



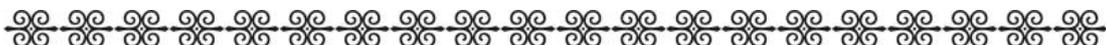
7TH BIENNIAL AASR CONFERENCE IN AFRICA

**PROGRAM
AND
BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

**RELIGION, SEXUALITY, AND IDENTITY
IN AFRICA & THE AFRICAN DIASPORA**

**ISSER CONFERENCE CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON**

JULY 26 – 29, 2016



PROGRAMME

26/07/2016: ARRIVAL: HOTELS

26/07/2016: DAY ONE

08:00 – 09:30 OPENING CEREMONY

08:00 – 08:30: Ushering in of invited guests and conference participants with cultural display by Abibigromma

08:30 – 08:05: Introduction of Chairperson- Dr. Rabiatu Ammah, Member of the AASR; Former Head, Dept. for the Study of Religions, UG; and Member of the Council of State, Republic of Ghana.

08:05 – 08:10: Chairperson's response

08:10 – 08:20: A word from the Head of Department, Rev. Dr. George Ossom-Batsa, UG.

08:20 – 08:30: A word from the Dean, Prof. Kodzo B. Gavua, School of Arts, UG.

08:30 – 08:40: A word from the Provost, Samuel Agyei-Mensah, College of Humanities, UG.

08:40 – 08:50: A word from the Pro-Vice, Prof. John Gyapong, ORID, UG.

08:50 – 90:00: A word from the Secretary General, IAHR, Prof. Afe Adogame

09:00 – 09:15: Welcome address: Prof. Ernest Aryeetey, Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana

09:15 – 09:25: Response: Prof. Elias Bongmba, President of AASR

09:25 – 09:30: Chairperson's closing remarks

09:30 – 10:30: KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Chair: Rabiatu Ammah

Rev. Prof. Emeritus John S. Pobee: Human Families together
Searching for Renewed Identity: An African Theological
Contribution

10:30 – 11:00: Break – Snacks

11:00 – 13:00: Concurrent Session I

I. CHURCHES AND THE LGBT DEBATE IN AFRICA

Chair: Lovemore Togarasei

Traci C. West: “Can We Talk? Prospects and Impediments for U.S.-
African Christian Solidarity on Ending Sexual Violence Against
Lesbian, Transgender, and Heterosexual Women”

Martin Mujinga: “Triple Oppression in God’s Household: The
Experiences of Gay Migrants in Churches in the City of
Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

W. Justin Ilboudu: “African Christianity and Homosexuality: Beyond
Rhetoric of Sin”

Adeola Kehinde Adedayo: “Christian Doctrine Of Sanctification And
The LGBT Debate In Africa”

II. RELIGION, SEXUALITY AND MEDIA

Chair: Abel Ugba

David O. Ogungbile: “Visual Terrorism and Social Violence: An
Analysis of Sexual Body in a Nigeria’s Print Media”

Victor T. Odewale: “Mediatizing Sexual Scandals: An Analysis of Print Media Coverage of Clergy Sexual Scandals in Nigeria”

Mobolaji Oyebisi Ajibade: “Pentecostal Spirituality in Electronic Media as Tools for Curbing Adolescence illicit Sexual life in South-Western Nigeria.”

Dominic Wemochiga Amonzem: “Dilemmas of the Ethnographer: Researching Women's Roles in Kasena Patriarchal Marriage Practices”

III. SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY IN AFRICA

Chair: Afe Adogame

Loreen Maseno: “Thou shalt bear a Wild Man: Conceptualizing Hagars’ Sexuality over Her Life Course”

Donatus Pius Ukpong: “God Created them Male and Female: Towards a Theology of Sexual Identity in Africa”

Jacob Kehinde: “By Their Fruit You Shall Know Them”: An Index for Generating Sexual and Religious Identities among the Yoruba People of Nigeria”

Joseph Ayanlola: “Male and Female He Created Them: Towards a Biblical Understanding of Gender Equality”

IV. RELIGION AND GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICA

Chair: Ben-Willie Golo

Mustapha Adebayo Bello: “Between Contradictions and Gender Equity: A Discourse on Disparity in Male and Female Sexuality in Islam”

Christian F. W. Gbekor: “The Role of Religion in Promoting Gender Equality in Africa”

Jibromah O. K.: “Marginalization of the Girl-Child: A Case Study of Selected Christian Homes in Ondo West Local Government Area of Nigeria”

Oyeronke Olademo: “Religion and Gender Construct in Work Place Relations”

13:00 – 14:30: Break – Lunch

14:30 – 16:30: Concurrent Session II

I. RELIGION, SEXUALITY, VIOLENCE AND HIV/AIDS

Chair: Gerrie ter Haar

Elliot Masomera: “Towards an innovative reconfiguration of the practice of Runyoka as an African indigenous response to the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS”

Gbenda Joseph Sarwuan: “Cultural Norms Of Gender And HIV/AIDSs Prevalence In Benue State, Nigeria”

Silindiwe Zuingowanisei: “Gender-based Violence in African Traditional Religion: The Case of Zimbabwe”

Kupakwashe Mtata: “Women in Pursuit of Power: Women Pentecostal Charismatic Preachers in East Africa”

II. TEACHING AFRICAN SEXUALITIES

Chair: Abamfo Atiemo

Ullrich Kleinhempel: “Where anthropology and spirituality meet: Eros, Libido and Force of Life – concepts of common origin in

African Traditional and Platonic world view and their re-emergence in the focus of debates on personhood and sexuality in modernity”

Adekunle Dada: “Evolving an Inclusive Hermeneutics of Sexuality in African Christianity”

A. A. Adediran, K. G. Adelegun and Grace Oke: “Teachers’ Perception of the Teaching and Learning of Sex Education in Secondary Schools”

Fortune Sibanda: “Teaching African Sexualities in Africa: The Case of Rastafari in Zimbabwe”

III. CONTESTING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN AFRICA

Chair: David O. Ogungbile

Moses O. Okai and Emmanuel O. Imasuen: “Religion, Insurgency and Gender Based Violence in Africa: The Case of Nigerian Boko Haram”

Ngozi Nwobia: “Discourse of Silence! Exploring Gender Based Violence and Religious Intersection in South Eastern Nigeria”

Mwandayi Canisius: “When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face” (Gen.38: 14): Libido as a sell-out of men to gender based violence”

Maria Frahm-Arp: “My Husband is not Abusive, it’s the Devil in Him: How Women in Pentecostal and African Independent Churches Explain Violence against Them”

IV. QUEERING AND FEMINISM IN AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Chair: Jan Plavoet

Zethu Matebeni: “Dying to be queer: On being human and living in South Africa”

Ashley Lynch: “The Privilege of Passing: The Historical Erasure of Black Queer Masculine-of-Center Women in Africa and the African Diaspora”

Njoki N. Wane: “Complexities in the Margin: Queering Black Feminism in Canada”

Damaris Parsitau: “Sex is a very bad Sin: Sex, Purity and Women Bodies as Sites of Contestation in a Neo-Pentecostal Church in Kenya”

16:30 – 17:30: IAHR Women’s Scholars Network Meeting

17:30 – 18:30: Dinner

27/07/2016: DAY TWO

08:00 – 10:00: Concurrent Session III

I. CONTESTING MASCULINITIES

Chair: Babatunde Adedibu

Ben-Willie Golo and Ernestina Novieto: “How Can She Be the Head of the House?” Masculinity, Power and the African Christian Family in a Changing Society.

Maryann Mwangi: “From Hegemonic to Transformative Masculinity: The role of the Church in Africa as a catalyst in redeeming positive masculinity”

Elias Bongmba and Richard T. Talla: “Land and Authority in Postcolonial Africa: Catholic and Muslim Perspectives on Land as Mediating Commodity in Understanding Modernity, Authority, Identity in the Wimbun Community”

Ann E. Lopez: “Navigating the Leadership Conundrum: Experiences of Black Caribbean Female Educational Leaders in the Canadian Diaspora”

II. INDIGENOUS RELIGION, CULTURE AND LGBT DEBATE

Chair: Nana Abraham Kwakye

Philip Ademola Olayoku: “The Invasion of the African Ethico-Religious Spaces and the LGBT Debate in Nigeria”

Boakye Owusu Ansah: “Never in Our Land: Religious Attitudes towards the “Secret” LGBT Community in Africa”

Owolabi Joseph Laval & C. O. Ogunkunle: “An Examination of Homosexual and Sex Abuse: Nigerian Christian Perspective”

Uncheakolam E. Umejiaku: “Same-Sex Relationship in the Context of Igbo Traditional Values”

III. SEXUALITY, VIOLENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Chair: Corey Williams

Benson Igboin: “Homosexuality and Human Rights Discourse in Sub-Saharan Africa”

Nomatter Sande: “The Sacralisation of Human Rights: Faith and Sexual Orientation in Zimbabwe”

Olubusola Bosede Akinfenwa: “Religion, Sex Trafficking and Identity in Africa and the African Diaspora”

Isaac Baffour-Revind: “African Sexuality and the Era of Assisted Reproductive Technologies: A Case of Charismatic Christian Couples and the Practice of Surrogacy in Ghana”

IV. RELIGION AND GENDER IN AFRICA AND AFRICAN DIASPORA

Chair: David O. Ogungbile

Beatrice Okyere-Manu: Identity and Xenophobia in South Africa: An Ethical Dilemma to Faith Communities

Carmelia Aparecida Silva Miranda: “Religion, Identity and Gender in the African Diaspora: The Quilombola de Coqueiros - Bahia / Brazil”

Grace Sintim-Adasi: “Ghanaian Traditional Women Priestesses: Identity and Encounters”

Olaomo Yetunde Abolaji: “Women Activities in the Growth and Expansion of Christianity in Nigeria from 19th to mid-20th Century and their Implication for Contemporary Nigerian Churches”

10:00 – 12:00: PLENARY I:

METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL ISSUES

Chair: Afe Adogame

Adriaan van Klinken: Introduction: Feminist, Postcolonial and Queer Perspectives to Religion and Sexuality

Nina Hoel: Taking the Body Seriously, Taking Relationalities Seriously: An Embodied and Relational Approach to Ethnographic Research in the Study of (Lived) Religion

Damaris Parsitau: Holy Daughters, Sinful Bodies, Lustful Brothers: Researching Women Bodies as Sites of Tensions and Paradoxes in a Neo-Pentecostal Church in Kenya

Adriaan van Klinken: Religion and Queer Politics in Africa: Dealing with Theoretical and Methodological Challenges in the Development of a Research Project

12:00 – 12:30: Break – Snacks

12:30 – 14:30: Concurrent Session IV

I. BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS AND THE LGBT DEBATE

Chair: Abamfo Atiemo

Adewale David Ajewole, Oyeyemi Jumoke Jekayinfa, Aminat Azohu Aburime, Solomon Kehinde Olowookere and Olajide Emmanuel Bello: “Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality And Same-Sex Marriages In Africa Diaspora”

Samuel Oluwatosin Okanlawon: “Theological Perspective on Gender Differentiation and Human Sexuality in Relation to the LGBT Debate in Africa”

Bamidele Olusegun Fawenu: “The Agitation for Same-Sex Marriage in Nigeria: Interpreting Selected Bible Passages for the Christian Community”

Janice De-Whyte: “The Reproductive Rite: Female Fertility in Context”

Janice De-Whyte: “The Reproductive Rite: Female Fertility in Context”

II. RELIGION, MIGRATION AND SEXUALITY

Chair: Gerrie ter Haar

Lilian Cheelo Siwila: “Singing the Lord’s Song in a Foreign Land: Feminist Critique of Migration and Surveillance Theology”

Dorcas Dennis, Francis Benyah and Fredrick Acheampong: “Ghanaian Pentecostal Ritual Praxis as 'Technologies' of Gender and Sexuality in Ghanaian Transnational Migrant Spaces”

Afia Sun Kim: “The Voice of African Women Christian in Korea: Religion and sexuality issue of African Diaspora in Korea”

Babatunde Adedibu: “Who is afraid of Jesus’ People? Urbanisation and Public Space Appropriation by African Pentecostal -led Churches in London”

III. PENTECOSTALISM AND THE LGBT DEBATE

Chair: Kwabena Asamoah-gyadu

Aidan Kwame Ahaligah “*Pentecostalization, Redeeming Africa and the Politics of Homosexuality in Ghana’s Contemporary Public Sphere*”

Nicole Wagner: “This is the work of the Devil”: Negotiations about Atheism and same-sex relationships in a Neo-Pentecostal Church in Kenya”

Nathanael J. Homewood: “Wrestling with Homosexuality: Bodies in contact and Conflict during Deliverance”

Michael Tokunbo Bankole: “Nigeria Leadership of Orthodox Anglican Movement against Homosexuality in Global Anglican Communion”

IV. RELIGION AND GENDER IN AFRICA

Chair: Jan Platvoet

Enoch Olujide Gbadegesin, Elizabeth Ayoola Adeyemi-Adejolu and Victor Taiwo Odewale: “Rethinking Gender and Culture in Nigerian Socio-Religious Context”

Daniel Osei Bediako-Akoto: “Redeemed Sexuality: A Paradigm for Holistic Sexual Flourishing”

Danoye Oguntola Laguda “Gauging the Interface between Religion and Sexual Orientations among Students in Nigerian Universities: Lagos State University as a Case Study”

Adediran A. A. & Atanda J. O.: “Students’ Perception of the Effect of Sexual Harassment on Academic Performance of Female Students in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria”

14:30 – 15:30: Break – Lunch

15:30 – 17:30: Panels: Three Concurrent Session

PANEL I. CONVENER: KIM KNIBBE: TRANSNATIONAL RELIGION AND SEXUAL LIFE-STYLING: GLOBAL SEXUALITY AND ITS LOCAL INTERSECTIONS IN AFRICA AND ITS DIASPORA

Chair: Elias Bongmba

Brenda Bartelink: Exploring the Cultural Trajectory of Religion, Secularity and Sexuality in The Netherlands.

Kim Knibbe: Sexuality and Cultural Encounters in the African Diaspora in the Netherlands: A Framework for Research

Francesca Mininel: Virginity for Health: Social and Religious Constructions of Female Purity in the Era of AIDS.

