81.15
Savings account:	\$ <u>2095.00</u>
	\$ 2176.15
Still due in outstanding fees from members	\$ 410.00
Still due from library subscriptions	\$ <u>50.00</u>
	\$ 460.00
<b>TOTAL EUROPEAN ASSETS</b>	\$ 2636.15
Dedicated funds in European account reserved for African Publication of Platvoet, Cox, Olupona (eds). <i>The Study of Religions in Africa</i>	\$ 850.00
<b>ACTUAL AVAILABLE BALANCE</b> in European ac- count (excluding anticipated income and dedicated Funds)	\$ <b>1326.15</b>

NORTH AMERICAN ACCOUNTS

1998-1999:	
Balance brought forward	\$ 226.82
Membership dues	\$ 375.00
Subsidy from IAHR	\$ <u>50.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 651.82
1999-2000:	
Membership fees	\$ 575.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b> (as of October 2000)	\$ 1226.82

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Expenses (1998-2000):	
AASR Newsletter	\$ 300.00
University of Florida Press (AASR Series)	\$ 300.00
Subsidy for IAHR Congress in Durban	<u>\$ 600.00</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 1200.00</b>

<b>NORTH AMERICAN BALANCE</b>	
(as of October 2000)	\$ 26.82
Membership fees received in 2001	\$ 500.00

<b>NORTH AMERICAN BALANCE</b>	
(October 2001)	<b>\$ 526.82</b>

### SUMMARY

<b>TOTAL AASR BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 3162.97</b>
<i>(Inclusive of dedicated and anticipated funds)</i>	

<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS</b>	<b>\$ 1852.97</b>
<i>(Exclusive of dedicated and anticipated funds)</i>	

<b>OUTSTANDING BILLS:</b>	
AASR Newsletter (2000)	\$ 500.00
AASR Newsletter (2000)	<u>\$ 405.00</u>

<b>TOTAL OUTSTANDING BILLS</b>	<b>\$ 905.00</b>
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Submitted by Dr James Cox  
 Secretary General & Treasurer  
 23 October 2001



## CONFERENCE REPORTS

Kevin Ward  
School of Theology and Religious Studies  
University of Leeds

### EUROPEAN TRADITIONS OF THE STUDY OF RELIGION IN AFRICA

This Conference was organised by Frieder Ludwig and Afe Adogame, in co-operation with Ulrich Berner and Christoph Boehinger, at Schloss Thurnau, Wissenschaftszentrum der Universität Bayreuth, Bavaria, Germany, 4-7 October 2001

The conference gathered some fifty scholars from many parts of Europe, from Africa and from America. It had a wide remit: to review European perceptions of religion in Africa from the eighteenth century to the present day, and to encompass the three great religious traditions of Africa: African Traditional Religions, Christianity and Islam. Presentations examined the lasting legacy of the European Enlightenment (particularly the writings of Kant and Herder) in using, on the one hand, a language of human equality and universalism, while in actual fact consigning Africa to an inferior position: a quite literal 'denigration'. It has been difficult for western scholars wholly to divorce themselves from the perceptions thus established. For the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there were papers examining the contribution of individual European academics, colonial servants, missionaries and anthropologists: Dietrich Westermann, Edwin Smith, Placide Tempels, Evans-Pritchard, Victor Turner, Geoffrey Parrinder and Bengt Sundkler. There were papers examining specific institutional centres of African religious studies in Europe, and a number of accounts of national academic traditions of response to Africa.

A number of interesting themes and trends emerged from this kaleidoscopic diversity. Perhaps the most important question related to the study of the traditional religions of Africa. Could one utilise Edward Said's work and talk about an African version of 'Orientalism' shaping European perceptions of Africa, and contributing to the construction of the discourse on 'African traditional religion(s)'? Bilolo Mubabinge's paper was concerned to show that while Placide Tempels saw himself as responding in an open

way to the reality of 'Bantu philosophy', as he understood it, his thinking was shaped by his European training, not only in his utilisation of Thomistic ontological categories, but also in his reliance on contemporary German and Dutch Catholic understandings of 'other religions'. Was Tempels arrogant or naïve in expecting that Congolese people would acknowledge that his work presented their thinking to themselves, better than they could have articulated it themselves? A later generation of European thinkers, represented in the post-war period by such men as Max Warren and John V. Taylor, were less confident that they could faithfully 'represent' Africans. They were concerned to advocate a somewhat humbler task: one characterised by 'presence' and 'attention', in which 'the other' impacted on, and changed, the European observer. But if 'representation' was always too large a claim, the impact of a man like Tempels remained profound, inspiring African intellectuals such as Kagame and Mulago to enrich and expand his work. The work of the Methodist missionary Edwin Smith, drawing on, and synthesising, varied African understandings of cosmology and ideas of God, similarly influenced the work of John Mbiti in the 1960s.

These interconnections have been as true of institutions as of individual thinkers. Andrew Walls discussed the role of Geoffrey Parrinder, who to a large extent gave shape and direction to religious studies departments in newly independent West African states, and who first defined the field and promoted the term 'African Traditional Religion' (by the singular, stressing the unity of African experience). Jim Cox reflected on the significance of this academic model as transposed to Aberdeen in Scotland by Walls himself. For Parrinder and the generation of scholars he inspired, faith and religion were seen as basic constituent categories of the human experience, *sui generis*, to be treated with respect, even reverence. Over the years this 'phenomenological' approach has had an important role in widening the sympathies and understandings of African university students and seminarians from Christian backgrounds, who might in other contexts have demonstrated a much greater hostility to traditional religion. But the phenomenological study of religion in European institutions of higher learning has been largely overtaken by other approaches, which do neither presume religious belief on the part of the scholar, nor that 'religion' is an irreducible category, incapable of being resolved into other sociological or ideological discourses.

African departments of religious studies operate still to a much greater extent within a community of believers, not least because seminaries and, increasingly, universities with a religious affiliation continue to have a major

input on curriculum development and in the shaping of goals and objectives of higher education. The need to continue and strengthen dialogue between the different research traditions of Africa and Europe and America is vital, especially in view of the pressures of money and time faced by African academics. Both the Nigerian and the Kenyan participants at the conference stressed how funding constraints affect recruitment to religious studies departments. Universities often depend on funding from international donors whose developmental agenda may have little sensitivity to the value of research into religion and the role of religious values in society. Not least there was the question of funding African participation at conferences like this one, so that African contributions can have the weight they ought to have.

There was a group of papers on the state of African religious studies in European centres, countries and institutions: in Basel by Barbara Müller, in Bordeaux by Marc Spindler, and in Uppsala by David Westerlund. Those in Greece, with its particular concern for African Orthodox communities, were discussed by Athanasios Papathanasiou; those in the Netherlands by Jan Platvoet, whereas the role of the World Council of Churches in supporting African studies was surveyed by Gerhard Grohs. Richard Hoskins provided some important insights into the task of introducing for the first time a course on African religion into a curriculum designed for European undergraduates.

The impetus for the study of African traditional religions in African academic institutions has been largely driven by those concerned with their relationship with African Christianity. Thus the two disciplines have developed along similar and intersecting trajectories. In contrast, African Islam is largely, at least in academic terms, a separate discourse, with its own geographical and methodological traditions and scholarly conversations. The disjunction seemed quite stark at this conference for much of the time. Ways of encouraging a more thorough integration of the study of the three African religious traditions might be an important theme for a future conference, not least because of its social and religious importance for contemporary African development. Another issue of growing importance, is the growing importance of the African presence within Europe itself. Religion often plays a central role in the experience of African communities in Europe, and is likely to have an important effect on the status of religion in Europe. The theme of 'African Traditions of the Study of Religion in Europe' might well be a fruitful conference for the future!

The conference setting, in the medieval castle of Thurnau was superb. We had an interesting trip to the Wagner museum in Bayreuth, which raised big questions on the relationship between culture, racism and fascism in Europe. The Director of the museum handled some hard questions in those areas with a commendable openness and lack of defensiveness.



Jan G. Platvoet  
AASR-Newsletter Co-Editor

## THE IMPACT OF NEW COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES ON RELIGIONS IN WEST AFRICA

Following up on the Conference on European Traditions in the History of the Religions of Africa, a one-day workshop was held at Iwalewa House, the Africa Centre of Bayreuth University, on 8.10.01 on 'The Impact of the New Communication Technologies on Religions of West Africa'. Lectures were presented in it by Prof. Jacob Olupona (University of California at Davis) on 'Current research on Nigerian Christianity in the United States'; by Prof. Musa Gaiya (University of Jos, Nigeria), on 'Approaches and Emerging Themes in the History of Christianity in Nigeria'; by Dr. Afe Adogame (Bayreuth University), on 'African (Christian) New Religious Movements and the Internet'; and by Prof. Andrew Walls (Edinburgh University), on 'New Challenges in African Church History'.

The workshop was organised by the *Kulturwissenschaftliches Forschungskolleg* (Research Group in the Cultural Sciences) of the University of Bayreuth, and the Department of Religious Studies of Bayreuth University in the framework of their Research Programme *Lokales Handeln in Afrika im Kontext globaler Einflüsse* ('Local [Modes of Inter-] Action in Africa in the



Context of Global Influences’). It followed up on some of its earlier workshops, such as one on ‘Innovations and their Contextualisation in African Islamic Societies’, held on 9-10 February 2001 in Bayreuth; and ‘Pentecostalism and Globalisation’, held on 24-25 March 2001 in Bayreuth also. It focused on a theme which had been a recurrent subject of discussions in these earlier workshops, to wit the growing popularity of the new communication technologies, especially e-mail and internet, with the new religions of West Africa: neo-traditional, Christian, Muslim, and Oriental for external propaganda and internal control. It reflected on the effects the use of these electronic means had on the belief systems of these new religions; on the opportunities the internet offered for research; and what problems emerged from studying these new religions through the internet.



Jan G. Platvoet  
AASR-Newsletter Co-Editor

## 300 YEARS GHANA – HOLLAND

On Wednesday 7 November, 2001, a conference was held in The Hague, The Netherlands, on ‘300 Years Ghana – Holland: Dutch-Ghanaian Relations, Past & Present’. It was organised by the African Studies Centre at Leiden, the University of Groningen, and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The conference’s formal reason was to commemorate the fact that David van Nijendael arrived in Kumasi, capital of *Asanteman*, the ‘Asante nation’, in November 1701 at the head of an embassy of the Dutch West Indies Company (WIC). That mission had been undertaken from the WIC’s headquarters in Elmina on the coast, because Asante had emerged in the previous year as the new major centre of political, military, and commercial power in the hinterland of the Gold Coast under the leadership of Osei Tutu, the first *Asanthe*, and his adviser *Okomfo* Anokye. Van Nijendael’s mission

to Kumasi in 1701-1702 was discussed in papers by Dr. Michel van Doortmont of Groningen University, and Dr. Henk den Heijer of Amsterdam University. The former stressed that relationships of equality obtained between the WIC and other European 'chartered' companies and the indigenous polities and traders in the pre-colonial, 'mercantilist' period. The latter emphasised on the basis of a letter in the WIC-archives, that Van Nijendael did not keep an 'exact account' of his stay at Kumasi, as Bosman had asserted in his *Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* (Utrecht, 1704; London, 1705: 76). 'The lost journal of Van Nijendael', for which historians of West Africa have been searching in vain, turns out to be a myth.

The conference, however, actually surveyed a much longer period, to wit Dutch relationships with the Gold Coast from 1593-1594, when Erik Barendsz was the first Dutch captain to trade there and return home with a profitable cargo of gold, pepper and ivory, till 1872. In that year, the Dutch ceded the last of the twenty-four fortified trading posts they had possessed on the Gold Coast – like the famous stone castle, Sao Jorge del Mina, headquarters of the WIC, at Elmina – to the British. By exchanging them for concessions by Britain in Asia, the Dutch paved the way for the establishment of the 'Crown Colony of the Gold Coast' by Britain in 1874.

This period, 1593-1872, was addressed in seven papers. Dr. Akosuah Perbi, of the University of Ghana, at Legon, Ghana, discussed 'The Slave Trade: Ghana and the Dutch in the Making of the Atlantic World from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries'; and Jean-Jacques Vrij investigated 'Forced and Voluntary Migration from Ghana to Surinam in the Era of Slave Trade'. Henri van der Zee and Dr. David Kpobi dealt with 'the dramatic life' and 'impossible mission' of the former slave and black Protestant minister Jacobus Capitein (c.1717-1747), who was the first black student ever to enter Leiden University in 1737. He completed his studies in theology there in March 1742 with his *Dissertatio politica-theologica: De servitudine libertati christianae non contraria* ('Political-theological dissertation: On Slavery as not opposed to Christian liberty'), a defence of slavery on the basis of Christian theological arguments. It made Capitein quite famous in Dutch society at that time: an African defending Dutch slavery as consistent with the profession of the Christian religion. Capitein was ordained a minister in the Dutch Calvinist Church in that same year, and then posted to the WIC-headquarters in Elmina, where he died on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1847.

Nathalie Evers, of Leiden University, treated two 'Eurafrican Women in Elmina: Helena van der Burgh and Wilhelmina van Naerssen'. Dr. Ineke van Kessel, of the African Studies Centre at Leiden, and dra. Endri Kusururi (of Salatiga, Indonesia) discussed 'The Black Dutchmen: African Soldiers in the Netherlands East Indies and their Indo-African Descendants'. Lastly, Dr. Emmanuel Akyempong, of Harvard University, discussed in his '*Ahenfo Nsa* (the 'Drink of Kings'): Dutch Schnapps and Ritual in Ghanaian History', the social history of alcoholic drinks in the Gold Coast in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and in particular the rise of Dutch aromatic J.H. Henkes' *jenever* (gin, *schnapps* in the characteristic square green bottle) to the position of *ahenfo nsa*, 'drink of kings'. Chiefs and elite families invariably use it for libation in all their traditional religious rituals.

In addition, the conference looked at other aspects of the complex relationships between the Netherlands and the Gold Coast in the colonial period (1874-1957) and those with the modern state of Ghana since 1957. They were dealt with in three papers. The first two were by Dr. V.K. Nyanteng, of the University of Ghana at Legon, on 'Cocoa Trade between Ghana and the Netherlands: Past, Present, and Future'; and Dr. Kofi Arhinful, of Amsterdam University, on "'We think of them": Money Transfers from the Netherlands to Ghana'. In the third paper, Dr. Rijk van Dijk, of the African Studies Centre at Leiden, examined the growth of the c. forty Ghanaian Pentecostal Churches in the Netherlands since the early 1980s, when Ghanaians began to come to The Netherlands. He also considered the role these churches play in their integration into Dutch society, with which Ghanaians have a tense relationship due to Dutch restrictive immigration policies. Lastly, in a fourth paper, André Pakosie, a *bonuman*, or healer, from Surinam practising in The Netherlands in the tradition of the Afro-Surinamese religion nowadays known as *Winti*, discussed the influence of 'African culture' [and religion] on the culture, religion and healing rituals of the 'Maroons' – run-away slaves – in Surinam, and on *Winti* rituals in The Netherlands.

**CONFERENCES AHEAD****RELIGION AND CONFLICT  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

28-29 November 2001 at Utrecht University

This conference is organised by Prof. Gerrie ter Haar, of the Institute of Social Studies at The Hague, The Netherlands, and Dr. Wouter van Beek, of the Department of Cultural Anthropology of Utrecht University. It will take place at Utrecht University on 28-29 November 2001. It proceeds from UNITWIN, the academic network linking Utrecht University with several universities in Southern Africa. It is they who identified the topic. The conference will feature papers by scholars from Africa only. They will examine how religion is manipulated by politicians to exacerbate political conflicts of an economic and/or ethnic nature in various parts of Africa. To counteract this destructive use of religion, they will identify the constructive potential of religion(s) and suggest ways in which it can be mobilised for purposes which are socially desirable.<sup>1</sup>

The following eight papers will be read. In the morning of the first day of conference, Dr. Umar Danfulani, University of Jos, Nigeria, will discuss first 'Shari'a and non-Shari'a Motivated Crises in Nigeria: Which Way Out for Lasting Peace, Conflict Resolution or Prevention?'. Then Dr. Idris Salim El Hassan, from Sudan, will deal with 'The Role of Religion in the Making and Unmaking of Societal Peace in the Sudan'. Dr. Tharcisse Gatwa, from Ruanda, will reflect after him on 'The Churches and Mediation in the Great Lakes Region Conflict: What Dynamics for Peace?'. Lastly Dr. Grace Wamue, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya, will discuss 'Religion and Conflict in Kenya: The Case of the *Mungiki* Movement'.