Mody Ndiogou Faye: The Senegalese Feminine Youth and its Strategies of Bypassing of the Taboos in the daily real-life experience of its Sexuality

PANEL II. CONVENER: BENSON OHIHON IGBOIN - HOMOSEXUALITY, RELIGIONS, AFRICAN CULTURE AND WESTERN INFLUENCE

Chair: Elizabeth Amoah

Benson O. Igboin: Of Culture, Western Pressure and Gay Marriage in Africa

Segun Adebileje: African Religious Beliefs, Cultural Integrity, and Moral Values against Imposition of Western Ideology on Sexual Orientation

Babatunde Adedibu: God loves homosexuals but hates their acts!
Rhetoric and responses of London's African Pentecostal-led Churches to Human sexuality in a changing context

Ucheakolam E. Umejiaku: Same-sex Relationship in the Context of Igbo Traditional Values

**PANEL III: CONVENER: BENSON OHIHON IGBOIN:
HOMOSEXUALITY, RELIGIONS, AFRICAN
CULTURE AND WESTERN INFLUENCE**

Chair: Lovemore Togarasei

Ojo Joseph Rapheal: Before the Cloud gets Thicker: Understanding the Fundamental Spiritual Disconnect in Human Spirituality through Gay Debate

Adeyemi Olalekan: Eurocentric Influence on Sexuality Discourse in the African Space

Akiti Glory Alamu: An Analysis of Homosexuality and Holy Writ in Contemporary Nigerian Society

Patrick U. Nwosu: Roman Catholic Perspective of Sin and Homosexuality: Scrutinising the Signs of the Times

17:30 – 18:30: Dinner

28/07/2016: DAY THREE

06:00 - 14:00: Conference Tour: Cape Coast Castles

14:00 – 14:00: Lunch and Plenary II.

Chair: Elias Bongmba

Prof. Bright K. Gavua: Slavery and Identity Construction in Ghana:
The Religious Factor

29/07/2016: DAY FOUR

08:00 –1 0:00: Concurrent Session V

**I. RELIGIOUS VIEWS ON HUMANITY AND THE
LGBT DEBATE**

Chair: David O. Ogunbile

Awoniyi Sunday: “A Socio-Cultural Value of Human Sexuality Cum
Virginity in Africa: A Moral Enquiry of the Yoruba People of
Nigeria”

Fabunmi Samuel Kehinde: “Culture, Religion and Politics: A
Tripartite Discourse on Homosexuality in the Nigerian Public
Space”

Georgia Kasamias: “Explicit Secularism, Implicit Religious Violence:
the LGBT Community and Politics of the Ivory Coast”

Nathan Esala: “School, Social Class, Sexuality, Security and Reading
Ruth with Young Ghanaian Women”

II. RELIGION, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HIV/AIDS

Chair: William Corey

Helen Olomu Ishola-Esan: “Engaging Religious Leaders And Communities In Addressing Gender-Based Violence And Hiv/Aids In Africa”

Lovemore Togarasei: “Re-Reading the Old Testament in the context of Gender Based Violence in Botswana”

Adewale J. Adelakun: “Reconsidering Paul’s Disciplinary Measures for Sexual Offenders in 1 Corinthians 5: 1-13 from the Nigerian Pentecostals’ Perspective”

Sandy Nomatter: “Women with Disability (WWD) and Motherhood: Traumatizing Relationships within Pentecostal Movements in Zimbabwe.”

III. SEXUALITY, IDENTITY AND BIBLICAL STUDIES

Chair: Babatunde Adedibu

C. O. Ogunkunle and Owolabi Joseph Lawal: “An Exegetical Study of Leviticus 18:22 and its Implications on African Youths”

M. O. Oyetade: “Effects of Lust and Adultery on the Contemporary Nigerian: An Exegetical Study of 2Peter 2:14-15”

Rose Nyirimana: “Culture and Morality in Africa and the African Diaspora: Reading the book of Esther with immigrant women and youth from the Great Lake Region”

Adewale David Ajewole, Oyeyemi Jumoke Jekayinfa, Olajide Emmanuel Bello and Aminat Ozohu Aburime: “An Exegetical Study of Leviticus 18:22, 20:13 and its Implications on African Peoples in Diasporia”

IV. MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY IN ISLAM AND AFRICAN CULTURE

Chair:

I. K. Odeniyi: “Islamic and African Traditional Marriages in Yorubaland: A Comparative Analysis”

Fatimatu N-Eyare Sulemanu: “Sexuality and Marriage in Islam: The Ghanaian Muslim Experience”

Rose Mary Amenga-Etego: “‘No, she is my Wife’: Unravelling the intersections of concurrent realities in Nankani Discourses”

Ilongo Fritz Ngale and Sentso Mpholi: “Marital belief systems and abduction among the Sotho”

10:00 – 11:00: Plenary III.

Chair: Oyeronke Olademo

Prof. Kofi Asare Opoku: The Handle of the Axe: Theology and the African World View

11:00 – 11:30: Break – Snacks

11:30 – 13:30: Concurrent Session VI

I. SEXUALITY AND GENDER IN AFRICAN CULTURE

Chair: Elias Bongmba

Mickie Mwanzia Koster: “Demystifying Notions of the African Body and Symbolism in the Ritual Space”

Ibrahim Esan Olaosun: “Sexual Orientation Discourse Practices in Yoruba Native Culture”

Mercy Agha Onu: “Sex Roles in Indigenous Religious Worship in Edda Igbo”

II. GENDER, MASCULINITIES AND SEXUALITY IN AFRICA

Chair: Chris Thomas

Isaac Dery: “Ghanaian men and the performance of masculinity: negotiating gender-based violence in postcolonial Ghana”

Samuel K. Nduati and Damaris S. Parsitau: “Turning Boys into Men: The Quest for Transformed Masculinities in Selected Faith Based Organizations in the Context of the Prevailing Family Crisis in Kenya”

E. K. Wilson and Brenda Bartelink: “The spiritual is political. Analyzing development approaches to sexuality, gender and religion in Africa”

Enoch Olujide Gbadegesin: “Socio-Anthropological Analysis of Gift Exchange and Gender Relations among the Yorùbá of Southwestern Nigeria”

III. SEXUALITY, MUSIC AND IDENTITY IN AFRICA

Chair: Elizabeth Amoah

Samuel Kayode M. and Adejube Samuel A.: “Socio-Religious Dynamics of the Music of Saint Janet”

Adeoluwa Okunade: “Ìjálá for All, Ìrèmòjé for Men”

Onyee Nana Nwankpa: “African Acts of Worship, Identity and Transformational Experiences: The Case Of The Kalabari Women’s Choir”

Oluwafemi Faseun: “The Effect of Culture and Doctrinal Practices on the Musical Output of Women in Two Mainstream African Churches”

IV. RELIGION, SUSTAINABILITY AND OTHERS

Chair: Nana Abraham Kwakye

Adisa Omowunmi Ajoke: “Sustainability of Traditional Religion among the Yoruba Race in Nigeria and Diaspora”

Harry Lawson Agbanu: “Mafi-Ewe Indigenous Culture and Environmental Conservation”

Gustavo Brito: “Great Houses Of Stone: The Body, The Land And The Memory In Chenjerai Hove’s Fiction”

Everette W. Richardson: “Fanon Contra Sartre: Beyond the Veil of Double Consciousness”

13:30 – 15:00: Break – Lunch

15:00 – 17:00: AASR Business Meeting

17:00 – 18:00: Closing

20:00 - 23: 00: Conference Dinner

30/07/2016: DEPARTURE

ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Human Families together Searching for Renewed Identity: An African Theological Contribution

Rev. Prof. Emeritus John S. Pobee
University of Ghana.

The assignment, “Keynote Lecture: Religion, Sexuality and Identity in Africa and African Diaspora” has been consciously tweaked to “Human Communities together Searching for Renewed Identity” for at least two reasons. For one thing, I do not feel competent to speak on Diaspora because I had not been able to put myself in the shoes of the Diaspora and I have learnt from Akan Ghanaian wisdom (proverb) that when one has not visited another person’s farm, it is easy and tempting to see oneself as the only, indeed champion farmer. Second, the tendency to see religion as system of beliefs has gone with the temptation to short change the fundamental meaning and significance of religion as being human and things human. “Human families” remain a reminder not to lose sight of that fundamental of religion.

The key terms of the theme point to the striking reality of pluralism and variety of religions, sexuality and identity which fingers a number of things: (1) religion as a “coat of many colours” (cf. Wilfred Cantwell Smith); the added complication of culture and ideology as the atmosphere in which religion is regularly soaked (cf. Christendom, Caliphate etc.) which sooner or later contribute to unfortunate use of power and the short-change of the fundamental human dignity, honour and justice that true religion espouses. There is the further complication

of social change which not only affects negatively and positively the fundamental human significance of religion. The human proclivity for sin and evil challenges religionists to constantly refocus religion so as to shore up the human in *koinonia* i.e. community – communion, solidarity, fellowship, sharing. That is the essence of the ecumenical vision and perspective which has the capacity to assist to reorient true and authentic religion.

The lecture is a theological endeavour which is an option for rationality and the further canons of fact, theory and objectivity. At its best, however, such processes are aid to renewal of society. The early Church further captured this as two altars at which religious worship – the altar in the sanctuary and the altar in the marketplace. In other words, theology is as articulating a vision which must also influence life outside the holy shrine. No apology may be made for the endeavour because wisdom of the ancestors teaches is “where there is no vision the people perish”. The Ecumenical imperative requires that whatever the distinctions and differences may be regarding religion, gender/sexuality, identity must be honed into forging a community of peoples bearing the *Imago Dei*. Living together in peace with security and justice-righteousness. The common experience and pathology of poverty i.e. exclusion and marginalization demands a further tweaking of the ecumenical hermeneutic to include the ideology of God’s preferential (not exclusive) option for the poor and that, as appropriate to the context(s). That moves us from just complaining to engaging in creative renewal.

PLENARIES

The Handle of the Axe: Theology and the African World View.

Kofi Asare Opoku

TIDAC, Ghana

"When the axe went into the forest, the trees said, 'your handle is one of us'". (African proverb).

European missionary activity and the church that followed it have both behaved like the proverbial axe that went into the forest to cut down trees, only to be poignantly reminded by the trees that its handle was the same as the trees the axe was trying to cut down. The church and its theologians tend to ignore the African world view that gave Africans a valid understanding of the world and wise insights into the meaning and significance of life, and begin their theology from the Bible, as if there was nothing but a theological wasteland in Africa before the introduction of the Bible. This represents the failure of African (Black) theological scholarship to make a distinctive contribution to theological scholarship in general.

Slavery and Identity Construction in Ghana: The Religious Factor

Kodzo B. Gavua

University of Ghana.

My presentation will discuss relationships that may be found between activities that were associated with the enslavement and trading of people and various ways in which identities are constructed, negotiated and reconstructed at personal and communal levels in the mid-west

Volta Region and in parts of the Eastern Region of Ghana. Drawing on written and oral historical information and on ethnographic and other data I have assembled as part of a long-term study of religion and belonging and the legacies of cross-cultural interaction in these regions, I shall argue that the demeaning and dehumanization of West Africans by mainly European merchants and their African agents in the course of chattel slavery engendered a tradition in which peoples of the regions who adopt Western European identities are deemed to be inferior to those who elect to maintain indigenous identities. This tradition is continually manifested in conceptualizations and negotiations of social and physical boundaries that promote non-African interests and negatively impact self, communal and national development.

A SPECIAL PLENARY ON METHOD AND THEORY
Convened by Adriaan van Klinken, University of Leeds

**Introduction: Feminist, Postcolonial and Queer Perspectives to
Religion and Sexuality**
Adriaan van Klinken
University of Leeds, UK

This introductory paper gives a general overview to the study of sexuality and religion, focussing on three major theoretical and methodological perspectives: feminist, postcolonial and queer studies. It introduces these perspectives in general while also paying specific attention to the way how they have been applied, developed and debated vis-a-vis African contexts.

Taking the Body Seriously, Taking Relationalities Seriously: An Embodied and Relational Approach to Ethnographic Research in the Study of (Lived) Religion

Nina Hoel

University of Oslo, Norway.

The paper proposes a nuanced and self-reflexive approach to the study of lived religion. Critically unsettling and disrupting the insider/outsider binary by bringing in methodological insights from feminist theory, the paper proposes that encounters between researcher and participant are constituted and animated by multiple and fluid positionings. By foregrounding a researcher's commitment to take the body seriously, and, relatedly, to take relationalities seriously, the paper does not only move beyond the insider/outsider binary but also introduces the importance of paying increasing attention to the embodied self. The paper outlines the various ways in which the body of the researcher is an invaluable and composite enfolded 'lens' through which to understand, analyse and theorise about lived religion. The paper also complicates the notion of an embodied approach by highlighting the relational aspects of ethnographic research. Foregrounding relationality as a conceptual portal through which to analyse the dynamics between researcher and participant, the paper problematises notions of detachment and non-involvement. By shifting the gaze from the content of research to the process of research, and from the 'object' of research to the self, the paper is a much needed methodological contribution to the development of self-reflexive ethnographic approaches in the study of lived religion.

Holy Daughters, Sinful Bodies, Lustful Brothers: Researching Women Bodies as Sites of Tensions and Paradoxes in a Neo-Pentecostal Church in Kenya

Damaris Parsitau
Egerton University, Kenya.

The body is one of the focal points where gender, sexuality and religion intersect. In many different religious traditions and cultures, the gendered and sexualized body is subjected to power and has become a site of contestation and conflict. This particularly implies to women bodies. This raises a number of pertinent questions such as: How to do research on bodies in religious settings? How to understand the body and the way it is subjected to and shaped by discourses and processes of power? How does an outsider navigate these tensions? In this paper, I explore these questions with reference to the Ministry of Repentance and Holiness (MRH) where women are taught to dress to embody and en-flesh holiness so as not to tempt men into what is called sexual sin. In response to such teachings, women in the MRH have evolved a unique dress style that is designed to cover their entire bodies. By covering their bodies, these women not only embody holiness but also protect themselves from men's roving eyes. They are taught that in causing men to lust after them, they would sin against God, the Holy Spirit and their own bodies, which would then prevent them from entering the Kingdom of God. Thus women must dress holy before the Lord and at all times guard their purity and morals. This paper also outlines the various ways in which women bodies are understood and conceptualized not just by women themselves but also by the general Kenyan society. More importantly the paper brings out the paradoxes and tensions of researching women bodies in a highly conservative society using gender and feminist lenses. The paper is based on ethnographic research carried out in the Ministry of Repentance and Holiness in Kenya.

Religion and Queer Politics in Africa: Dealing with Theoretical and Methodological Challenges in the Development of a Research Project

Adriaan van Klinken
University of Leeds

Usually at conferences, we present the results of research that has been conducted. Instead, in this paper I will present a research project I am currently developing, paying particular attention to the theoretical and methodological issues in the project. The research is about the relation between religion and queer politics in Africa, and it examines the ways in which LGBT individuals, activists and communities relate to religion. The focus of the research is on a selection of Kenyan LGBT cultural and social ‘texts’, that all speak to this question in different ways. Presenting the project, I will address and reflect on a number of challenges, such as:

- How to bring together three different fields of study, African, Religious and Queer Studies?
- How to conceptualise African queer politics?
- How to examine a range of socio-cultural texts of quite a different nature?
- How to construe my own role and position in this research in relation to the communities I’m working with, and how to do research that is relevant to them?

Reflecting upon these questions, and sharing how I engage them, will hopefully give insight in the underlying theoretical and methodological issues and be useful for others developing research in the broad field of religion and (queer) sexualities in Africa.

CONCURRENT PANELS

TRANSNATIONAL RELIGION AND SEXUAL LIFE-STYLING: GLOBAL SEXUALITY AND ITS LOCAL INTERSECTIONS IN AFRICA AND ITS DIASPORA

Panel convenor: Kim Knibbe (Univ. of Groningen)

Exploring the Cultural Trajectory of Religion, Secularity and Sexuality in the Netherlands.

Brenda Bartelink

Groningen University, The Netherlands.

This paper will analyse the moral underpinnings of secular views on sexuality by tracing how the cultural trajectory of secularity in the Netherlands has produced specific understandings of sexuality and religion. It will start with exploring how in the Netherlands secularisation alongside with sexual liberalisation has produced specific understandings of religion since the 1960's. In addition it will look at how in the context of these historical trajectories development policy and health policies have been designed that – while being implemented in the Netherlands and abroad- have profound implications for how issues around sexual health and wellbeing are problematized. In conclusion I will look at the implications such policies may have for the interactions between people in the African diaspora and health organisations in the Netherlands. Overall, this paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of how secularism has served as a dominant frame for understanding human experience in the age of globalisation.

Sexuality and Cultural Encounters in the African Diaspora in the Netherlands: A Framework for Research

Kim Knibbe

Groningen University, The Netherlands.

This paper will outline the framework for research of a newly started research programme on sexuality, religion and secularism in the African Diaspora in the Netherlands. Public debates in Europe have shown that religious and secular ideologies often polarize around issues of sexuality, especially in relation to migration. In these debates, Europe is presented as progressive and enlightened in its approach to gender and sex, against the migrant ‘other’ who is regarded as someone who will have to be brought up to date to fully belong to the nation. This is also visible in the ways sexual health organizations view the role of religion and ‘tradition’ in the African Diaspora in the Netherlands: as something to be overcome, or at least confined to a marginal role. This research programme wishes to break with this European singularizing view on sexuality. Instead, we propose a framework departing from the understanding that sexuality is a dimension of life that is both deeply personal and subject to strong societal religious and cultural constraints and possibilities. Whereas Dutch and European secular understandings of the ‘right’ way to approach for example issues of sexual health position themselves as ‘freed’ from religion and tradition, we analyse this position as also deeply cultural, bound up with particular normative views on personhood and agency. Therefore, we approach the different views on sexuality not in terms of a confrontation between ‘modern, European, liberal’ views and ‘religious, traditional views’, but rather in terms of a meeting of different cultural trajectories emerging from both sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. In these trajectories, religion and tradition may play very different roles in shaping personhood and subjectivities, and therefore also in the ways people understand and experience sexuality.

Virginity for Health: Social and Religious Constructions of Female Purity in the Era of AIDS.

Francesca Mininel
Univ. Aix-Marseille, France.

In Africa, Christian religious movements are more and more involved in HIV prevention programs. Their strategy combines the promotion of virginity and fidelity. In a growing number of countries, as of recently including West Africa, virginity tests are becoming common practice and are promoted as instrumental in the struggle against HIV. The influence of transnational churches, identity politics discourses aimed at "rediscovering African values" as well as international policies have shaped the ways people practice and conceive sexuality.

This paper will analyze contemporary conceptualizations of female virginity in Togo. We will question the symbolic meaning of virginity in Ewe-speaking south Togo; the social status of "virgins" (prepubescent girls) in the rites of initiations practiced in the north (especially Akpema); the sanitized notion of abstinence conveyed by public health organizations and local associations working in HIV prevention, such as the Virgin Realm, which organizes the Virgin Trophy, a virginity contest described by the CNLS as "the 2012 best prevention practice in Togo". We will show how local representations are intertwined with Christian meaning of purity and the notions of individual responsibility and choice conveyed by HIV prevention campaigns. Pro-virginity activists are promoting a globalized notion of virginity as STD, abortion, early motherhood prevention and, at the same time, a political-constructed vision of African tradition.

We will finally explore the emergence of a new notion of modernity framed by a behaviorist approach in which "moral selves" are shaped by religion and science.

The Senegalese Feminine Youth and its Strategies of Bypassing of the Taboos in the Daily Real-life Experience of its Sexuality

Mody Ndiogou Faye

Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal.

The aim of this research is to present the various strategies implemented by the Senegalese feminine youth in the daily real-life experience of its sexuality. The latter establishes, in this country of western Africa, Islamized at the level of 95 %, and where the Islam, in the mystic version in which it is practiced, Sufism, tends to govern all the collective mentality by fixing and by directing, at the same time, the direction and the rhythm in whom has to progress the society, one of the most important taboos. She comes and designs in silence and most absolute intimacy. The reason is quite simple: it is present in the collective imagination, not as a need bodily and necessary for the construction and for the moral self-fulfillment and the physical appearance of the person, but rather as the lechery, that is a wild quest of the carnal pleasure, for which we do not hesitate to put a violent and moralizing sentence on the one who claims the exercise. So, the youth of this country sees itself divided between, on one hand the desire to stay in compliance with its religious faith as well as with the traditional values in which it was educated and, on the other hand, sees itself invested with a strong need to live fully its sexuality and to have completely its body free from censorship.

HOMOSEXUALITY, RELIGIONS, AFRICAN CULTURE AND WESTERN INFLUENCE

Convener: Benson Ohihon Igboin

Of Culture, Western Pressure and Gay Marriage in Africa

Benson O. Igboin

Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria.

The debate on gay marriage in Africa has centred on four main issues: culture, politics, reason and religion. These four complex areas have tended to analyse the issues differently deploying different methodologies. Each of these areas is spurred by certain interests within and outside Africa. This is demonstrated in the various positions that have been canvassed and advocated even by Africans. While culture and religion (though there is split in Christianity) largely agree in Africa that gay marriage is largely ‘unacceptable’, Western pressure, based on some human rationality and politics of aid, is infiltrating the positions of many African countries. The protests, lobbies and diplomatic ploys to integrate or legitimise it in Africa have shown the legal-moral argument of the West and its influence on Africa. Through the gristmill of critical engagement with the four cruxes, this paper would unravel the implications of pressured gay marriage on African metaphysics, culture and community and politics.

African Religious Beliefs, Cultural Integrity, and Moral Values against Imposition of Western Ideology on Sexual Orientation

Segun Adebileje

The Redeemed Christian Bible College, Nigeria.

This article aims to examine the influence of Africa’s dominant religions, combined with cultural integrity and moral values in combating imposition of western homosexual ideals. Sexual orientation is a person’s sexual identity in relation to the gender to which they are attracted, thereby categorising people into two broad classes of heterosexuals or homosexuals. Heterosexuality, which is having a sexual interest in people of the opposite sex, has been the normal way of life since the Bible days. Though homosexuality has been in practice in many cultures for thousands of years, yet, sexual attraction between people of the same sex remained a hidden practice of sort, being generally viewed as an aberration. However, recent developments in the western world led to the reclassification of homosexuality as a normal

sexual behaviour protected by gay rights. Consequently, many homosexuals made their sexual identity public, thereafter demanding equal treatment in employment practices, housing, and public policy. Western powers responded by enacting favourable laws and banning discrimination against homosexuals. Furthermore, western support for gay rights and same-sex marriage equality has grown steadily. It seems obvious that western powers colluded to develop foreign policies, to force the hands of weaker nations around the world, to accept a western interpretation of sexual orientation and identity. A few African countries are presently at the receiving end due to their defiant denunciation of homosexual ideology; as the European Union and the United States, have carried out the threat to withdraw humanitarian aid from some African countries. Nevertheless, Africans have remained resolute in complete rejection of homosexual ideals even in the face of tyranny. The study aims at examining what makes African countries resolute in their stand against western ideology and recommendations will be proffered from the results of findings from the study.

God Loves Homosexuals but Hates their Acts! Rhetoric and responses of London's African Pentecostal-led Churches to Human Sexuality in a Changing Context

Babatunde Adedibu
University of Roehampton, London.

Britain of today is a melting pot of ethnicities, diversities and religious pluralism due to the social, economic and political factors accentuated by migration and forces of globalisation. In essence, this has changed the Christian landscape across Britain particularly urban cities like London. African Pentecostalism is one of several Christian traditions within the British religious space. It is no longer an herculean task to experience African Pentecostalism in London due to the fluidity of the

socio-religious ideals as most Africans travel to the West not only with portable practices of their faith but also their doctrinal persuasion.

Human sexuality within the Christian traditions was held in so much awe and sacredness. In the last three decades, the Christian community has witnessed the gradual disintegration of the normative narration on human sexuality which has been redefined by some Christian traditions. The redefinition has contributed to the emergence of intra-denominational disputes within some ecclesiastical orders even amongst main line denominations in the West. However, Pentecostal leaders and Evangelical Christians from Africa have resisted the redefinition of human sexuality but are branded as uncivilised and fundamentalist.

Nevertheless, it has been observed that various Christian traditions in Britain like Church of England, Quakers and Church of Scotland, Methodist Church and a host others have contributed to the discourse through various theological forums. However, the discourse within the African Pentecostal–led churches is mostly rhetoric from pulpits which are more reactionary than well horned theological arguments on the discourse. This article aims to examine the rhetoric’s of some of the leaders of these churches in the public domain as well as critically engaging with imperialistic tendencies of the West on the subject matter.

Same-sex Relationship in the Context of Igbo Traditional Values

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Federal College of Education, Nigeria.

Same sex relationship in recent times has been a topical issue not only in Europe and America but also in Africa. More worrisome is that both continents are bent on forcing many African countries that depend on

them to accept the practice publicly. This however raises some questions; is the west more interested in so-called human rights in Africa without minding the traditional values of the people? Are African nations really sovereign? And where is the place of traditional values in the sovereignty of the nations? Several African countries have shown their displeasure with a sexual orientation that is at variance with their traditional values especially among the Igbo of Nigeria. This paper analysed the adoption of same-sex relationships in the West, threat of sanctions on African countries with anti-gay laws, in the light of African traditions with particular emphasis on Igbo traditional values. Findings showed that even with the westernization and acculturation of the Igbo, they, on the strength of their traditions and cultures still consider some same-sex relationship taboo.

Recommendations include that to maintain sanity and sanctity in Igbo societies as long as moral views bordering on religion and tradition are concerned, the west should respect the views of Africans. And African leaders should not be intimidated to surrender their sovereignty on the platter of foreign aid.

Before the Cloud gets Thicker: Understanding the Fundamental Spiritual Disconnect in Human Spirituality through Gay Debate

Ojo Joseph Rapheal

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From the inception, man's make-up appears to have reflected the handiwork of an intelligent Being who crafted him in a way that suggests a 'natural order' which defines his existence. This natural order and his spiritual wiring have been subjected to many attacks in the face of modernization and quest for human rights. One of these claims is that of marriage, hence, the gay-debate. Gay marriage debate dominates the tabloid of discourse in the 21st century with emphasis on legalising the union of couples of same gender. Since 2001, 10 countries and other

jurisdictions have made gay marriage union legal. This rapid rise in the advocacy of gay marriage and its consequent legalization in many countries which include Ireland, USA, and even gaining great sympathy in Africa now is quite worrisome and creating a lacuna in the human spirituality. Using the historical, sociological and analytical research methods, it was revealed that the conflict over same-sex marriage is not a simple one but involves legislative, cultural, religious and family issues. Many see it as the expression of human rights, love and such must be respected; while others see it as another means of reducing the fast growing population around the world. As good as these arguments may sound; this work presented the urgent need to address the fundamental problem that is facing the human spiritual make-up through such practice. The work therefore recommended that, a re-assessment of human rights must be embarked upon, proper enlightenment on the true position of religions on marriage and human sexuality must be promoted by religious institutions and it should be taken as the sole authority on the matter. The work concluded that, theology on human spirituality and sexuality as prescribed in the three major religions in Nigeria must be upheld no matter the wave of modernity and its influence.

Eurocentric Influence on Sexuality Discourse in the African Space Adeyemi Olalekan

The Redeemed Christian Bible College, Nigeria.

This study looks at issues of sexual orientation from African perspectives vis-a-vis Eurocentric perceptions with a view to identifying reasons why issues of sexual influences perceived as Eurocentric within the blacks have suffered undue attention despite the rate of legalisation within the civilised regions of the world. This study focuses on the importance of sexuality from an African space and its central place within the social construct of the blacks. However,

sexuality as recently defined by Eurocentric forces has raised a lot of concern for sexual orientation in many African countries. The west is taking undue advantage of postmodernity to influence the African space towards legalising homosexuality as done by America and a few other countries. This study utilises historical approach to do a critique of sexuality and Eurocentric influences within the African space with a view to espousing the implications on Christian orthodoxy and African culture. The study challenges the African community to rise above these challenges and protect its culture against Eurocentric influences that are incongruence to African sexual orientation and values especially those identified as violating African family values as well as in total negation of God's character and standards.

An Analysis of Homosexuality and Holy Writ in Contemporary Nigerian Society

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This paper examines homosexuality in contemporary discourse in Nigeria. Sexuality definition has come to be closely related to physical pleasure or copulation between man and woman, man versus man and woman versus woman. The famous maxim for homosexuals used to be 'the love that dares not speak its name'. Although historical records have shown that several civilisations have engaged in it, now many homosexuals increasingly build sexually hormone-branded lifestyle, while others engage in it secretly. The methodology adopted is historical and intercultural approaches. The paper postulates that in the beginning, God created Adam and Eve, not 'Adam and Steve'. The paper concludes that homosexuality is diametrically opposed to by the Holy Scripture and vehemently rejected by 'true' Christians.