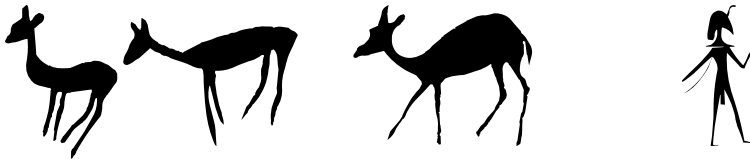
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<sup>1</sup> Cf. also *Religion and War [in Africa] in the 1990s*; special issue of *Journal of Religion in Africa* 31, 2 (2001) with articles by Gérard Prunier on 'The Catholic Church and the Kivu Conflict' (139-162); Timothy Longman on 'Church Politics and the Genocide in Rwanda' (163-186); Kevin Ward on "'The Armies of the Lord": Christianity, Rebels and the State in Northern Uganda' (187-221); and Stephen Ellis on 'Mystical Weapons: Some Evidence from the Liberian War' (222-236).

These lectures will be followed in the afternoon by three parallel workshops on religion and conflict in particular regions of Africa. That on West Africa will be chaired by Dr. Stephen Ellis of the African Studies Centre at Leiden, The Netherlands. That on East and Central Africa will be introduced and chaired by Prof. Mohammed Salih of the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, The Netherlands. And that on Southern Africa will be introduced and chaired by Mr. Erik van den Berg (Kairos).

On the second day, Dr. Elom Dovlo, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana, will first discuss 'Human Rights and Female Ritual Servitude: Conflicts and Problems in Transforming Religio-Cultural Practices in Africa'. After him, Prof. Thias Kgatla, University of the North, Sovenga, South Africa, will deal with "'A Witch has No Colour": A Case of South African Witchcraft Accusations'. His paper is followed by that of Dr. Daniel Ntonzi, from Angola, on 'The Role of Religion in the War in Angola'.

In the afternoon, Prof. Christo Lombard, University of Namibia, will first discuss 'The Breaking the Wall of Silence Movement and the Council of Churches in Namibia: The Ups and Downs of Religion and Human Rights in Namibia'. His lecture will be followed again by three parallel workshops. One is 'Religion as a Source of Conflict' and will be introduced and chaired by Dr Paschal Mihyo, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands. Another is on 'Religion as a Background to Conflict', which will be introduced and chaired by Habtom Yohannes. And the third, on 'Religion as a Source for Peace', will be introduced and chaired by Dr Laurenti Magesa.



Isabel Phiri  
University of Natal

## WCC-Conference on

# THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA

16-23 September 2002 at Kempton Park,  
Johannesburg, South Africa

Recently I attended a planning meeting for a World Council of Churches upcoming conference for Africa the theme of which is 'A Critical Evaluation of Theological Education and Ecumenical Formation in Africa'. This conference is planned to take place from 16th to 23rd September 2002 at the Lutheran Centre, Kempton Park, Johannesburg, South Africa.

The *objective* of the conference is to engage in an interactive process of critical self assessment and evaluation on how we prepare youth, women and men for church leadership in laity training centres, capacity building programmes, theological education, ministerial, spiritual and ecumenical formation in residential colleges and by way of theological education by extension and distance education.

The *methodology* proposed is that the participants engage in an interactive process of critical study on key issues regarding theological education and ecumenical formation by asking themselves: what have we done best in the last fifty years in preparing and equipping youth, women and men for ministry? How can we build on this foundation to move forward in the 21st century? What resources have we used and what do we have today? Where have we erred and how can we correct our past mistakes? How can we make a difference in the life and mission of the church and other church-related institutions in Africa?

This interactive process will accumulate in a conference of about 100 people, in which a representative group of those engaged in the process will gather for dialogue and study, and draw a plan of action that will guide activities in this first decade of the 21st century. Some of the major issues to be studied and discussed in the interactive process and in the conference are:

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- = different kinds of theological institutions and faculties and the TEE programmes (Bible schools, seminaries, colleges, universities, etc.);
  - = patterns of theological education and TEE tutorial and training;
  - = what is involved in Ecumenical Theological Education and Ecumenical Formation?;
  - = how are theological educators and administrators trained and equipped?;
  - = different kinds of Laity Training centres;
  - = transforming curricula for 21st century challenges;
  - = accreditation of theological programmes and degrees;
  - = research, writing, and publishing;
  - = the place of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in theological and laity training institutions;
  - = the place of Religious Studies Departments in State Universities with regard to the formation of church leaders.
  - = funding Theological Institutions/Faculties, Laity Training Centres and Associations;
  - = scholarships;
  - = inter-religious studies and dialogue in seminaries;
  - = relationship of theological institutions, laity training centres, the churches and ecumenical institutions;
  - = relationship with founder churches and mission boards and missionaries; and Theological Institutions/Faculties and Associations;
  - = brain drain of theological educators;
  - = sabbatical studies for theological educators;
  - = African library development.

The following institutions in Africa and elsewhere are to be involved in the process:

- Interdenominational theological colleges, seminaries and universities (church sponsored);
- Denominational theological colleges, Bible schools, Pastoral Institutes and universities;
- Theological and religious departments in the state universities;
- Regional and sub-regional Theological Associations;
- Networks and association of Laity training Centres;
- Capacity building Institutions;
- National and sub-regional ecumenical institutions (Council of Churches and Fellowships of Councils of Churches);

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- Regional ecumenical institutions (AACC, OATCs, United Bible Societies);
  - Regional confessional Institutions (Roman Catholic, Association of Evangelical Churches, Pentecostals and Charismatic);
  - Inter- religious Councils;
  - Publishers of Theological and Religious books;
  - Partner Churches, Theological Faculties, Institutions and Associations, Laity Training Centres and Academies and Mission Boards outside Africa.



BSA Sociology of Religion Study Group  
Annual Conference 2002, 8-11th April, 2002

### RELIGION IN AN URBAN CONTEXT

The Sociology of Religion Study Group of the British Sociology Association will hold its annual conference from 8 to 11 April at the University of Birmingham. The conference aims to bring together established scholars and research students from a range of disciplines, who are concerned with the study of religion in an urban context. Papers are welcome from those studying established religious communities, 'religion'/'spirituality' in wider society, religion and urban politics, spatial and symbolic aspects of religion in an urban setting. Particular emphasis will be on studies which combine theoretical and empirical research.

Presentations can be full papers (45 min., incl. questions), work in progress (15 min.) or poster displays, addressing the following areas:

= ethnographic and other studies of specific religious communities living and worshipping in an urban context and their interaction with the surrounding population

= studies of the role of religion in defining and constructing the identity of particular neighbourhoods or ethnic groups in an urban setting



- = questions about the relationship between religious practice, religious ideals, and local politics in an urban context
- = theoretical and empirical questions surrounding the sites of religious buildings or symbols and other questions relating to the use of space and visibility
- = studies of the way in which religious groups use, define, and negotiate urban space in festivals and other activities
- = ethical and other methodological/theoretical issues relating to the study of religious practice in a contemporary urban setting

Dr Martin Stringer is the Local Organiser. To submit a proposal, please send a summary (100 words), together with your name, details of your institution, current post and/or research to the local organiser (address as below). Please, state clearly whether you propose a full paper, work in progress or poster presentation. Cost of participation is £150.00 (with reductions for post-graduate students). Deadline for proposals: 31st January, 2002.

Dr Martin Stringer, Worship in Birmingham Project, Department of Theology, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT, UK.

E-mail: [m.d.stringer@bham.ac.uk](mailto:m.d.stringer@bham.ac.uk)

Details of the conference are on the Study Group website:

<http://www.socrel.org.uk>; and on the conference website:

<http://artsweb.bham.ac.uk/mstringer/conf.htm>



**BASR Conference**  
**RELIGION AND THE STATE**  
9-12 September 2000

BASR (British Association for the Study of Religions) will hold its Annual Conference 2000 from 9 to 12 September 2000 at the Department of Theology & Religious Studies of the University of Surrey, Roehampton, London SW15 5SL, UK. Its theme will be: 'Religion and the State'.

The Conference aims to be inter-disciplinary and multidisciplinary and it is intended that the theme be interpreted in the broadest possible way. This may include a focus on areas such as civil religion, education, civil liberties and human rights, civil disobedience, international and local politics, establishment and state involvement with religions in historical and contemporary contexts.

Offers of papers and reports of work in progress should be directed by 1 May 2002 to: Dr Marion Bowman, Religious Studies Department, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA.

E-mail: [M.I.Bowman@open.ac.uk](mailto:M.I.Bowman@open.ac.uk)

A limited number of student bursaries are available for post-graduates presenting papers or work in progress reports. Contact Marion Bowman for details of how to apply. Applications by 1 May 2002 please.