Roman Catholic Perspective of Sin and Homosexuality: Scrutinising the Signs of the Times

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In a pluralistic world, in which the issues of homosexuality and gay rights have taken the centre stage of discourse in Sub-Saharan Africa, critical analysis is required to re-appraise the Roman Catholic perspective of sin and homosexuality. Again, the emergence of the study of homosexuality as a subfield within African Studies gives further vent to critical reflection to assess the merits and demerits of Church pronouncements on the issues. In the context of emerging fields of study and various sexual orientations of people of different cultures today, the issue of the Roman Catholic understanding of sin and her position on homosexuality has become problematic to many, especially the younger members in various higher institutions of learning. A growing number of young African Roman Catholics think that the recent comments of the Catholic Pontiff are not helping matters. The challenges seem to lie in balancing the teachings on homosexuality with the belief that God is merciful and loving. The relatively charitable disposition of the Pope calls for the re-evaluation of the Church stance on sin and homosexuality. Therefore, the paper, using historical and analytical methods, examines the basic meaning of sin and puts in context the prospect of accepting homosexuals without giving approval to homosexual acts that God himself condemns. Drawing on relevant literature and on the assertions of some scholars, the paper concludes that in a pluralistic society the homosexuals may make the human community richer when given the same opportunities accorded the majority orientation, including the adequate platform to experience self-transformation.

INDIVIDUAL PAPER ABSTRACTS

Can We Talk? Prospects and Impediments for U.S.-African Christian Solidarity on Ending Sexual Violence against Lesbian, Transgender, and Heterosexual Women

Traci C. West

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There are certain forms of cultural support for sexual violence against women in the United States that are exhibited within entrenched patterns of anti-black racism and religious expression. Moreover, some gender norms taught within African American churches and communities can implicitly condone tolerance of this violence. Fresh perspectives are needed to more thoroughly critique the U.S. religious values and racial attitudes that can lend support for such tolerance of sexual violence against heterosexual, lesbian, and transgender women. Garnering lessons about resistance to cultural support for sexual violence from anti-violence African scholarship concerned with African contexts could perhaps enrich the discussion of resistance in the U.S.-American context. In this paper I am interested in the development of ethical, transnational Africana strategies to do so.

The paper focuses on how anti-racist critiques of U.S. Christian religious mores related to sexual violence might be informed by black African gender justice activists and scholars of religion. But also, might some of those same U.S. Christian mores have a destructive impact on the struggle against gender-based violence in some parts of Africa? Based upon a comparison of their ideas, the paper will consider possibilities for and impediments to solidarity among feminist and

womanist (and others) across African-U.S. cultural and political boundaries. Deeper solidarity might be possible. It might stem from shared commitments to identifying the role of Christian religion and anti-black racism/colonial legacies in helping to maintain moral values that reinforce women's vulnerability to sexual assaults and related abuse and violence. What methodological starting points allow both respectful and critical engagement of the role of cultural values in fostering sexual assault in U.S.-American as well as African contexts? How do homophobia and heteronormative understandings in Christian teachings about gender and sexuality combine with longstanding anti-black colonial legacies and Christian missionary paternalisms impede even envisioning such solidarity?

The paper will focus on methodological considerations for transnational scholarly engagement in the construction of moral values. Yet it retains an insistent liberationist approach to Christian ethical understandings in a multi-religious world. Its underlying purpose resides in a resolve to garnering ideas that inspire more resistance to sexual attacks on lesbians, transgender and heterosexual women in the United States and in Africa.

**Culture and Morality in Africa and the African Diaspora:
Reading the book of Esther with immigrant women and youth
from the Great Lake Region**

Rose Nyirimana,
South Africa

Culture and Morality are terms that do not have a universal common meaning as each society has its standards in the understanding of the

terms. African societies and communities have different approaches to certain behaviour which one society views as morally and culturally right while the same behaviour would be banned in another society as wrong. This contributes to the challenges that are confronted by immigrant parents and children as they strive to keep the basic of their cultures in foreign lands which is often called Diaspora. The present article displays the dialogue on that topic by some groups of women and youth immigrants from the Great Lake Region living in South Africa. It points to their struggles while seeking to maintain the biblical, cultural and moral values from their homeland and families when confronted with new cultures in the Diaspora. The challenges become complex when parents try to convince their kids, especially teenagers to keep away from the foreign cultures whereas the children don't have a clear understanding of any of the cultures, the parents' or their peers. The article suggests some thoughts to immigrant parents, especially mothers, who are most involved in the rearing of the children. In addition, mothers are the most concerned because of the traditional and patriarchal assumption that portray the view that any good child reflects the father's character while the opposite reflects the negative image of the mother and her carelessness. This article also points other ways of reading the Bible with ordinary readers who are not biblically trained. The main approach that guides this article is based on the Contextual Bible Study model.

Ghanaian Men and the Performance of Masculinity: Negotiating Gender-based Violence in Postcolonial Ghana

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Masculinity studies have gained much purchase globally in recent decades especially the sense in which it has produced discursive space for interdisciplinary investigations. In the light of this, there is increasing consensus among commentators that different masculinities co-exist within a particular social space. There is also a growing recognition and awareness of the merits in examining the conceptual underpinnings of masculinity (especially hegemonic masculinity), its variously contested meanings and values, and how it generates certain behaviours amongst men which contribute to perpetuate violence. The consequences of hegemonic masculinity and its violent impacts on men and women have been evident. The emerging call to imagine more egalitarian and complex masculinities among men has been at the centre of various discussions on the fight against violence that some theorists argue emanates from men's drive to live up to impossible ideals of "masculinity". Seeking to make the connections between masculinity and gender-based violence, this paper discusses the imperative and possibilities of engaging men/boys as active actors in the fight against violence. The negative implications of men's embodiment and performance of dangerous masculinities to violence, which has emerged in recent discussions is worth re-examining. This paper therefore argues that empowering men to understand the implications of certain behaviours is key in an attempt to arrest violence. This paper is situated within the thesis that there is a relationship between men's embodiment and performance of dominant forms of masculinities, on the one hand,

and violence against women and other men, on the other. Based on research that I conducted in northern Ghana on domestic violence, it is the argument of this paper that in order to contain violence against women, conditions of gender construction need to be problematised in a manner that will transform fundamental understandings of gender relations in society.

Wrestling with Homosexuality: Bodies in Contact and Conflict during Deliverance

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Homosexuality in Accra is mostly secretive, closeted, hidden, and disguised. It is made public occasionally in the dismissive tones of rap songs, homilies and websites. There is perhaps no public appearance of homosexuality starker, though, than the writhing and wrestling bodies on the floor of deliverance sessions where efforts are made to separate bodies from the spirits of madness and sexuality, or “gayism and lesbianism.” By focusing on the bodily interactions of deliverance from the spirits of gayism and lesbianism, I will explore the meaning of that writhing and wrestling. In deliverance, each bodily action choreographs a potent story of sexuality and assumptions about sexuality that must be discussed.

Many have noted the primary role that religious institutions and leaders have played in opposing homosexuality in Ghana. However, the role of ritual and the actual experiences within those rituals has remained underexplored. Beyond the ubiquitous verbal condemnations of homosexuality, what does the interaction between bodies during

deliverance teach us about how sexuality is understood? In other words, what do the physical exchanges in deliverance – the way touch is used, the way bodies writhe, and the manner in which violence and intimacy are enacted and received – communicate about how sexuality is conceptualized materially and metaphysically?

The focus on bodies (of the deliverer, deliverer and other parties involved) instead of rhetoric illuminates implicit assumptions about non-normative sexualities. For example, in one particular deliverance session I watched, the possessed person danced suggestively as a spirit instructed her and the charismatic prophet encouraged her. During the deliverance her body writhed, clothes were shed and the hands of the prophet touched particular parts of the woman's body with varying degrees of force. Each movement and moment of contact in this experience illuminated a variety of beliefs about non-normative sexualities: what was the source of homosexuality, how do lesbians experience sexual pleasure, what bodily parts are most potent? The deliverance of this woman demonstrates that everything embodied, mythologized and fantasized in sexual deliverance rituals needs to be revealed through a careful reading of deliverance bodies.

Homosexuality and Human Rights Discourse in Sub-Saharan Africa

Benson O. Igboin

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This paper discusses two cardinal issues: homosexuality controversies and their attendant human rights debates within Africa. The argument

proceeds from the point that even in a globalising world, African life is still being lived productively within its cultural or cosmic arcade. What this immediately implies is that autochthonous African culture still permeates the life of most African people. The second precinct of thought centres on the issues of human rights. It is argued that human rights issues with regard to homosexuality are highly politicised; Africa is being forced from without by non-Africans to accept and legalise the practice. The implications of this are: Africa's rights are being systematically violated, for one pertinent notion of right is freedom to act independently as sovereign nations. The paper suggests that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, upon which the homosexual rights advocacy hinges, can only be universal if and only if they are contextualised, and respect values that make Africans live meaningfully.

**Towards an Innovative Reconfiguration of the Practice of
Runyoka as an African Indigenous Response to the fight against
the spread of HIV/AIDS**

Eliot Masomera

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Diverse interventions aimed at arresting the spread of HIV have been made at both global and local levels with little satisfactory results thus frustrating the UNAIDS vision of zero HIV infections necessary to guarantee an HIV/AIDS-free future. Research shows that the idea of abstinence from sex as a measure of reducing HIV transmission proves to be difficult to many people. Defenceless populations such as children and people with disabilities are increasingly becoming targets of rape,

incest and other forms of sexual abuse that expose them to HIV infection. Entrenched cultural beliefs that teach that terminally ill people can receive mystical healing if they engage in sexual intercourse with minors and/or people with disabilities, fuel the problem in a remarkable manner. This paper proposes an innovative approach drawn from African Indigenous Religions that calls for the employment of *Runyoka*, a practice that medically “fences off” women from sexual predators. There are two broad categories of *Runyoka*, the punitive type that punishes the person or persons involved in the illicit sex. The second category is the preventative type which frustrates the sexual act from taking place for instance by inducing temporary erectile dysfunction thus foiling the attempted sexual act. The paper focuses on the latter type as it promises protection to defenceless, vulnerable populations through “default abstinence.” It is hoped that such an approach can foster an acute decline of new HIV infections especially in the case of the defenceless. Owing to colonial prejudices and distortions of indigenous knowledge systems, *Runyoka* has often been looked upon with askance as a result of its misplaced association with witchcraft. This paper hopes to clear such colonial biases and present the practice as a potentially effective African solution to the African continent which one of the most affected in the world.

The Sacralisation of Human Rights: Faith and Sexual Orientation in Zimbabwe

Nomatter Sande

Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University, Zimbabwe.

The dilemma of sexual orientation (homosexuals) has sparked complex debate both in civic and civil society and about the laws that govern them. This tension includes, but is not limited to, the inclusion of homosexuals in society, their identity, convergence, or correlational paradigms. As such this has been exacerbated further when, in the context of shifting identities, human rights, globalization and religious freedom are added to the mix. Christianity in particular has not been spared, nor its beliefs, rituals and practices as it seeks to justify, mitigate and define sexual orientation within its space of worship. There is not much literature which explores the human rights of the homosexual oriented in churches, hence the need of further investigation. This paper seeks to understand the sacralisation of homosexual orientation, the integration of homosexuals, their collaboration and acceptance into religious expressions, symbols and rituals. Intimate studies on the sexuality of homosexuals evoke methodological questions such as: how one can gain access to what is construed as invisible, and to issues that are considered private and personal? This paper utilizes Symbolic Interactionism theory; intellectualized as process of interactions in the formation of meaning in relation to environment. This will be used to explain the relationship of faith based perspectives on homosexuals. Data collection is largely archival using historical and contemporary perspectives. This paper contributes constructively to the outcome of religious freedom and human rights in Africa.

Keywords: sacralisation, human rights, religious freedom, sexual orientation.

Cultural Norms of Gender and HIV/AIDS Prevalence in Benue State, Nigeria

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Research in many parts of Africa has shown that attitudes of ancient origin continue to affect the lives of people in Sub-Saharan Africa, despite the impact of modern forces of change and westernization. In this regard, tackling HIV/AIDS in Africa requires a holistic response that recognizes the wider cultural and social context. It is against this backdrop that this paper examines traditional attitudes regarding gender and the impact on HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention using some ethnic groups in Benue State, Nigeria. The paper argues that cultural norms play a major role in determining the position of men and women in society. These norms build around notions of masculinity and femininity; tend to create unequal rights, duties, power relations and behaviour among sexes with implications on HIV/AIDS prevalence. The paper concludes that cultural practices which influence HIV/AIDS transmission are at the same time critical for the development and implementation of successful prevention programs.

Ghanaian Traditional Women Priestesses: Identity and Encounters

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Accra Polytechnic, Ghana.

This article focuses on Ghanaian Women Priestesses, their identity and encounters in Ghana. It seeks to highlight the significance of female traditional religious leaders in contemporary Ghana and fill gaps in

knowledge about their Profession, position, role and lifestyle in the Ghanaian societies. Whereas it is often assumed that their position in general is not highlighted and looks eroded because of the predominance of their male counterparts and the activities of Christians. Some of them are married, mothers, Christians, divorced and single/single mothers. The study examines the theory of intersection of female/male duties as a theoretical frame using cases and historical analysis method. The structures within the society lay emphasis on men rather than on women in the various sectors of life. The cultural, religious and moral bases for the stereotyping of Women Priestesses are examined. Women Priestesses have been leaders in the society, attaining other professions and combining duties generally, participating fully in almost all aspects of activities in the society. The conclusion is that traditional Women Priestesses when possessed by their spirits reveal important messages cure and perform their duties perfectly and I recommend their recognition.

Keywords: Intersection, Priestesses, Singleness, Cultural, possessed.

The Invasion of the African Ethico-Religious Spaces by the LGBT Debate in Nigeria

Philip Ademola Olayoku
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There has been the on-going debate on the religious invasion of the secular sphere by religious noise both captured literarily and in metaphors. The apparent contrasting paradigms of these different spheres create an exclusivist ambience in which religious ethics are, at times, presented in contradistinction to public morality. Hence, there

has been an ‘ethical conspiracy’ in the gradual separation of morality from religion through the proposition of logical insufficiency in exploring realms of the sacred, and the insufficiency of applying religious summations to secular concerns. This study is an interrogation of this ethical divide using the African religious context from a reverse spectrum of the invasion of religious spaces by secularist views. The quick label of homophobia on age-long religious doctrines reveals the complexities in the exercise of freedom within the limits of the protection of the rights of the other. This paper draws on several religious doctrines in juxtaposition with the LGBT debate in the dynamics of redefining key concepts of belonging, class, sexuality, family, gender, human body, and religion itself. This redefinition is contextualized within virtual spaces, of the social media, that create globalized debates with lots of localized consequences. It thus concludes that the social consequences of the modern dynamics in engaging the meanings of ethico-religious concepts, context and identities necessitate mutual respect for rights to divergence across different spaces.

Never in Our Land: Religious Attitudes towards the “Secret”

LGBT Community in Africa

Boakye Owusu Ansah

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“Africans are notoriously religious.” That is not an exaggeration... regardless to whatever religion people convert to (Mbiti, 2014). The current development of LGBT as a focal issue in a broad debate which wrangles in different parts of Africa, has empowered a cliché picture of

one homophobic Africa. An African's religious views, ideas, and beliefs are embedded in all their activities in the society. All religions in Africa are strongly against the acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender practices in society. Using published articles, this paper will focus on the religious views of the popular religions in Africa such as African Traditional Religion, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Judaism on the rejection of LGBT activities on the continent of Africa. Although there are religious views about their morality, the paper will also concentrate on the issue of human rights, the "LOVE" for the sinner, accepting of repentance and mercifulness in hasidism (folk Jewish mysticism) and *musar* (Jewish ethical literature) on *mishkav zakhar* (homosexual relations), *pandanka* ('prostitution') as a path to *moksha* ('liberation') in the *Kama Sutra*, and the hate of the sin that all these diverse religions preach about. There is a need to separate the question of religious and cultural morality from sexual orientation in a society where we refer to homosexuals as dogs and pigs and even say that same sex animals will not even practice such an act of abomination. What is striking is that this picture of Africa as homophobic is advanced by political, traditional, and religious leaders who assert that homosexuality is a Western irruption [invasion] by the Western media to draw attention to the homophobic articulations from African political and religious leaders. LGBT in Africa is not aligned with the cultural and religious morality of the African society and is therefore not acceptable on the continent.

Singing the Lord's Song in a Foreign Land: Feminist Critique of Migration and Surveillance Theology

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Although the issue of migration is as old as humanity, the consequences leading to people moving from their original place of residence differ according to circumstances leading to migrating. In most African countries migration has taken on different forms. In Southern Africa for example most of the migration that took place during the colonial period was done by men who travelled from the rural areas into the city to seek for employment especially in the mines. Another form of migration that has been practiced by the African peoples is what I would call a North South form of migration that has attracted a number of Africans to Europe and America in search for a good life. This study is focused on a form of migration that has currently affected most African countries due to civil wars and ethnic conflict. The study will use a postcolonial feminist theory to explore refugee women's religious experience of God's protection during the period of xenophobic experiences. To what extent can surveillance theology be used as a form of security by these women refugees in order to answer these questions, the study will use Contextual Bible Study to assess how sacred texts can be used as form of security by refugees. The group of women to be interviewed belong to an all Congolese church that is run by a refugee pastor in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The relevance of this study is first that it asks questions of human security at a time when migration has led to a number of migrants to experience xenophobia. Second, the use of contextual bible study makes the study unique in that it will allow the

participants to engage with other ways of addressing the issue of security through the use of sacred texts.

Effects of Lust and Adultery on the Contemporary Nigerian: An Exegetical Study of 2Peter 2:14-15

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Africa has experienced family crises as a result of corrupt desires over the last century which has affected the sanctity of marriage and this has resulted into a serious and worrisome quagmire. Despite many theological seminaries and numerous ecclesiastical affiliations, Nigeria still remains one of the low moral standard countries today. This paper therefore provides an exegetical study of 2 Peter 2:14-15 as a premise for the examination of Lust and Adultery and the havoc it has caused in the contemporary society in Nigeria. The objective of this paper is to unearth the unholy attitude in our society which has given adultery and fornication an opportunity to spread widely, most especially in the Post-colonial Africa. Methodologies adopted in this paper are exegetical, historical and sociological. The major findings are that: the “eye” is usually the first offender, the inlet to corrupt desires, and the medium by which they are expressed. Excision of body parts is not an answer to lust, but is rather a desecration of God’s temple. The death of parts of a body, a subduing of the passions and appetites by a severe or strict manner of living has nothing to do with cutting part of one’s body or plucking out eyes. Way out of adultery is therefore mortification, which is the subjection and denial of the bodily passions and appetites, abstinence or self-inflicted pain or discomfort and not excision.

Keywords: Lust, Adultery, Eyes full of adultery, Greed, Cannot cease, Exercise.

Christian Doctrine of Sanctification and the LGBT Debate in Africa

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Sanctification is one of the biblical teachings or doctrines that theologians have differentiated in their opinions or views just like in some other doctrines of the scripture. Sanctification is to set apart or of being made or becoming holy. Mike Sullivan defines sanctification as “a process of becoming more like Christ in our conduct and character.”¹ There are several passages in the scripture both in Old and New Testaments that point to the fact that Christians are expected to live a holy life.² This study is therefore aimed at studying the doctrine of sanctification (holiness) and vis-à-vis the LGBT movement, hoping to dig into the biblical understanding of the doctrine and remove the misconception and lack of understanding of LGTBs, and bridge the differences among denominations. How does the Church in Africa view the LGBT movement? In what ways have the activities/behaviour of the LGBT members constituted “the defilement of the bed?” How should the Church treat LGBT members who claim to be Christians? Does LGBT membership constitute unholy alliance according to the Christian standards? Is the Bible in support or against LGBT groups within or

¹ Mike Sullivan, *Five views on Sanctification: an in-depth Analysis*. Xemos online Journal. Accessed on 13/08/2014.

² Leviticus 11:44, Matthew 5:48, Hebrews 12:14, 1 Thess.4:3.

without the Church? We hope at the end of the paper to discuss the question of whether the LGBT membership constitute holiness or sinfulness within the Church would be trashed.

Rethinking Gender and Culture in Nigerian Socio-Religious Context

Enoch Olujide Gbadegesin, Elizabeth Ayoola Adeyemi-Adejolu & Victor Taiwo Odewale, Nigeria.

The rise of gender as an analytical category in scholarship has been both fascinating and challenging. Some scholars often depict pre-colonial Africa in general and Nigeria in particular to have egalitarian gender relations in its social structure. They often assert that men and women public roles were not too differentiated. In actual fact, we maintain that a deep reading of culture needs to go beyond the superficial to shows examples of women's ancient power across Nigerian cultures. In modern times, however, many references to gender relations in Nigerian popular culture often present men as always powerful, and women as weak and deferential. Bringing together insights from gender studies, cultural studies and sociology we discuss the relevance of rethinking the roles of culture on gender in Nigeria. In particular, we examine how Nigerian socio-religious atmosphere has been implicated in the ways men and women are treated differently within the society they are part of. We present an initial literature review on gender, culture and spirituality/religion as these factors relate to the ways identities and behaviours are shaped in any given society. Discussing these dimensions of human experience will help us know how people understand and interpret social reality and how it is especially related to

the Nigerian society. Our conclusion will be that culture plays important role in determining gender relations within a given society.

The Role of Religion in Promoting Gender Equality in Africa.

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Societies define gender according to criteria prescribed by the culture. Whiles sex is classified based on whether a person has male or female genitalia; gender is determined by beliefs, norms and practices of the society. The society puts in place systems that ensure that the characteristics and roles of a gender are learned by people classified into that group. Moreover, religion as an agent of socialisation underpins gender orientation in Africa. From this perspective this paper will examine the role of religion in gender orientation and development that has resulted in gender inequality. It will then proceed to examine the role of religion as a key agent in the fight for gender equality. The three dominant religions on the continent, i.e. African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam, will be studied. Formal education, religious education, moral training and rituals are some of the factors to be explored in the study.

Reconsidering Paul's Disciplinary Measures for Sexual Offenders in 1 Corinthians 5: 1-13 from the Nigerian Pentecostals'

Perspective
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This article is a contribution to the on-going debate among scholars about what Paul meant when he instructed the Christians in Corinth

hand over the incestuous man to Satan. The article reiterates, through the exegesis of 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, that Paul's injunction involved a severe discipline of the incestuous man. The text is also studied within the context of the Nigerian Pentecostals' perspective about disciplining Christians who commit sexual sins. Based on the exegesis of the text, it is concluded that it was difficult for the Corinthian church to discipline the incestuous man probably because he was a prominent figure in the church which had been divided into different factions.

The Spiritual is Political: Analysing Development Approaches to Sexuality, Gender and Religion in Africa

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Sexuality and Gender have become an area of humanitarian and developmental concern in African societies over the past decades. Both secular and religious actors have increasingly contributed to shaping discourses and practices around Sexuality and Gender mainly by addressing persistent problems such as gender-based violence, maternal and infant mortality and so-called harmful traditional practices. While many development agencies have taken a human rights based approach, both secular and faith based agencies increasingly realize that human rights based approaches may have limited legitimacy or are even contested in local communities. Moreover human rights-based approaches often fail to acknowledge and engage personal and spiritual dimensions of configurations of gender and sexuality in local contexts. Another critical avenue is that development agencies are part of an international field of development that primarily engages with sexuality, gender and religion on secular Western terms. The proposed paper looks

at how gender, sexuality and religion intersect in development discourses and practices. It does so by analysing the interactions of a development programme of World Vision called Channels of Hope with local religious leaders and communities in Eastern and Southern Africa. The paper is informed by data gathered as part of two evaluation studies of the aforementioned programme and subsequent analysis by the authors. The paper will argue that the programme has the potential to break through secular/religious and male/female binaries; in that sense it broadens older discourses of gender by rendering not only the personal but also the spiritual as political. The paper will also raise some critical questions about the notions of religious leadership as well as the moralities around gender and sexuality underlying the methodology.

**Students' Perception of the Effect of Sexual Harassment on the
Academic Performance of Female Students in Tertiary
Institutions in Nigeria**

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Sexual harassment is a form of sexual assault, rape or attempted rape as well any unwanted sexual contact or threat. Sexual harassment is an involuntary sexual act in which a person is threatened, coerced, forced to engage in against his/her will, or any sexual touching of a person who has not consented. Sexual harassment as a conduct is typically experienced as offensive in nature, in which unwanted sexual advances are made in the context of relationship of unequal power or authority. This study is therefore using a research design of descriptive survey and a population of 173 students from school of education of two colleges

of education in Ogun State, Nigeria. These colleges of Education are the Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, and the Tai Solarin College of Education, Omu Ijebu. The two hypotheses tested if there is relationship between students' perception of sexual harassment and their academic performance in the two colleges of education. Based on the result of the findings, it was recommended that higher institutions should have written a policy of disciplining any erring staff and students on matters relating to sexual harassment.

Keywords: harassment, sexual, students, involuntary, female.

Religion, Sex Trafficking and Identity in Africa and the African Diaspora

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Sex trafficking is the exploitation of some men, women and children, within national or across international borders for diverse purposes either for sale, forced labour or for the purpose of sex trade. This trade often involves the use of agents who also use rituals to harass the victims into silence. The victims are often traumatized owned to failed hopes, dislocations and abuses leading to the death of quite a number. The majority of those trafficked are taken from the nooks and crannies of Africa to urban places in Europe and other continents of the world. Assessing human trafficking is wide and out of the purview of this conference, hence, in scope, this paper examines women who are trafficked usually against their will while this researcher is not unaware of children and men that are also victims of the illicit trade. This article therefore highlights the escapades of the slave masters (agents), the

victims from the African habitat to their environments in the diaspora. It will assess the role of religion in the eradication or otherwise of this sex trade. The focus here is multidisciplinary as it ranges from such disciplines of economics, sociology, anthropology, but mainly religious. Here, religion is seen as a unity but areas in which a particular religion's effort must be mentioned will be so be highlighted.

A Socio-Cultural Value of Human Sexuality Cum Virginitly in Africa: A Moral Enquiry of the Yoruba People of Nigeria

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It is obvious that every society possesses some cultural values irrespective of the socio-economic development of that society. For the Yoruba people of Nigeria, human sexuality is a real virtue [an intrinsically moral issue], while virginity of the unmarried is equally regarded as a sacred entity duty especially in girls and any deviation from it is severely censured. Human sexuality and virginity also have spiritual connotations, interpretations and consequences among the Yoruba and are said to constitute a state of well-being for a single person. The Yoruba people attached great importance to human sexuality and virginity of a bride (*virgo intacta*). However, a cursory survey and observations show that attitudes concerning sex relations are now changing with the trends of modernity; and today, increasing numbers of adolescents and female youths are involved in premarital and extramarital relations. This paper, therefore, illuminates the concepts human sexuality and virginity in order to convey the exact meaning within which they are used in the context of this paper. This

paper equally attempts to investigate sexual morality and Yoruba cultural values. Also, it explicates the place of virginity in the contemporary Yoruba society, identifies the causes, effects of premarital sex in the society and as well evaluates the link between the Yoruba traditional values and the Yoruba values in modern Nigeria. Suggestions and recommendations are proffered. Data were collated through secondary sources, while socio-ethical and cultural approaches were utilized in the analysis of the work.

Keywords: Culture, Human sexuality, Virginity, Morality, Yoruba, Nigeria

Religion and Gender Construct in Work Place Relations

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Several publications have explored the phenomenon of religion. Many of these sources posit that religion proves difficult to define. However, in general, religion could be described as an attempt by humans to establish and maintain a relationship with the unseen divine power. The essential fact however is that religion is dependent in a variety of ways on external forces with which communication is maintained. Gender is a social category as opposed to Sex which is biological. Gender is historical and oftentimes context and culture bound. Work and human relation are an integral component of human experience in the society, because humans cannot survive in isolation.

Gender issues have implications on how people relate, especially in the work place. These issues may have their roots in religious injunctions/instructions. Thus, religion may be implicated as the basis

for gender discrimination of varied types as displayed in the work place. Such inequalities include policy formulations on promotion, remuneration, welfare and appropriate conduct. It is justifiable to investigate gender relations in the work place because a positive disposition in this regard guarantees progress and development for individuals in the society and the society.