## PERSONS &amp; POSTS

## OBITUARIES

THE SAD DEMISE OF PROFESSOR HANNAH W. KINOTI  
WHO WAS PROMOTED TO GLORY ON 30TH APRIL 2001

by Dr. Grace N. Wamue

Prof. Hannah W. Kinoti (BA Hons., Makarere, Dip. Ed., Makarere, Ph.D., Nairobi University), Assistant Professor at the Department of Religious Studies of the University of Nairobi died on 30 April 2001. Her fields of teaching were Sociology of Religion, and Ethics, and her fields of research traditional African values and indigenous value systems, with a focus on proverbs. Among her recent publications are the collective volumes, *The Bible in African Christianity: Essays in Biblical Theology* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1997), which she edited together with J.M. Waligo; and *Pastoral Care in African Christianity: Challenging Essays in Pastoral Theology* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1994<sup>1</sup>, 2000<sup>2</sup>), which she edited together with D.W. Waruta.

Professor Hannah W. Kinoti was an active member of the African Association of the Study of Religions (AASR). She was a woman who positively touched the lives of all she interacted with, young and old. The AASR fraternity will dearly, significantly and sincerely miss her. Her Eulogy, which was read to a full audience in her funeral service on Friday 4th May and on, the funeral day, Saturday 5th, practically says in brief who this remarkable woman called Hannah was.

*Eulogy*

We are gathered here to celebrate the life of the Professor Hannah Wangeci Kinoti. She was a woman of deep faith, warm and strong character, and outstanding leader and teacher, and a wonderful wife and mother. The centre of her life and work was Jesus Christ. Hannah Kinoti's gifts of leadership were recognised early from her school days. She served as a prefect, a leader in school and university Christian unions, dramatic society, and university student government. Later in life she served as Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies, University of Nairobi, and an elected member of the University Senate and Council. Professor Kinoti served on the governing boards of many organisations, including CORAT Africa, St.

Paul's United Theological College, and St. George's Secondary School. She was a Methodist lay preacher, Sunday school superintendent and conference speaker.

Hannah Kinoti was educated at the Alliance Girls High School, Makerere University and the University of Nairobi. From Makerere she graduated with an honours degree in English and Religious Studies and a Diploma in Education. She started her teaching career at the Kenya High School where she taught for six years. She proceeded to the University of Nairobi where she obtained a PhD while teaching religious studies. She rose through the academic ranks to become Associate Professor. She was a scholar who published many papers, books or book chapters on ethics, religion and social issues. Hannah Kinoti was visiting lecturer at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada, and at St. Lawrence University, Kenya Campus. Hannah Kinoti was external examiner in several universities in East Africa and abroad. A fellowship at the Harvard University Medical School gave her an opportunity to pursue her keen interest in the relationship between health and religion. She was an active member of several theological bodies.

Hannah Wangeci was born on August 1, 1941 in Nyeri. Her parents, the late Rueben Gathii and Ruth Wanjiru were pioneer Christians at the Church of Scotland Mission, Tumutumu. She was sister to the late Isaac Nderitu, Susannah Wangari, Simeone Kimwe, Tito and Esau. In 1967, Hannah Wangeci Gathii married George Kinoti and they were blessed with five children: Karimi, Wanjiru, Kathambi, Kimathi and Wangari; and grand daughter, Malika.

To the family and all who interacted with her, she set a remarkable example of love and selfless service; generosity and hospitality; hard work and determination; humility and freedom from meaningless conventions. We are deeply grateful to God for the life and service of Hannah Kinoti.

Hannah Wangeci Kinoti, 'God will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people' (Hebrews 6:10).

ADRIAN HASTINGS  
23 JUNE 1929 – 30 MAY 2001

by Ingrid Lawrie  
University of Leeds

Adrian Hastings, emeritus professor of Theology at the University of Leeds, and Editor of *Journal of Religion in Africa* from 1985 to 1990, died after a brief illness on 30 May 2001 at the age of 71. A memorial service of thanksgiving for his life was held at the Church of the Holy Rosary, Louis Street/Chapelton Road, at Leeds on Saturday 22 September 2001. For his achievements for the academic study of the religions of Africa as scholar and as Editor of *Religion in Africa*, see David Maxwell, 'Editorial', in *Journal of Religion in Africa* 29, 2 (1999): 135-139, and Ingrid Lawrie, 'Adrian Hastings: An African Bibliography, 1950-1999', in *Journal of Religion in Africa* 29, 2 (1999): 230-236.

In 1996, Adrian Hastings wrote a short piece for this Newsletter about the *Journal of Religion in Africa* to mark the recently established link between the AASR and the *JRA*. In it he spoke of the increase in the *Journal's* size during his editorship (to keep pace with the amount of material received), his policy of producing, wherever possible, themed issues, and of accepting important papers that many other periodical editors would dismiss as too long. He lamented 'Africa's book famine', and the small number of African contributors, but celebrated the increasing success of the *JRA's* companion monograph series, *Studies of Religion in Africa*. In conclusion, he hoped that collaboration with the AASR would enhance 'the imaginative cooperation of a network of scholarly communities' upon which the *JRA's* success depended.

In reviews of Adrian's life, the *Journal of Religion in Africa* can almost be overlooked. During the years of his editorship, 1985 to 1999, he did so much else: running a busy university Department of Theology and Religious Studies; giving numerous public lectures; producing articles and reviews at an alarming rate; writing books, including *The Church in Africa 1450-1950* (often described as 'magisterial'); editing and contributing to three very substantial volumes, *Modern Catholicism*, *A World History of Christianity* and the *Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*; developing a passionate involvement in the troubles of the former Yugoslavia. All the while, the work that he described as a 'treadmill' was going on in the back-

ground and, indeed, it is possible (without being too fanciful) to see Adrian's editorship of the *Journal* as a microcosm of his other spheres of activity.

First, he was a superb organiser (though no one would guess this from the appearance of his professorial room in the department in Leeds), and an imaginative, meticulous forward planner. The punctual appearance of the *JRA*, the huge output of writing, his academic management, his chairing of committees (including those on Balkan affairs) and much else testify to this.

He could be ruthless in rejecting articles or demanding revisions. In all his editorial projects, distinguished scholars were sometimes surprised (to say the least) to find their contributions returned for substantial re-writing, but this was part of Adrian's perfectionism, his pursuit of the highest standards in whatever he did. He pointed out that an editor's job was not conducive to making friends, but his charm, and dislike of remaining on bad terms with anyone, ensured that he rarely made enemies for long. In his running of the department too, his absolute commitment to excellence could lead to conflict at times, but because he did not bear grudges it was difficult for others to do so.

While his perfectionism could not allow him to accept anything for the *JRA* that he considered sub-standard, his pedagogic and pastoral dedication would lead him to write extended letters advising young scholars on how their work could be improved. The teacher in him was never far below the surface, and in conversation he could rarely resist instructing as well as entertaining. His most impassioned letters to newspapers also had a didactic element: points of historical accuracy, precise population statistics, even the movements of the American Ambassador in Serbia. In the formal educational context, he introduced the teaching of African religious studies to the Leeds Department and his reputation attracted a number of postgraduates from Africa, who benefited not only from his academic guidance but also from his strong personal support. He ensured that after his retirement the connection with the continent would continue, as it does today.

Adrian wrote fluently, engagingly, quickly and copiously, but he was not prominent as a writer in the *JRA* because he believed that an editor should not submit articles to his own periodical (though this did not extend to reviews, where he was most generous with his time and talent). He broke his rule only once, in 1998, with a paper on King Pedro IV of the Kongo, but

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the first issue after his retirement contained a lively survey of 'African Christian Studies, 1967-1999'. His short editorials, however, are masterly introductions to the contents of an issue. Even where there is no connecting theme between the articles he does not falter:

Guinea Bissau, Tanzania and Cape Town; anthropological analysis, cultural history, theoretical debate, precise reconstruction of a Victorian community; ancestor veneration, Christianity and drumming, Muslim leadership patterns: the *Journal* remains a Noah's Ark in which everything African is welcome so long as its methodology is convincing and its findings fresh. (*JRA* XXVI.2, May 1996, p. 103)

Adrian himself had a dauntingly wide range of academic interests, but again and again African stories, examples, parallels break into his writings on apparently non-African subjects. He was committed to the continent, and published about it (the pamphlet *White Domination or Racial Peace?*), before he arrived there in 1958 as a parish priest in Masaka diocese, Uganda, and he remained committed to Africa and her people throughout his life. All who knew him rejoiced that he had been able to make his long-delayed return visit to East Africa just a few months before he died. It was a hugely successful trip, and he was proud and delighted to find many of his former pupils from Bukalasa minor seminary, as lawyers, doctors, bank managers, politicians, playing a leading part in Ugandan society.

His talent for friendship won love and respect from almost everyone he interacted with, and his strong practical support for younger scholars meant that a number of people can now say 'I owe my career to Adrian Hastings'. Several of his academic friends and colleagues have contributed to a memorial volume (originally planned as a *Festschrift*), *Christianity and the African Imagination: Essays in Honour of Adrian Hastings*, edited by David Maxwell with Ingrid Lawrie, published by Brill in November 2001.



## APPOINTMENTS &amp; OTHER NEWS

**Frans Wijzen** (1956) has been appointed Professor of Missiology at the RC University at Nijmegen, The Netherlands, on 1 June 2001. He will deliver his inaugural address on 19 April 2002. Dr. Wijzen is an associated married lay member of the Dutch Province of the RC (missionary) Society of African Missions. Since 1984, he served both as a missionary in Usukuma, Tanzania, for several years, doing long periods of research there, and as a part-time lecturer in Science of Religions and Missiology at UTP (a RC University for Theological and Pastoral Studies) at Heerlen, The Netherlands. When UTP was fused with the Faculty of Theology of Nijmegen University in 1991, Wijzen was appointed as a Lecturer in Missiology and Science of Religions at the Missiological Institute of the RC University at Nijmegen. He earned his Ph.D from Nijmegen University in 1993 for his thesis *There is only One God: A Social-Scientific and Theological Study of Popular Religion and Evangelization in Sukumaland, Northwest Tanzania* (Kampen: Kok, 1993). Further results of his studies of religion in Sukumaland may be found in his most recent publication, which he co-authored with the anthropologist Ralph Tanner, *Seeking the Good Life: Religion and Society in Usukuma, Tanzania* (Nairobi: Paulines, 2001). The authors contend in that book that, on the one hand, Sukuma indigenous religion, though functional in former small-scale society, is incapable of coping with the large-scale problems of the modern, globalising world; and, on the other hand, that the Sukuma wish to stick to their 'good life'. Therefore, they retained their cultural patterns much more than other Bantu societies and did not become much involved in the Christian or Muslim 'civilisations'.

Prof. **Rosalind Hackett**, Ex-officio member of the AASR-Executive, spent the academic year 2000-2001 at Harvard University Law School and at the Center for the Study of World Religions (also at Harvard University) working on a project on Media, Religion and Human Rights in Africa. In addition, she taught a class this summer on 'Media, Religion and Culture in Ghana: Field Research and Evaluation' at the Central University College in Accra, Ghana. She also informs us that a new CD Rom on *Art and Life in Africa* has been produced by the University of Iowa. It has a lot on religion and is very useful for teaching. More information on it may be found on the web site of the University of Iowa.



Dr. **Mary Getui**, chair of the Department of Religious Studies, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya, and Member of the IAHR-Executive, has been appointed Director of Undergraduate Studies at Kenyatta University.

Dr. **Grace Wamue**, AASR-Vice President, holds a fellowship at SOAS (School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London,) from 23<sup>rd</sup> September to 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2001, where she participates in the East Africa Visiting Scholars Scheme at SOAS.

Prof. **Robert M. Baum**'s *Shrines of the Slave Trade: Diola Religion and Society in Precolonial Senegambia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) received a prize from the American Academy of Religion for the best first book in the history of religions.

Dr. **Ezra Chitando**, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies, Classics & Philosophy of the University of Zimbabwe, Harare, stayed at Uppsala University from September to December 2001 on an African Guest Researcher Scholarship at the Nordic Africa Institute for research on 'The Influence of Christianity on Popular Culture: A Study of Gospel Music in Zimbabwe' in the context of NAI's research programme 'Cultural Images in and of Africa', run by Mai Palmberg.

Rev. Dr. **Roswith Gerloff**, Leeds University, reports that the Council of African Christian Communities in Europe / Conseil des Communautés chrétiennes d'expression africaine en Europe (CACCE), which represents African Christian organisations in Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, gathered an assembly of African and African Caribbean Christian Leaders in Europe at La Maison d'Altitude La Recontre, Arzier, Geneva, from the 14-17 June 2001 after having met previously in Leeds in 1997, in Cambridge in September 1999, in Belgium in December 1999, and in Berlin in September 2000. The CACCE decided to reconstitute itself into an international organisation that covers the whole of Europe. It will now be known as Council of Christian Communities of an African Approach in Europe / Conseil des Communautés Chrétiennes d'expression africaine en Europe (CCCEAE). It intends to promote fellowship and the Christian gospel, to serve African Christian Communities in the pursuit of human and socio-economic development, justice and peace, and to provide a platform for networking and the creation of strategic partnerships. It decided to locate its headquarters in Berlin, Germany, as a symbol of remembrance of the Berlin Congo Conference, held in 1884, which facilitated the division of Africa.

Elections were held and Rev. Kounkou Dominique (France) was elected to the office of Chair, Archbishop Fidelia Onyuku-Opukiri (United Kingdom) to that of Vice Chair, Rev. Ronald A. Nathan (United Kingdom) to that of General Secretary, Alimamy Sesay (Germany) to that of Vice Secretary, and Rev. Dr. Joseph Kabongo (Switzerland) to that of Treasurer. CCCEAE understand itself as called to stand up and speak up for change socially, politically, economically, academically and spiritually. The European Community needs it! This goes beyond migrants being just a source of cheap and disposable labour. Europe needs African and African Caribbean Christians in their totality to speak up and stand up for the biblical cause of righteousness and freedom. They must stand shoulder to shoulder and engage the call to Christian Mission that results in holistic liberation for all. Their freedom and liberation is intertwined with those of all the peoples of Europe. For further information contact one may contact in France, Rev. Kounkou Dominique (+33.1.60087257); in UK, Archbishop Fidelia Onyuku-Opukiri (+44.20.83409962), and Rev. Dr. Roswith Gerloff (+44.113.233 3651); in Germany, Alimamy L. Sesay (+49.30.61288635) and Pastor Alex Afram (+49.40.2719275); in Switzerland, Rev. Dr. Joseph M. Kabongo (+41.79.3190685); and in Belgium, Rev. Didubi Way-Way (+32.2.687 7213).



## FOCUS ON INSTITUTIONS

### THE RELIGIONS OF AFRICA AT BAYREUTH UNIVERSITY

N.B.: The data for this contribution were taken from <http://www.bayreuth.de> and <http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/Afrikanologie/IAS/>, and from the paper by A-sonzeh F.-K. Ukah, 'The Study of Religions in Africa: The Bayreuth Traditions', which he read at the conference 'European Traditions in the History of the Religions of Africa' at Schloss Thurnau, *Wissenschaftszentrum* of the University of Bayreuth, in Germany, from 4 to 7 October 2001 (JP).

Bayreuth is a small town of 74.000 inhabitants in the region of Ober-Franken in the federal state of Bavaria in the South of Germany. Its university is young and small: it was founded in 1972, began teaching in 1975 and has now 8.000 students. Being young and small may, however, be an advantage. As Germany lost its colonies in Africa after World War I, 'African Studies' failed to develop in German universities. They are absent from them even now, except in Bayreuth, which is the only university in Germany with a young, but large and well-developed, Institute of African Studies (IAS).

IAS was founded only in 1991. It co-ordinates the teaching on, and research in, Africa of four of its five faculties. IAS also has an Africa Centre, the Iwalewa-Haus, which is famous for its African cultural events and its collection of African cultural items. IAS also has a library with 50.000 books and 240 periodicals on Africa. It has currently two Visiting Professors from Nigeria, the economist Prof. N.I. Ikpeze from the University of Nsukka, and the historian of Christianity in Africa, Prof. O.U. Kahlu, from the University of Nigeria and the Centre for the World Religions of Harvard University. In addition, two more professors from Nigeria, one from former Zaire, now Congo, and one from Ivory Coast/USA are also staying at Bayreuth University for teaching and/or research. IAS is a member of AEGIS, a network of universities in Europe specialising in African Studies. It maintains research partnerships with several universities in Africa, notably in West Africa, the Sahel and East Africa: e.g. with the universities of Dakar, Abidjan, Lomé, Cotonou, Ouagadougou, Khartoum, and Nairobi, and with a research centre on 'Local Knowledge' at Bamako.

Two of the four faculties of Bayreuth University are particularly important for the study of the religions of Africa, to wit that of *Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaften* ('Linguistics and Literatures' [of Africa]), and that of *Kulturwissenschaften* ('the study of [African] cultures'). In addition to other academic staff, the former has a professor in 'Africanology' – or African Studies –, two professors in African Languages, three in the study of the various literatures of Africa (indigenous, francophone and lusitophone, and anglophone), two in African Islam, and one in Arabic Studies.

The latter has a professor in *Religionswissenschaft* (the academic study of [African] religions), and another in 'religious socialisation'; two in Ethnology and one in Social Anthropology; one in the History of Africa, one in Medieval History, and one in Modern History; and, lastly, one in the Sociology of Developing Nations, and other academic staff.