I will utilize the Kantian Divine Command Theory (DCT) as defended by Robert Adams, Phillip Quinn and Edward Wierenga; and as opposed by Kai Nielsen and J. L. Mackie; to interrogate the role of religion in gender relations in the work place. In addition, the paper will attempt recommendations based on the Natural Law Theory and examples will be given from Nigeria.

The study is qualitative employing the historical, sociological and phenomenological methods. The paper aims to contribute to the literature on women in religion in ways that carry social relevance and application.

Triple Oppression in God's Household: The Experiences of Gay Migrants in Churches in the City of Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

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Drawing from a number of interviews this paper analyses the logic of the churches' multi-dimensional marginalization of gay migrants in Pietermaritzburg. It argues that current xenophobic attitudes towards

gay migrants are deeply rooted in religious, cultural and class prejudices, related to South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy, the quest of developing a South African nation with generally common values and the struggle to deal with the challenges of global migration. The paper observes that religion conspires with other factors such as class status and culture in the violation of the human rights of gay migrants. The paper goes on to propose that both religion and culture have to draw resources for empowering gay migrants from their emancipatory potentials, which currently have been co-opted by those with xenophobic and homophobic attitudes within the church.

Pentecostalization, Redeeming Africa and the Politics of Homosexuality in Ghana's Contemporary Public Sphere

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The ferment of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa, as has been widely observed, Pentecostalism in particular, has not only led to a Pentecostalization of Christianity and public spheres but also acknowledged, as a result of its extended field of influence in contemporary public spheres, is its complicity in the characteristically highly emotional debates on gay rights and the politics of it.

With a neo-nationalist theology couched with biblical imageries of nativity, and traditional cultural logics and values of gender, that combines fortuitously with the rhetoric of Africa Rising, Pentecostals presents themselves as the liberators of Africa from her burden of 'shame' and Western imperialism. Here, I examine the tensions,

complexities and contradictions this Pentecostal ‘neo-nationalist’ theology of Africa’s spiritual emancipation engender in Ghana with respect to trajectories of religio-political interactions on gay rights, aid as ‘gay conditionality’ and contemporary debates on Western imperialism. This analysis is done in the context of Pentecostal conceptions of sovereignty and the demonic (demonic altars and territorial spirits).

The claim is made that at the core of the public rejection of homosexuality and the furore it occasionally generates in Ghana, (during elections) and the usually uncritical claim that homosexuality is un-Ghanaian/African, are new forms of religious neo-nationalism shaped by distinctive Pentecostal hermeneutics of the spirit and the ‘burden’ to ‘man-up’ Africa and subsequently change its feminized status in a post-colonial era.

The rhetoric of Africa Rising, the Pentecostal biblical neo-nationalist conceptions of Ghana/Africa, framed as a spiritual emancipation from inherited curses, from its pre and colonial past, combine to complicate the perception of Africa’s homophobia while opening up an alternative space/s for accessing religious shaping of homosexual debates in a contemporary African context.

Ìjálá for All, Ìrèmòjé for Men

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Ìjálá remains one of the surviving musical arts of the Yorùbá of the southwestern Nigeria that surfaces on stage as hunters' chant. In the traditional Yorùbá society, this genre could only be performed by men, since hunting is predominantly for men, and they are also more prominent in the leadership of the worship of Ogun, the god of iron and tool implements of the hunter. However, in the contemporary Nigeria, Ìjálá is performed by both men and women. As part of the hunters' burial rites, Ìjálá could be bespectacled before members of the community. Another dirge that must accompany the death rites of the hunter is Irewoje. Conversely, Irewoje till date remains an art for men and men only. The theory of continuity and change which has liberalized the performance of Ìjálá by extending its performance to female members of the society has not been able to spread its tentacles to women in the performance of Irewoje. This paper, with bibliographical evidences supported with audio-visual recordings looks at the role of women in the performance of Ìjálá and their restrictions in the performance of Irewoje, the two musical works that primarily belong to the same genre.

‘No, she is my wife’: Unravelling the Intersections of Concurrent Realities in Nankani Discourses

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It is practically normal in the Ghanaian society to hear the emphatic statement ‘No, she is my wife’ publicly from a man. However, to hear this from a woman draws attention. Yet, this happened when two Nankani women were asked by a man if they were sisters or friends. Drawing attention and creating uneasiness, the female ‘husband’ added, ‘she is my brother’s wife’. Laughter was heard immediately at the background followed by vibrant chats. This brief narrative raises a series of concerns. In as much as it subtly raises the issue of a loss or disappearance of a tolerant and inclusive indigenous society, even if only figuratively, it also creates danger for those suspected of breaking the allegedly normative heterosexual Nankani paradigm. Thus excluding some forms of indigenous lifestyles and discourses, and polarizing our contemporary society, how can we as a society embrace the concurrent realities in both the indigenous kinship and marriage relationships and its related symbolic discourses? With examples from the indigenous Nankani kinship and marriage systems, this study explores the intersections in Nankani discourses of sexuality and the ambiguities they create in the contemporary Ghanaian society because of the emergence of the LGBT debate in Ghana.

“When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face” (Gen.38:14): Libido as a sell-out of men to gender based violence

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Historically, gender based violence has been framed and understood exclusively as a women's issue such that the terms ‘violence against women’ and ‘gender-based violence’ have often been used interchangeably. At most, men have stood accused of fuelling such violence against women and girls. For example, studies by Clark (2004) show that young girls married to older men with more sexual experience are at great risk of HIV infection and another study by Santhya et al (2010) show that child brides are at heightened risk of violence in the home. Though men have often been made to shoulder the blame of gender based violence, the main focus of this paper is on violence against men, looking in particular at the sexual abuse they face at the hands of younger women and girls. Using the socio-anthropological method, the paper seeks to argue that the behaviour of young women and girls especially in Africa, towards men who are older than their ages is often manipulative of the sexual weakness of men. To buttress the point, the case of Tamar trapping Judah shall be used to argue that women know the weak point of men and they can easily manipulate this weak point to get what they want from men and such an act is characterized in this paper as being abusive of men.

Key words: gender based violence, HIV and AIDS, child brides,

The Effect of Culture and Doctrinal Practices on the Musical Output of Women in Two Mainstream African Churches

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Before Islamic and Christian religions got introduced to Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, there were established religious practices and attendant doctrines. This paper investigates how (if there were) past African traditional practices impacted on the current musical practices in two mainstream independent churches – Christ Embassy and Celestial Church of Christ with regards to established gender inequality in Africa. In the research, various documents which contain the established norms and practices were studied in addition to seeking thorough understanding of the established rules and tenets of the churches as contained in their constitutions. We visited the Headquarters of the churches to interview the leaders to establish their position on the issue of gender inequality to establish if it has any effect on the participation of women in music of the Church. Choir practices and performances at various venues were also observed to be able to determine how women participate in music in these two churches. The findings showed that music plays a major role in the churches. In Celestial Church of Christ, women's roles in general and in musical practices are limited. However in Christ Embassy, both men and women are given equal opportunities to express their musical gifts. In the former church, African traditional belief of restricting women from some rites or from handling some spiritual exercises during their menstrual cycle is strongly held to as part of their doctrines; in the latter, there are no restrictions. We concluded that while traditional culture plays a major role in people's view of Christian religion and the way it is practiced in the Celestial Church of Christ, Christ Embassy on the other hand does

not allow such gender differences to impact on the role of women in music.

African Sexuality and the Era of Assisted Reproductive Technologies: A Case of Charismatic Christian Couples and the Practice of Surrogacy in Ghana

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In most societies of Africa, to grow up to a certain age of say thirty years and above, without getting married, is to draw attention to that person.³ Many interpretations would be put on that state no matter the religious or non-religious affiliation. For instance, the society would think that there must be something wrong. Gyekye states, “A young man who has gainful employment of any kind and earns some income is expected, in fact, urged to marry. Any undue delay on the part of the young man to marry will cause his parents or the elders in the lineage to worry and even to interfere in his private life in order to advise and encourage him to marry”.⁴ This is because in most African societies there is the belief that marriage results in procreation for continual survival of a particular family in the subsequent generation. Because of this, marriage is not deemed successful till the couple become parents. Childlessness is perceived as a problem if not a curse. This makes childless couples

³Rebecca Ganusah, Informed choices on marriage, Childlessness and reproductive technologies: An African Christian theological and ethical reflections, in Cephas Omanyo and Abamfo Atiemo (eds), Ghana bulletin of theology, vol1.no1 (2006) pp11-12.

⁴ Kwame Gyekye, *African cultural Value: An introduction*, (Philadelphia, Pa/ Accra: Sankofa publishing Company, 1996) 78.

sometimes experience stigmatization and discrimination from their family and the society at large.⁵ However, to avoid this stigmatization, the new way employed by most couples nowadays to erase such a social stigma is the scientific procedure called surrogacy, another woman carrying the baby for you, which is one of the methods in Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs). It aims at helping to solve infertility issues. Among Christian denominations in Ghana, the charismatic fraternity is one group that have varied opinions about surrogacy. Research shows that their members resort to the use of surrogacy to serve as remedy to their infertility problems, while their Pastors and some leaders do not allow it on the basis of its ethics and theology. The question is why is it that some Charismatic Christian couples engage in surrogacy irrespective of the teachings of their Church leaders? This paper seeks to examine the motivation of Charismatic Christian couples to engage in the practice of surrogacy contrary to the preaching of their leaders.

Women Activities in the Growth and Expansion of Christianity in Nigeria from 19th to mid-20th Century and their Implication for Contemporary Nigerian Churches.

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This work focuses on the involvement of women in Christianity in Nigeria. It is about the historical analysis of the endeavours of women in Nigerian Christianity from close of the 19th to the mid-20th century

⁵Samuel Kunhhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, (Nairobi: Hippo Books, 2008), 5.

which was the time missionaries came from America and Europe to Nigeria to establish mainline churches after the abolishment of the Atlantic Slave trade. It will also assess historically, women activities in the African Indigenous Churches (AICs) in Nigeria which had already been established by the mid-20th century. It will see the trend of the activities of women in these two kinds of Christianity in Nigeria and its implication for the current trend of women involvement in Christianity in the country. This is because it is observed that the first kind of Christianity in the context of this article was brought in by the western world, the second type of the AICs was founded within the country, and the current trend is the establishment of Nigerian forms of Christianity also in the African Diasporas. Each of these trends has influenced one another, thus producing diverse styles in Christianity. Therefore, this study will itemize and correlate where necessary, for a view of the current trend of women activities in Nigerian Christianity; thus visualizes what may likely happen in the nearest future. The method for the study will be historical, descriptive and correlative. It will use mainly bibliographical search and archival materials like letters, diaries, reports daily newspapers women to gather necessary information about the activities of feminine involvement in Nigerian Christianity.

Dying to be Queer: On Being Human and Living in South Africa

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“To get justice, you have to die. That is the scenario”

Indira Jaising

This paper seeks to interrogate and unsettle the meanings of violence and death particularly for queer bodies in Africa. For many sexual and

gender non-conforming persons in South Africa, as in the continent, the idea of violence is an everyday reality. But what does this mean, especially in a South African context where being a lesbian, gay, or transgender person now is a protected right and implies that one can be seen as human? What is being human when the possibility of violence, and death, outweigh the opportunity to live? In engaging with these questions, the paper revisits the brutal murders of 42 mostly black LGBT persons in South Africa that took place between 2005-2015. Utilising court records, archival material gathered mostly from activists, family members, activist media, and participant observation, the paper brings a lived experience to the notion of dying. Through an empirical and theoretical exploration of queer theory and the notion of dying, the paper poses critical questions on methodologies of ended life; the limits of human rights discourses; and the ways in which queer bodies have been rendered dead in South Africa, and by extension in African contexts. The paper works towards arguing and ensuring that black lesbians and all black queer lives matter before they are dead; that justice should be an everyday reality for the living, and not the domain of the dead.

Islamic and African Traditional Marriages in Yorubaland: A Comparative Analysis

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An attempt is made in this paper to bring forward the similarities and differences between Islamic and Traditional marriages in Yorubaland. Islamic marriage comes under the Islamic family law that binds a

Muslim man and woman together as husband and wife. Islamic Marital Law denounces fornication as illegal. It urges both sexes of humanity to subject their relationship to a code of law which protects the morality of man and woman against indecency and immodesty and guards against chaos. Hence, the objective of marriage in Islam is for preservation of morality and chastity. Though Islam allows man to marry more than one wife, they must not be more than four. On the other hand, Yoruba traditional marriage gives room for unrestricted polygamy, snatching forms of marriage, marriage by inheritance and other forms of marriages which are anti-Islamic in nature. Similarly, in this paper, I will discuss the similarities that exist between Islamic and African Traditional Marriages with reference to Yorubaland. The extent to which an African marriage is Islamical and the extent to which it is not would be discussed through historical method.

Keywords: Islam, Qur'an, Marriage, African Tradition, Yorubaland

Women in Pursuit of Power: Women Pentecostal Charismatic Preachers in East Africa

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Despite the marked proliferation of women Pentecostal-Charismatic (PC) Preachers in Kenya in recent decades, little attention has been given to the phenomenon in the academic study of religions. This paper presents a conceptual framework and preliminary results of a study on the strategies of women PC leaders in Kenya. The study employs ethnographic methods of data gathering and analysis. It is hypothesized that while women in pursuit of power employ the same methods as their male counterparts, women have to deal with extra hurdles related to

cultural constrains. Preliminary results will be presented regarding how particular female preachers in Kenya deploy their femininity in a bid to find their way around such hurdles.

Where Anthropology and Spirituality Meet: Eros, Libido and Force of Life – Concepts of Common Origin in African Traditional and Platonic Worldview and their Re-emergence in the focus of Debates on Personhood and Sexuality in Modernity

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Germany

The aim of this paper is to trace the common roots of the Platonic concept of “eros” and its cosmological role, elaborated by Neoplatonism which is at the root of concept of “libido” of S. Freud and C. G. Jung (cf. Ellenberger, H. F., *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, 1970) and the concept of the “force of life” (“Axé”), described e.g. by P. Tempels (*La Philosophie bantoue*, 1945) with their spiritual and vital properties. According to M. Bilolo (*Fondements Thébains de la Philosophie de Plotin l'Égyptien*, 2007) both are linked by origin. The Neoplatonic idea of a cosmogonic “eros” is related to the concept of spiritual “energeia” in anthropology and spirituality. This is fundamental for the Psychodynamic theory of the person. It has also influenced Christian Orthodox Theology. Both the Platonic and the African Traditional concepts of a “force of life” account for the positive evaluation of sexuality and attribute spiritual significance to it. On this basis attitudes to “libido” and the issue of fertility and procreation as a desired social norm are distinguished. Considering that the positive evaluation of “libido” in Psychoanalytic anthropology is probably the

most influential force in the “sexual liberalisation” of European and North American culture, an identification of its spiritual aspects and common roots with African Traditional philosophy provides a basis for discourse in view of conservative Christian and Muslim positions and for a debate on sexuality, sexual identities, ethics and gender in view of the spiritual, cosmological and anthropological traditions of Africa and Europe which have accommodated for “deviance” as well as for procreation.