Undergraduate and graduate degree courses are offered in Swahili Studies, and in African Studies. The former comprises an intensive training in Swahili and Arabic. The latter is wide ranging. It offers courses in African Arts, in particular modern African arts; in African literatures, oral as well as written ones, particularly the Swahili one; in African languages, with an emphasis on Swahili, Hausa and Bambara; in the Anglophone literature of Africa; in the Socio-Linguistics of Arabic in Africa; in African Ethnology, with an emphasis on the Sahel, and the Swahili area of East Africa; in African History, particularly of West and East Africa; in Islam, especially in Senegal, Nigeria and Sudan; in Modern History, with an emphasis on the former colonies of Germany in Africa; in African systems of law, especially in Benin, Ghana, Togo, Namibia and South Africa; in the Study of the Religions of Africa, with an emphasis on the interaction between Yoruba culture in Nigeria and Christianity, the 'Independent Churches' and 'New Religious Movements' in Nigeria; in the Social Geography of Africa, in particular of Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania and Tunisia; and in the Political Economy of Africa, especially of Nigeria, Tanzania and South Africa.

The two core departments devoted to the study of religions in Africa are the Department of Islamology, and that of 'Science of Religions'. The former was established in 1984 and chaired by Prof. Jamin M. Abun-Nasr, who had been trained in Beirut and Oxford, and had taught in African universities (Legon, Freetown, Ibadan) and in Berlin, till 1997. Its focus from 1984 to 1990 was on Islam in Nigeria. Its results appeared in a volume, edited by Abun-Nasr, entitled *Muslims in Nigeria* (1993). The next project, from

1990 to 1995, focused on Islam in Nigeria, Senegal, Egypt, Morocco and Mali. The current research project, under the new chair, Prof. Rainer Oßwald who specialises in Islam in Mauretania, focuses on Islamic education in East Africa in the context of globalisation, in particular as it develops in Zanzibar and Mombasa.

Students are involved in these research projects. They are therefore required to master either Swahili or Hausa, to spend much time in African societies in order that they may become their 'home away from home', and to develop partnerships with African students and scholars. The latter come to Bayreuth in exchange programmes, especially to work in the Islam in Africa Archive of the Department.

The Department of *Religionswissenschaft* was founded in 1986 and is chaired by Prof. Ulrich Berner. Its focus in teaching and research is on Christianity in Nigeria and its relation with the indigenous religions of Nigeria. It pursues that research in particular by inviting Nigerian scholars, such as Jacob Olupona in 1989, Osmund Anigbo in 1989-1990, Emefie Ikenga-Metuh in 1992, David Olayiwola in 1993, Friday Mbon in 1994, Cyril Imo, also in 1994, and Umar Danfulani in 1996-1997. In the context of the research programme 'Identity in Africa', Afe Adogame and Justin Omoyawojo, did Ph.D research on the processes of charismatisation and institutionalisation in two Nigerian Independent Churches (cf. Afe Adogame, *Celestial Church of Christ: The Politics of Cultural Identity in a West-African Prophetic-Charismatic Movement*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999). Another African scholar of religions who obtained a PhD at Bayreuth University is John Khamalwa from Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya. His thesis examined problems of inculturation in initiation rituals among the Bamasamba of Uganda.

The present research of the department focuses on African Christian movements in Nigeria and Germany, with Afe Adogame investigating the interface between migration and religion in Germany, and Asonzeh F.-K. Ukah concentrating on the Redeemed Christian Church in Nigeria.

In both the study of African Islam and African Christianity, processes of transformation are examined in the context of the rapid and deep socio-economic and political changes in Africa in the past two centuries and now.

A major handicap for Bayreuth University, and German Universities generally, in their effort to contribute to the training of academic manpower for African universities is the German language, which takes African scholars a long time and major effort to master.



## INVESTIGATING THE HISTORY OF THE BERLIN MISSION

N.B.: The data on BGMG below were taken from pamphlets in German distributed at the Bayreuth conference, 4-7 October, 2001 (JP).

The *Berliner Gesellschaft für Missionsgeschichte e.V.* (BGMG, 'Berlin Society for Mission History, registered association') was founded at the Humboldt University in Berlin in 1994. Its chair person is Prof. Dr. Andreas Feldtkeller, professor of Mission, Science of Religions, and Ecumenics at the Humboldt University. BGMG is an interdisciplinary association for cooperation in research on the archives of the Berlin Mission between scholars from Germany and other parts of the world who wish to use these archives for historical purposes. Its aims, therefore, are to foster dialogue between scholars interested in them in Germany and in other parts of the world. Its other aims are to publicise the value of these legacies – material as well as written – of missionary societies beyond the small circle of missiologists who currently use them; to initiate and support research on them; to see to it that missionary archives are properly stored and taken care of; to foster a critical dialogue about the religious and cultural heritage of the missionary organisations, especially with the German missionary societies themselves and to incite them to critically face and investigate their own history.

BGMG organised its third international conference in 1999 under the title *Mission und Gewalt* ('Mission and Violence'). Together with the *Evan-*

*gelische Akademie* at Berlin, it started a series of evening sessions on *Missionen: Grenzgänge zwischen Hegemonie und Dialog; Berliner Gespräche zur Missionsgeschichte* ('Missions: Border Cases between Hegemony and Dialogue; Berlin Conversations on Mission History'). It publishes the [monograph] series *Missionsgeschichtliches Archiv* ('Archive of Mission History') at the Franz Steiner Verlag in Stuttgart, Germany; and since 2000 also the *Berliner Beiträge zur Missionsgeschichte* ('Berlin Contributions to Mission History').<sup>2</sup>

BGMG's mail address is: *Berliner Gesellschaft für Missionsgeschichte e.V.*, c/o Humboldt Universität, Prenzlauer Promenade 149-152, D-13189, Germany. Phone/Fax: +49 (30) 47.97.138. E-mail: [contact@bgmg.de](mailto:contact@bgmg.de) ; internet: <http://www.bgmg.de>



## FELLOWSHIPS & SCHOLARSHIPS

### THE FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

#### *Introduction*

The Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP) provides opportunities for advanced study to exceptional individuals who will use this education to become leaders in their respective fields, furthering development in their own countries and greater economic and social justice worldwide. To ensure that Fellows are drawn from diverse backgrounds, IFP will

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also the reference to Pakendorf 2001 in the rubric Recent Publications.

actively recruit candidates from social groups and communities that lack systematic access to higher education.

### *General Guidelines*

The International Fellowships Program provides support for up to three years of formal graduate level study. Fellows will be selected from countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Russia, where the Ford Foundation maintains active overseas programs. U.S. nationals are not eligible, although Fellows may study in the United States.

Fellows are chosen on the basis of their leadership potential and commitment to community or national service, as well as for academic excellence. Fellows may enroll in masters or doctoral programs and may pursue any academic discipline or field of study that is consistent with the interests and goals of the Ford Foundation. The Foundation currently works in 15 fields to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation and advance human achievement.

Once selected, Fellows may enroll in universities in any part of the world, including their country of residence. The program will provide placement assistance to those Fellows not yet admitted to graduate school.

IFP support will enable Fellows to undertake short-term language study and training in research and computer skills prior to graduate school enrollment. New Fellows attend orientation sessions, and current Fellows participate in learning and discussion activities designed to create information and exchange networks among IFP Fellows worldwide. The program also encourages Fellows to maintain contact with the program and remain current in their respective fields after completing the fellowship period.

Because local conditions vary widely among the IFP countries, applicants must carefully follow the specific application guidelines, including deadlines for the submission of applications, provided by the relevant IFP partner organization.

### *Who Is Eligible?*

Applicants must be resident nationals or residents of an eligible IFP country. In addition, all IFP Fellows must:

- Demonstrate excellence in their undergraduate studies and hold a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent.



- Have experience in community service or development-related activities.
- Pursue a post-baccalaureate degree that will directly enhance their leadership capacity in an academic, policy, practical or artistic discipline or field corresponding to one or more of the Foundation's areas of endeavor.
- Present a plan specifying how they will apply their studies to social problems or issues in their own countries.
- Commit themselves to working on these issues following the fellowship period.

#### *Current IFP Regions and Countries*

China, India, Indonesia (Asia), Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal (Africa), Chile, Peru, Guatemala, Mexico (Latin America), and Russia.

#### *IFP Fields of Study*

IFP Fellows may choose to study in any academic discipline or field of study related to the Ford Foundation's three grant-making areas, which are:

1. Asset Building and Community Development; Children, Youth and Families, Sexuality and Reproductive Health, Work-Force Development, Development Finance and Economic Security, Environment and Development, Community Development;
2. Education, Media, Arts and Culture, Education Reform, Higher Education and Scholarship;
3. Religion, Society and Culture, Media, Arts and Culture, Peace and Social Justice, Human Rights, International Cooperation, Governance, and Civil Society.

#### *The Application Process*

All applications must be submitted to IFP offices in the country or region where the applicant resides. Applications are reviewed and evaluated by a local or regional panel composed of scholars and practitioners from various academic fields, who also make the final selections. The level and duration of the award will be determined as part of the placement process. Ford Foundation staff and their family members may not serve on selection panels and are not eligible to apply for IFP awards. Members of selection committees, staff of the organizations managing the program in the various regions and their family members are also ineligible for IFP awards. IFP Fellowship offices determine the application deadlines and selection schedule.

*IFP Fellowship Offices*

For more information on IFP, or to apply for a fellowship, interested individuals may contact IFP partner organization in their region listed below. General information on IFP may be found on the Ford Foundation's website: < [www.fordfound.org](http://www.fordfound.org) >

*Future Sites*

IFP activities in the Philippines, the Middle East and North Africa (Egypt and Palestine), Southern Africa (Mozambique and South Africa) and Brazil will begin in late 2001. Contact information for IFP partners in these countries and regions will be posted on this site as soon as it is available.

*Current IFP Partners in Africa:*

For Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, please contact:

Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)

East African Development Bank Building

Plot 4 Nile Avenue, P.O. Box 7110, Kampala, Uganda

Phone: (256) (41) 256251/2; Fax: (256) (41) 342007

Website: < [www.iucea.org](http://www.iucea.org) >

E-mail: [ifp@iucea.org](mailto:ifp@iucea.org) or [IUC@inforcom.co.ug](mailto:IUC@inforcom.co.ug)

For Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal, please contact:

The Association of African Universities (AAU)

PO Box AN 5744, Accra North, Ghana

Website: [www.aau.org/](http://www.aau.org/) E-mail: [ifp@aau.org](mailto:ifp@aau.org)



## IAS FELLOWSHIPS AT BAYREUTH UNIVERSITY

The *Institut für Afrikastudien* (IAS, Institute of African Studies) at Bayreuth University invites applications for a six months Visiting Professorship at the IAS. Successful candidates are expected to make a theoretical and conceptual contribution to the IAS current interdisciplinary research programme on *Lokales Handeln in Afrika im Kontext globaler Einflüsse* ('Local [Modes of Inter-] Action in Africa in the Context of Global Influences') through regular courses and (staff) seminars. Candidates may have a background in either the Humanities or in the Social Sciences, but should have an interest and experience in interdisciplinary research.

Since candidates need a personally responsible host, they need mostly to be proposed by a member of the institute. Applications should further be supported by a complete CV, list of publications, names and addresses (mail/e-mail/phone/fax) of two referees, and a proposal on a general project on, and their personal contribution to, the research programme *Lokales Handeln in Afrika im Kontext globaler Einflüsse*.

Further information may be obtained from Prof.Dr. Eckhard Breiting, Institute for African Studies, Bayreuth University, D 95440 Bayreuth, Germany; Tel: +49 (921) 55.3571; Fax: +49 (921) 55.3627.

## ASC VISITING FELLOWSHIPS

The African Studies Centre at Leiden, The Netherlands, was founded in 1948. It is one of Europe largest research institutes and documentation centres for Sub-Saharan African Studies, particularly the social-scientific ones. It has a staff of forty researchers, and a large specialist library stocked with 55.000 books and reports, some 600 journals, four African daily newspapers, newspaper microfiches, and development plans of many African states. It is funded by three Dutch government ministries and provides consultancy and advisory services to Dutch and other agencies involved with Africa.

Current ASC-research programmes are organised around three themes. 'Conflict, Conciliation and Control in Africa' is concerned with recent developments in African politics, and the mechanisms of formal and informal control, conflict and conciliation. It aims to understand recent changes through case studies in countries in West, East and Southern Africa and to arrive at theoretical informed explanations of them.

'Globalisation and Sociocultural Transformation in Africa' studies the connections which globalisation establishes across communities and cultural traditions and the creative and discordant responses of African people in Africa and in the diaspora to the need to reconsider customary notions of locality, group identity, and 'tradition' under conditions of scarcity, insecurity and conflict. It seeks to develop new theory about globalisation through empirical research in West, South-Central and East Africa, and in Europe.

'Society and Resources in Africa: Resource Management and Social Security in the Context of a Changing Natural Environment' studies the relationships between social, political and economic crises of African societies and the degradation of their natural environment through drought, desertification, land degradation and deforestation. The changes in the management of natural resources, livelihood strategies and social security are central to this research, which is carried out in the drylands of West and East Africa and in the coastal zone of East Africa in both their rural and urban areas.

ASC has an active Visiting Fellows Programme for scholars who use their time in Leiden for data analysis and writing, often in a joint research project with one or more ASC staff members. They have access to the ASC library and computer facilities, as well as those of Leiden University. They are expected to contribute to ASC seminar programme and to work on papers and books for publication. The maximum stay of Visiting Fellow is six months, and the minimum three.

Applications should include the applicant's curriculum vitae, names of two referees, and a statement of the purpose of the stay at ASC. The latter should contain: the subject of the proposed research; its scientific relevance; the planned output (article, book, report); the relationship of the proposed research subject with one of ASC's three research programmes; a tentative work schedule; a copy of at least one international publication; and mention of any specific needs during the stay at ASC.

Applications for a fellowship in the first half of a year must reach ASC before May 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year; and those for the second half of a year before November 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year.

Applications may be directed to: Dr. Gerti Hesseling, Director, African Studies Centre, PO Box 9555, 2300 RB Leiden, The Netherlands.

Phone ASC: +31 (71) 527.3372; Fax +31 (71) 527.3344.

Web site: <http://asc.leidenuniv.nl/>

E-mail: [asc@fsw.leidenuni.nl](mailto:asc@fsw.leidenuni.nl)



## JOURNALS & SERIES

Abdulkader I. Tayob  
JSR-Editor

### *JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION*

The *Journal for the Study of Religion* is the official publication of ASRSA, the Association for the Study of Religions (Southern Africa), which is an IAHR affiliate, admitted in 1980. Its bi-annual journal was also founded in 1980 and then named *Religion in Southern Africa*. In 1987, it was renamed *Journal for the Study of Religion*, under which name so far fourteen volumes have appeared. JSR was launched in 1987 in its current format to reflect the field of religious studies in the region.

Since 1998, JSR has become a medium for publishing issues around a particular theme. Some of these themes have included: 'Religion as Ethos' (11: 1, 1998, on religious education); 'Religion and Politics in South Africa' (11:

2, 1998); 'African Religions' (12: 1, 1999); 'Sacred Space in Southern Africa' (13: 1, 2000); 'Religion: Rhetoric and Politics' (14: 1, 2001). The next issue (14: 2, 2001) focuses on 'Feminist Spirituality'.

For more information on subscriptions and purchase of individual copies, contact the editor Abdulkader Tayob at his e-mail address: [tayob@humanities.uct.ac.za](mailto:tayob@humanities.uct.ac.za).



Acton Publishers, Nairobi

### *AFRICAN RELIGION IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS*

Acton Publishers (PO Box 74419, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya; phone +254.2.-608.810), directed by Prof. Jesse K.N. Mugambi (e-mail: [jmugambi@iconnect.co.ke](mailto:jmugambi@iconnect.co.ke)), has recently added a new series, *African Religion in Global Contexts*, to its several other successful series. In the new series, the following three volumes have been published so far:

Gerrie ter Haar 2001, *African Christians in Europe*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers, (= Gerrie ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise: African Christians in Europe*. Cardiff: Academic Press, 1998<sup>1</sup>).

Gerrie ter Haar (ed.) 2001, *Religious Communities in the Diaspora*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers, (= Gerrie ter Haar, *Strangers and Sojourners: Religious Communities in the Diaspora*. Leuven: Peeters, 1998<sup>1</sup>).

John Vincent Taylor 2001, *Christian Presence amid African Religion*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers, (= J.V. Taylor, *The Primal Vision: Christian Presence amid African Religion*. London: SCM Press, 1963<sup>1</sup>, 1965<sup>2</sup>).

This is, however, not the only new series Acton Press has launched lately. In 2000, *Christian Theology in African Scholarship*, was launched with monographs by Kwesi Dickson (2000), Mercy Oduyoye (2000), and Jean-Marc

Ela (2001), and a collective volume edited by Jesse N.K. Mugambi & Mika Vähäkangas (2001). They are all listed below under Recent Publications.