Visual Terrorism and Social Violence: An Analysis of Sexual Body in a Nigeria’s Print Media

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The human body is the primary object and window through which sexuality is understood, interpreted and expressed. For a religious person, both the human body and sexuality convey a deep sense of sacredness. Social and print media employ, explore and exploit the human body for several purposes namely: psychological, economic, social, political, etc. This paper examines the “Fashion Court” column, pages 34 and 35 of the Nigeria’s *Sunday Sun* Newspaper. It focuses on 24 selected issues of the paper, and describes the general features and contents of the entries including several photos which expose the sensual and sensitive part of the woman’s body, with side comments on each photo by ‘prosecuting counsel’ and ‘justice’, and a ‘witness box’. It adopts a socio-psychological interpretation of the content analysis of the use of words and expressions, pictorial image of the body parts, ethical import on human sexuality, the effects on the ‘seeing eyes’ and implications on social violence.

Socio-Religious Dynamics of the Music of *Saint Janet*

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The inclusion of sexual themes in music composition and performance of youths is becoming a dominant feature in Nigeria's contemporary urban popular culture. Members of the society sometimes consider this phenomenon excusable for male music artistes, but not for their female counterparts who are often expected to maintain societal values including decorum and piety especially if such musicians are gospel music artistes. Janet Omotoyosi Kayode-Iyun, popularly known as *Saint Janet*, is a Nigerian female pseudo *juju-gospel* music practitioner famous for adopting erotic themes in her music. Existing scholarly studies are yet to examine the music of *Saint Janet* as a manifestation of a gradual shift in the social and religious concept of morality. This study, therefore, investigated the socio-religious dynamics of *Saint Janet*'s music in relation to morality. The study was anchored to Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the Social Cognitive theory of Morality and adopted the ethnographic research design with the use of interviews and non participant-observation methods. Interviews were carried out with *Saint Janet*, her manager and purposively selected members of the society. Specific music (audio and video) and other data were subjected to content and structural analyses. Findings revealed that *Saint Janet*, mainly motivated by social mobility, which is pursuit of money, fame and recognition, adopts parody of popular gospel *juju*/highlife, choruses, and *native air* with lyrics overlaid with lewd texts. In an attempt to cope with the challenge of surviving in a highly competitive music industry, she resorts to reconstructing gospel music by jokily mentioning male and female sexual organs without any

decorum, a practice that has received condemnation from members of the society. The music of Saint Janet is an expression of devalued socio-religious norms precipitated by socio-economic factors. The need for regulatory agencies in censoring musical arts which promotes moral decadence in the society was stressed as part of recommendations.

Keywords: Saint Janet, Erotic texts, Nigerian popular music, Morality.

Teachers' Perception of the Teaching and Learning of Sex Education in Secondary Schools

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Sex Education is a life-long process of building a strong foundation for sexual health through acquiring information and forming attitudes. Sex Education is a broad term treated in many areas such as sexual anatomy, reproduction, sexual intercourse, reproductive health, emotional relationship, abstinence, contraception and other aspects of human sexual behaviour. Sex Education may be taught informally through parental advice, peer group discussion, religious leaders or through the media. Sex Education does not only focus exclusively on coitus and reproduction but also considers all aspect of life which is related with sexuality. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. A total of 100 respondents which were randomly selected from ten secondary schools in Odeda Local Government Area of Ogun state, Nigeria. Descriptive analysis of frequencies and percentages were used to describe the demographic information of the respondents while t-test and chi –square (X^2) analysis were used for the variables. The findings revealed that there was a significant difference between the perception

of male and female teachers of the inclusion of Sex Education in Secondary school's curriculum. In view of the findings, the researchers recommended among other things that Sex Education should be included in the secondary school curriculum.

Keywords: Teaching, Perception, sex education, Teachers, learning.

Gender-based Violence in African Traditional Religion: The Case of Zimbabwe.

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Gender studies have grown enormously in recent years. While it is indisputable that sexual differences are a fact of biology, it is equally true that the particular significance which societies attach to sexual differences is a human cultural creation. These differences in value and behaviour assigned to men and women are embodied in gender roles. Thus gender is a social construct while sex is a biological condition. In this paper I examine gender-based violence in the African Traditional Society using Zimbabwe as a case study. Generally in Zimbabwe there seems to be a common understanding that gender-based violence has to do with men causing violence on women. Perhaps this is because statistically there are more such cases and not vice versa. In this paper I argue that in Zimbabwe, research has shown that cases of women causing violence on men are rampant and they are increasing at an alarming and unprecedented rate. However men are suffering in silence because of socialisation. In the Zimbabwean traditional society, a man should not cry in public like a woman. Consequently, they end up suffering from various health problems while others end up committing

suicide and there is a high incidence of such cases in Zimbabwe. I suggest that Zimbabwean men should be educated to know that gender-based violence is a two-sided issue. Men should move away from the oppressive and unrealistic cultural expectations of suffering in silence. Rather, they must begin to speak out if they are suffering violence at the hands of their female counterparts. This way they would get the necessary legal assistance since both men and women are protected by the law in Zimbabwe, for example, the Domestic Violence Act.

“By Their Fruit You Shall Know Them”: An Index for Generating Sexual and Religious Identities among the Yoruba People of Nigeria

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Experience shows that the phenomenon of the ascription of an identity to a person, place or a thing is a product of man’s innovation and creativity; hence the process is a continuous exercise among the Yoruba of Nigeria. Previous studies on the subject of identity have been approached from social, political and psychological perspectives with little attention paid to its moral dimension, which is the gap this study intends to fill. Therefore, the main occupation of this paper is to see how one’s action and inaction at one time or the other in time and space could lead to the coining or creating a new sexual and/or religious identity for an individual or group of individuals whose action/inaction is appraised from a moral point of view. In interrogating this issue, we rely on consequential ethical theory which is complimented with the use of interview and observation as research methods. Our argument is that

the action or inactions of individual male and female and group of individuals in Yoruba history have implications for the sexual and/or religious identity Yoruba society could ascribed to an individual or group of individuals; hence, the manifestation of the biblical aphorism “by their fruit you shall know them”. Possible inference will be drawn from the whole scenario to make recommendations geared towards creating a new sexual and/or religious identity for modern African individuals or group of individuals that would be capable of thinking and acting right in order to overcome moral decadence charactering his/her or their political, social and religious atmosphere.

Religion, Insurgency and Gender Based Violence in Africa: The Case of Nigerian Boko Haram

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Religion has been seen as essential to human societies, as it enhances human security which cuts across socio- political and economic sphere of any nation. Hence, the positive grip of religion on human societies cannot be overemphasized. Unfortunately in recent years, there has been a changing dynamic of religious connotations in African States, where the emergence of extreme religious zealots have become the order of the day. Thus, insurgency has constituted a major threat to peace and security of Africa. With reference to Nigeria, the emergence of the Boko Haram Islamic sect since 2009 has brought untold hardship to the people in the North Eastern zone, where women and girls have been adversely affected. This study examines Gender Based Violence in the context of the Boko Haram uprising in North Eastern Nigeria. The paper further

focuses on the multi-dimensional aspects of Gender Based Violence, evidenced in rise in the incidence of rape, sexual slavery, intimate partner violence and abductions. This paper also examines the responses of religious organizations in addressing gender-based violence in Nigeria. The historical and phenomenological methods were used to review the Boko Haram sect and the menace of gender based violence. The paper contends that the low responses of religious organizations over the years have further escalated the menace. The paper concludes by recommending the need for religious organizations to embark on more pro-active strategies in curbing gender based violence as well as nipping the Boko Haram sect in the bud.

Keywords: Religion, Insurgency, Gender, Violence and Boko Haram

“This is the work of the devil”: Negotiations about atheism and same-sex relationships in a Neo-Pentecostal Church in Kenya

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Over the last few years, secularism, atheism and same-sex relationships are recurring topics in Kenya, which have reignited debates about social and moral decay. These debates are diversely and controversially discussed and pervade the public, private as well as the religious sphere. One of the leading religious voices in these debates is Prophet Dr. Owuor, who burst into the public limelight in 2008, and is significantly shaping Kenyan’s religious landscape. “The End-Time-Prophet”, as his followers refer to him, preaches about the “Second Coming of the Messiah” and “Repentance and Holiness.” For Prophet Owuor and his followers the secularization of the world, which is accompanied by the

rise of atheism, as well as the liberalization of same-sex relationships, is a sign of the “work of the devil” in the end time of the approaching apocalypse of the world. As remedy and solution to this “evil world”, Dr. Owuor’s advice is to live a holy life and to repent in order to enter into the Kingdom of God and seek eternal life. Dr. Owuor and his Ministry of Repentance and Holiness (MRH) enjoy a growing prominence in Kenya. Currently over 10 Million Kenyans are supporters and followers of Prophet Owuor, among them high-ranking politicians and university professors. This paper studies how Prophet Owuor and his MRH address the current “headaches” of atheism and same-sex relationships in a time of rapid social change in Kenya. Which biblical references does Prophet Owuor use to consolidate his message? Further, the paper critically examines, why so many Kenyans feel attracted to a spiritual moralist like Prophet Owuor and his message of repentance, holiness and moral probity. Can this conservative force of “moral renewal” be seen as countermovement to modernity?

Redeemed Sexuality: A Paradigm for Holistic Sexual Flourishing

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Among the many challenges facing Africa with regard to sexuality, limitation of space allows this paper to concern itself particularly with these three. Firstly, the fear of breaking sexual taboos prevents open talk about sexuality. Normally, issues regarding sexuality are seen as ‘dirty’ and something which ‘soil’ the reputation of those who dare engage in them. Secondly, there tends to be a widely shared opinion that sexuality exists only for the goal of procreation. This trivializes the legitimacy of

celebration of the sexual-self, especially that of the woman. Thirdly, there are strong expectations about the specific roles and ways in which women and men are to define and express themselves as sexual-beings. This paper finds these three themes to be limiting influences on the sexual flourishing possibilities of women and men in Africa thereby denying them the legitimacy of enjoying their God-given sexual bodies. The paper thus, sees the above-mentioned factors as constituting the core challenge plaguing sexuality in Africa. As far as this paper is concerned, by addressing these underlying factors regarding sexuality in Africa, a key foundational issue shall have been tackled to pave the way for other critical challenges to be addressed. However, the paper finds that people's sexual opinions and paradigms of sexuality in Africa have greatly been shaped by religious presuppositions. One such religious influence affecting sexuality is the Christian Creation Theology based on the Genesis 1-3 narratives. It is therefore important that we re-interpret this crucial text in order to de-construct unhelpful sexual perspectives and to re-construct a theology of sexuality that engenders holistic human sexual wellbeing in African communities. This paper attempts a development of such a 'new' theology of sexuality defined as theology of redeemed sexuality.

Ghanaian Pentecostal Ritual Praxis as 'Technologies' of Gender and Sexuality in Ghanaian Transnational Migrant Spaces

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Ghana

The last three decades have witnessed the proliferation of African Pentecostal Christianity (APC) in Europe, North America and recently

Australia. A dimension of this Pentecostal group is the practice of exorcism, popularly known as 'deliverance' in the African Pentecostal ritual parlance. The practice of deliverance where enigmatic and malevolent elements are expelled from the body, carry implications for how gender and sexuality are constructed. Following Michel Foucault's 'technologies of the self,' we will argue that this practice is a 'technology' that engenders a particular African Pentecostal ethos contributing to a redefinition of masculine and feminine ethos within transnational spaces. In this fieldwork-based paper, we will demonstrate how deliverance rituals at a Ghanaian Pentecostal migrant church in Australia known as the Power Chapel, address gender and sexual 'normativity' as well as deviance in gender and sexual roles for the migrants. Their deliverance rituals have two categories of spirits, the spirit spouses and mermaid spirits (*Maame Wata*). Consequently, the paper will also explore how the mobilization of these categories of spirits points to gender and sexuality configurations of the church in Ghana. It will show that the church negotiates gender and sexuality in the migratory context as a response to the reconfigurations and broader gender context in Australia.

Identity and Xenophobia in South Africa: An Ethical Dilemma to Faith Communities

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The continuous attacks on migrants living in South Africa, from 2008 until now have generated worldwide debates and discussions on issue of the safety of migrants in the country. There have been numerous

reported incidences of abuse, intimidation, discrimination and even deaths which have culminated into the continuous Afrophobic attacks. The current article adds to the debates by arguing that notwithstanding the accusations alleged towards migrants by the media and some South Africans as the reasons for these attacks, the Christian community in Pietermaritzburg can make a difference. The current article explores how the Christian community in Pietermaritzburg can be hospitable to migrants and thereby ensuring their safety. This is because they are called to exercise the golden rule by loving their neighbour as themselves. Through the Christian ethic of hospitality, the article challenges the Christian community on the need to review their attitude towards migrants in their midst. In the same way it acknowledges the potential migrants have to make positive contribution to the country and therefore the need for them to be educated on how to live in a foreign land.