The same goes for those in another new series, *Biblical Studies in African Scholarship*, with collective volumes with papers on OT presented in a conference in Nairobi in October 1999, edited by Mary Getui, Victor Zinkuratre and Knut Holter in 2000; with papers on NT, presented in a conference in Hammanskraal, South Africa, in August 1999, edited by T.S. Maluleke, Mary Getui and Justin Ukpong in 2001, and M.T. Speckman's revised PhD thesis on *The Bible and Human Development* at UNISA, Pretoria, South Africa, also in 2001.

Another new series is *Studies in Social Change in Africa*. Its first volume is a collection of papers on social change in East Africa by scholars in the Humanities from East Africa and the USA which were presented at a conference at the University of Nairobi in 2000. They were edited by J.M. Behe-mula and J. Brockington.

Relatively new is the *EATWOT Kenya Chapter* with two collective volumes edited by Mary Getui & E. Obeng (1999) and Mary Getui & Matthew Theuri (2001). There is also a new volume, edited by Larry Henderson (2000), in the series *African Christian Biographies*. Lastly, to its oldest and biggest series, *The African Christianity Series*, two new volumes were added: one edited by Mary Getui (2000), and a monograph by S.K. Gitau (2000). The success of this series is apparent from three second editions in 2000, one edited by J.K. Mugambi & A.N. Wasike; another by A.N. Wasike & D.W. Waruta; and one by D.W. Waruta & the late H.W. Kinoti.

Acton Press has an excellent web site: <http://www.acton.co.ke/> with information not only on its background, mission, vision and standards, but it lists also its catalogue, services, and latest books. It also has a list of the now already 130 authors and/or editors of, and contributors to, its books, and a site for ordering books electronically in East Africa, and elsewhere. And lastly, it has a list of the bookshops, in Nairobi, Dar-es-Salaam, Kampala, Lusaka, Harare, Maputo, Johannesburg, Lagos, Accra, Addis Ababa, and Rome, where its books may be bought.

## *AFRICAN SOURCES FOR AFRICAN HISTORY*

Brill, at Leiden, will publish critical editions of indigenous African narrative sources for the history of sub-Saharan Africa in paperbacks and at prices which, it hopes, will be accessible to scholars and students in Africa too. The series will concentrate on narrative sources from before 1950. The first volume in *African Sources for African History* is Conrad 2001 (see Recent Publications).



### REVIEW

by Jacob Olupona  
University of California, Davis

Joseph M. Murphy & Mei-Mei Sanford (eds.) 2001, *Osun across the Waters: A Yoruba Goddess in Africa and the Americas*. Bloomington (Indiana): Indiana University Press.

Murphy and Sanford's *Osun across the Waters* provides us with an exciting and informative look at the richness of the Osun goddess as the 'seventeenth' principal paired Odu of Ifa. It is fitting to note that the seventeen contributors to this work give us with a refreshingly new taste of African orality, divination and ritual from a diversity of perspectives. I find these contributions to be accurate and authoritative in their presentations of the complexities and significance of this Yoruba deity and way of life. Here Murphy and Sanford have collected a diverse, yet representative, series of articles that reflect how Osun has come to represent the identities of African and African diasporic peoples throughout the Afro-Atlantic world. It is a work in many ways reminiscent of Osun, in that it nurtures us with the presence of a wisdom that transcends both time and space.



Briefly touching on only some of these contributions, I would like to note that Rowland Abiodun's contribution, 'Hidden Power', is a remarkable insight into the complexity of Osun's power. The coolness of her character, as well as her relationship to Olodumare and the other principal Odu, is symbolic of the ethical teachings and gender roles of Ifa that contemporary gender studies have taken an interest in. These themes are also addressed in such contributions as David Ogungbile's 'Eerindinlogun', which focuses on such concepts as women's power and the principle of healing, or Lindsay Hales' emphasis on the gender dynamics of Osun /Oxum in 'Mama Oxum'.

In Isabel Castellanos's contribution, 'A River of Many Turns', and in Ieda Machado Ribeiro dos Santos's contribution, 'In This City Everyone Is Oxum's', and Manuel Vega's 'Mae Meninha', we see a glimpse of how the values, ideas and ethics of Osun have evolved within Afro-Cuban societies. Although the names, rituals and concepts have changed slightly, the power of Osun continues to be observed through these diasporic communities. In Yeye Cachita's contribution, 'Ochun in a Cuban Mirror', Cachita presents us with an African diasporic look at Osun emerging over a synthesis of Afro-Cuban beliefs among the community of La Caridad devotees. In recent years with the changing US demographics due to increased African immigration, we are seeing increasing interest in American Ifa communities. These trends are reflected in the American Osun communities examined in such chapters as George Brandon's 'Ochun in the Bronx' and Rachel Harding's 'What Part of the River You're In'.

In my own contribution, "Orisa Osun", I am privileged to focus on Africa's Osun in such roles as her association with the values of thrift, entrepreneurship and commerce so prominent among the admired market women of Africa. Additionally, the discussion of the fourteen day Osun festival and ritual of Sacred Kingship, demonstrates the pre-eminence of this deity in Yoruba institutions that have emerged in ways that I refer to as a modern civil religion. By this I refer to the role Osun has taken in the reaffirmation that many Yoruba cities and towns are undertaking in expressing their core values and mythic-history.

In subsequent discussions of Afro-Atlantic values and cultures, Diedre Ba-dejo provides a thorough analysis of the sources of authority, gender and power in his contribution, 'Authority and Discourse in the Orin Odun Osun'. I must also note the excellent contribution of Wande Abimbola in his article 'The Bag of Wisdom'. Here Abimbola discusses the too infrequently

examined relationship between Osun and the historical-mythical origins of Yoruba divination.

On the aesthetic side, Cornelius Adepegba's work, 'Osun and Brass', provides an insightful interpretation of Osun related concepts in West African religious art. The same can be said for Robert Thompson's presentation of African diasporic Oshun art in 'Orchestrating Water and the Wind'. In discussing the Lucumi Altar tradition, Ysamur Flores-Pena focuses on the significance of these sacred centers and their connections to Osun/Ochun.

When we view the totality of these contributions, we must conclude that *Osun across the Waters* is representative of a number of new works that are coming out of the Afro-Atlantic world that are written by both scholars of African studies and African practitioners themselves. This trend indicates that Yoruba/Ifa studies in particular are quite advanced in the overall field of African studies. When African traditional beliefs begin to compose a thorough and detailed literature, it is an indication that we are dealing with complex systems that are well integrated in the mind, body and spirit of Africa and African diasporic peoples.

*Osun across the Waters* is part of a new literature that is developing its own unique method and approach that Afro-Atlantic scholars will continue to enjoy and appreciate. It is a synthesis of both academic analysis and insider's interpretation that captures the self-understanding of traditions, which the contributors have raised. It is part of a process in which part of an oral tradition becomes written but not in a canonical way. This process is not new to the study of African religion. We have seen faiths such as Christianity and Islam change from oral traditions and teachings to an authoritative text written down by their respective followers. Works such as Murphy and Sanford's *Osun across the Waters* and Sandra T. Barne's *Africa's Ogun*, may some day have the distinction of being "semi-bibles" in that they could become the historical texts that future generations of scholars and Africans will refer to in attempting to comprehend this vast tradition.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Abbink, G.J., 2000, 'Loof den Heer!: Jeugd en religie in Afrika', in I. van Kessel & H. ter Borg (eds.) 2000, *Beelden van Afrika*. Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 102-111.
- Adamo, D.T., 2001, *Africa and Africans in the Old Testament*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers, ISBN 23.9966.888.50.0, K.shs 900 in East Africa; US\$ 24 elsewhere.
- Adjeoda, R., 2001, *Ordre politique et rituels thérapeutiques chez les Tem du Togo*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 294 pp., F160.
- Agadjanian, V., 1999, 'As Igrejas ziones no espaço sócio-cultural de Moçambique urbano (anos 1980 e 1990)', in Bastian, Guichard & Messiant 1999b: 415-424.
- Ahmed, H., 2000, *Islam in Nineneenth-century Wallo, Ethiopia: Revival, Reform and Reaction*. Leiden: Brill, xx + 232 pp., cloth, ISBN 90.04.11909.4, EUR 63, US\$ 78.
- Akrong, A., 1998, 'The Historic Mission of African Independent Churches', in *Research Review, New Series* [Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana] 12, 2.
- Akrong, A., 2000, 'Neo-Witchcraft Mentality in Popular Christianity', in *Research Review, New Series* 16.
- Akrong, A., 2001, 'Towards a Theology of Witch and Evil Spirits', in *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 4 (June 2001).
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