Demystifying Notions of the African Body and Symbolism in the Ritual Space

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The idea of male and female naked bodies gathered secretly at night to conduct ritual ceremonies, may translate into various images and ceremonial imaginations. Some question, while others outright attest, that the rituals were elaborate and “perpetual orgies”.⁶ These accounts

⁶ “Perpetual Orgies” is how the oath rituals were describe in Kenya: The Oath Takers,” *Time*, June 13, 1960, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,940578,00.html>.

reveal a great deal about how the body, especially the African body, is and have been historically perceived, interpreted, and regulated during ceremonial spaces. This study aims to examine these perversions and how Africans have continued to process, and culturally engage the body in ritual acts as a means to invoke power at various historical moments and situations. This study engages with the rituals used in Kenya during the 1950s to dismantle colonial rule as a means to understand intersectionality of the ritual space, the body, power, and associated discourses. Using testimonies and accounts of ritual participants, this study explores the appropriation of the body in ritualized spaces as an extension of ritual tools, types, and symbols to invoke spiritual interventions. This is not to suggest that sexual acts, gestures, or thoughts did not occur. On the contrary, it aims to question the use of the body symbolically during the ritual ceremonies as a method of unification, breaking taboos to create secrecy, and harnessing power. The study also seeks to convey how this type of power is attacked and minimized for political interests and agendas. To this point, on June 13, 1960, *Time* magazine published the article, “Kenya: The Oath Takers”⁷ to explain the secret and cursing oath rituals in Kenya. The article opens describing the ritual acts using “corpses & orgies” during ceremonies. Throughout the article, words like “blood lust”, “semen” and “orgies” were used that took symbolic acts of blood use and nudity out of context. Imagery and descriptions in print were able to invent ceremonies and fantasies to shape the ideas of the ritual space, often minimizing the acts viewed as sacred. History is full of many documents that reveal the problems with text, especially those looming in the colonial archives

⁷ The article was based on the *Time Magazine*’s ghastly spin on the oathing process from the Corfield report. “Kenya: The Oath Takers,” *Time*, June 13, 1960, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,940578,00.html>.

that can create an often lop-sided position serving colonial/Western interests. The language and words used by the passages reminds one of the polarity of ideologies and need to control the permeation of African power. What has been the impact of these printed claims on the historiography and our knowledge on the ritual space? Were these acts merely sexual in nature as described by outsiders? Have these accounts over time devalued the importance and use of African rituals, thus suppressing the practices? What are the consequences of these attributions? How does this negative association of the body confuse the possible realities of the ritual goal and objectives?

Marginalization of the Girl-Child: A Case Study of Selected Christian Homes in Ondo West Local Government Area of Nigeria

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Many studies have been carried out on gender bias and regulation of the women and girl child but nor have addressed the issue of marginalization of the girl child in Christian homes. The study surveyed the attitude of Christian parents and siblings towards the girl child in Ondo West local Government Area of Nigeria. The objective of this paper is to examine whether specific roles are assigned to the girl-child in the home. It also explores factors responsible for this. The paper adopts historical and contextual analysis. A sample of 100 Christian homes was selected through stratified random sampling techniques. A questionnaire designed by the researcher was used to elicit information from the respondents. Simple percentage was used to analyze the data.

The results show that many Christian homes assign duties to the girl-child believed to be made for the girl-child. Even the male-child believes that the girl-child is to serve him just like the woman and the paper conclude that a re-orientation of the family values, attitudes and roles will go a long way to curb many of the marginalizations against the girl-child in the homes.

Evolving an Inclusive Hermeneutics of Sexuality in African Christianity

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Sex and sexuality remain a popular discourse in the West. However, in Africa especially among Christians the issue of sexuality has not been given adequate attention. This might perhaps be part of the carry-over from the traditional African understanding of sex and sexuality, where these issues were given a restrictive treatment. This attitude also informed the interpretation of the Bible in Africa especially on the issue of sex and sexuality. The Bible has been used to define and set the boundary of sexuality. Any attempt to go beyond the set bound is viewed as ungodly. The goal of this paper is to explore how the Bible could be effectively interpreted in order to engender an inclusive understanding of sexuality. This will be done with view to expanding the scope of the understanding of sexuality in African Christianity. To this effectively, the paper will seek for ways in which the scope of the understanding of sex and sexuality can be expanded without necessarily distorting the basic ethos of the Christian faith and the African cultural understanding of sex and sexuality.

Sexual Norms and Deviance among the Yoruba South-western Nigeria

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Sexuality is central to Yoruba life just as it is with every other culture in the world. Sexuality encompasses sex, gender, identities and roles, pleasure, intimacy, and reproduction. This can be experienced in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practises, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced, expressed or acceptable. There is social norms and deviance which is complex but relative terms. Sexual norms are rules and expectations by which members of society are conventionally guided while deviance is an absence of conformity to these norms. Sexual norms differ from culture to culture. For example a sexual deviant act can be committed in one society that breaks a social norm there, but may be normal for another society. Today, with extensive researches and more information available on the subject of sexuality, it is possible to define our sexuality on the basis of personal choices because modern lifestyles and upscale urban living have led to a shedding of inhibitions and increased sexual freedom to explore various sexual behaviours. With the assistance of existing literatures, oral interviews and the internet, the paper shall examine the Yoruba traditional sexual norms vis-a-vis the various deviances that is gaining acceptance as typical sexual behaviours in the contemporary Yoruba society.

Keywords: Sexuality, Norms, Deviance, Culture, Behaviour

An Exegetical Study of Leviticus 18:22 and its Implications on African Youths

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Most Nigerians are living in a sex-perverted era with the display of movies and the newspapers pictures expressing men's and women's bodies in one alarming form or another. On the media (television, radio), bills boards and in books, magazines and newspapers, the society is continually rounded of sex. Obviously, even items like cars, banks or drinks cannot be advertised without some sensitive parts of the human body being exposed. Everywhere one turns today, there is sex in some form or another being thrown at one. Today, the Church founds herself living in a sexually saturated or unsaturated culture. It is believed that sex and sexual expression among the Christians, especially within the African context is borrowed idea from the western culture. It is forbidden in Africa that sexuality is highly respected within the African context before the advent of the westerners, but today, reverse is the case. It is very notable today that some people involve in sexual harassment in the name of civilization. The paper objectively tend to remind the general public of the original source of dressing and never to derail from it, no matter the foreign influence and the pressure. The research method used include historical and exegetical. Historical method helped to dig deep into some past and present materials. While exegetical method involved the use of Hebrew language to interpret relevant text. In the course of the research, the following objectives were discovered: Seduction, rape, prostitution, sexual harassment among others. The paper concluded that God frown at homosexuality and adultery and that we have to go to the drawing board to maintain and

normalize the way we view sexuality. This paper recommended that high respect should be given to our moral values and culture, and above all, obedient to the word of God must to be paramount.

Navigating the Leadership Conundrum: Experiences of Black Caribbean Female Educational Leaders in the Canadian Diaspora

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University of Toronto

This presentation will share the experiences of Black female educational leaders in K- 12 schools and higher education in Southern Ontario Canada. Utilizing Critical Race Theory and Culturally Responsive framework the experiences of three educational leaders will be examined as they navigate the educational landscape in Southern Ontario Canada. The presentation will examine and interrogate the tensions of the journey, coping strategies that these educational leaders employed to encounter resistance, and successes that they achieved. Through their narratives these educational leaders carved out spaces to disrupt, posit counter narratives, engaged in self-reflection and discovery. Ladson-Billings (1998) argues in favor of counter-narratives as a means to study and define realities that are juxtaposed to prevalent narratives. Counter-narratives open doors to disruptions and re-interpretations of reality as expressed through pervasive, socially accepted stories. As Delgado (1991 as cited in Ladson-Billings, 1995) suggests people name their realities because much of their reality is socially constructed, stories provide marginalized people with a vehicle to critically reflect, and exchange of stories from teller to listener can help overcome the pain that is experienced and the dysconscious

conviction of viewing the world in one way. This presentation has relevance not only for educators living in working in diasporic spaces but all racialized bodies and marginalized bodies.

Sex Roles in Indigenous Religious Worship in Edda Igbo

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Most world religions have sought to address the moral issues that arise from people's sexuality in society and human interactions. Each major religion has developed moral codes covering issues of sexuality, ethics and values. These moral codes seek to regulate the situations which can give rise to sexual interest and to influence people's sexual activities and practices. Sexual morality has varied greatly over time and between cultures. A community's sexual norms and standard of sexual conduct can be linked to religious beliefs, or social and environmental conditions, or all of these. Sexuality and reproduction are fundamental elements in human interaction and society worldwide. Again, sexual restrictions are one of the universals of culture peculiar to all human societies. Accordingly, most religions have seen a need to address the question of a proper role for sexuality in human interactions. Different religions have different codes of sexual morality, which regulate sexual activity or assign normative values to certain sexually charged actions or thoughts. This paper sets out to investigate the different roles played by different sexes in Edda traditional religion. The paper finds out that different roles are attached to the religion of the people; it also finds that there are different deities which are worshipped or served according to the sex of the people. In these deities those of that particular sex are the priests or the priestesses. It therefore concludes that special interest should be given to religion since sexual norms and standard of sexual conduct are attached to the religion in order to avoid religious chaos in Edda community.

Marital Belief Systems and Abduction among the Sotho

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This study is based on empirical research data collected from perpetrators and victims of abduction in the Mafikalisiu community of Lesotho. It focuses on marital belief systems which foster abduction among the Sotho. The research design is qualitative. Data is collected through police records and a semi-structured interview, and interpreted phenomenologically. The following factors perpetuate abduction in contemporary Lesotho: enabling forces (a patriarchal mentality); mediating forces (low educational level and poverty among perpetrators); reinforcing forces (fear of stigma, judicial sympathy, and geographical isolation). The study recommends grassroots rapprochement between the people of Mafikalisiu and the forces of law and order, and national awareness raising sensitisation campaigns to effectively manage the phenomenon of abduction in the latter community and Lesotho in general.

Keywords: abduction, patriarchal mentality, fear of stigma, judicial sympathy, poverty.

Engaging Religious Leaders and Communities in Addressing Gender-Based Violence and HIV/Aids in Africa

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Gender-based violence (GBV) highlights the nexus between women's subordinate status in society and their increased vulnerability to violence. Research has shown that worldwide, about one in four women

experience gender-based violence including; sexual, physical or emotional abuse by an intimate partner (known as intimate partner violence-IPV), family members or others; sexual harassment or abuse, trafficking for forced labour or sex, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, child marriages, and sexual violence in conflict situations. It is widely believed that women face these and other types of violence as a result of their subordinate status in society, which is enhanced by laws and customary practices including polygamy, virginity testing, and female genital mutilation (FGM), among others. High levels of violence perpetuated against women can directly and indirectly expose them to HIV/AIDS through forced or coercive sex with an HIV-infected partner; rape, women's inability or limited ability to negotiate condom use with partners; men having multiple sexual partners; use of alcohol or drugs; transactional sex and many more. While men, boys, and other vulnerable or marginalized populations also experience GBV and thus vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, the writer of this paper is specifically perturbed by violence against women as a key expression of GBV. Religious leaders possess ordained roles and serve as role models of care and compassion. As religions around the world reiterate the inherent sacredness of human life, they and their communities have the moral obligation and authority to raise awareness about and campaign against GBV and strive to transform societal or religious norms or practices that promote such violence and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. This paper seeks to explore types of GBV; their effects on the female gender, as well as the nexus between HIV/AIDS and GBV. It will identify key gaps and challenges that limit the effectiveness of responses to the epidemics. More intently, the paper will establish the rationale for engaging as well as the roles of religious leaders and

communities in raising awareness, campaigning against and providing support and care to victims of GBV and HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Keywords: Religious Leaders, Communities, Gender-Based Violence, HIV/AIDS

Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriages in Africa Diaspora

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Azohu Aburime, Solomon Kehinde Olowookere & Olajide
Emmanuel Bello
Nigeria

Over the past decade, homosexuality has moved from being a taboo topic to centre stage or has led to a bone of contention in Africa. One precipitating factor was the election in 2003 of an openly gay bishop, Gene Robinson, by the Episcopal Church in the United States of America. This action created a crisis, with many African Anglican Church leaders threatening to break away from the Anglican Communion. Gay and lesbian rights groups are now speaking up and seeking legislation to protect homosexuals. The paper discovered that, South Africa is the African country in which such weddings are legalized. Since homosexuality has been made a social justice issue in the secular realm, this paper found that, the Church is placed in a state of confusion or dilemma and becomes afraid of being accused of “social injustice” and victimization of gay and lesbians. This paper uses historical, hermeneutical, and analytical research methods. Data was collected through secondary sources. This paper also noted clearly that, scripture has a very negative view homosexual intercourse; any attempt

to justify homosexuality and lesbianism acts is foreign to the scripture. The paper recommends that, Christians need to give due weight to empirical and scientific arguments, but should never compromise their submission to the teaching of scriptures. From biblical point of view, homosexuality, lesbianism, and same- sex marriages are manifestation of our sinful nature and are contrary to the clear teachings of Scripture.

Keywords: Biblical Perspective, Homosexuality, Lesbianism Same-Sex marriage, Africa Diaspora

Male and Female He Created Them: Towards a Biblical Understanding of Gender Equality.

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The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary

The prejudices, inequalities and injustice suffered by women appear to be universal and deeply rooted in all cultures. In the African context the role of religion, especially Christianity has been unfortunate and exploitative. The misconception about the status of women at creation is traceable to the misinterpretation of sections of Pauline writings from the original Greek to modern English. Neither man nor woman is made more in the image of God than the other. Neither sex neither is exalted nor is neither depreciated. Unfortunately large percentages of women are inclined to accept the finality of their inferior status erroneously as the divine order. This paper based on the evidence of Genesis 1:27, “God created man in his own image... male and female he created them”, however, affirms the equality of both male and female. They are fundamentally equal in value, potential, rights and every other attribute that matters morally. In God’s likeness they demonstrate spiritual

powers such as powers of thought, communication and self-transcendence. The essential unity of their being is the result of their complementarity as determined by their definite and defined God-given roles for important and effective everyday life. The relationship between the two is also expressed by the term translated as helper or help meet indicating mutuality. The paper concludes that the misinterpretation of the scriptures, especially by male religious leaders provide the foundation or justification for much of the pervasive persecution and abuse of women throughout the world. Consequently recommendations are made that: authorised scholarly review of the initial scriptural misinterpretation of relevant passages dating to the 4th Century; total rejection of age-long traditional Jewish discriminative tendencies inherited by the Christian Church; and a critical review of modern realities that show that no human community makes progress that treats half of her population as inferior be undertaken.

Homosexual Practice and Human Dignity: Biblico – African View in Esan Perspective

T. O. Ebhomienlen

Humans are created and given the gift of human relation including sexual interactions. Sexuality is one of the sacred cooperation which is held in high esteem. Homosexuality is an aspect of sexual relations which had raised questions in the ancient and still raising issues in the contemporary times. However it is popularized currently because some groups of persons publicly agitate for the legalization of the practice. Nonetheless, it has not ceased to be a problematic issue. Hence the paper examines homosexual practice and human dignity in Biblical – African

view in Esan Perspective with an attempt to make an academic contribution to the phenomenon. The study discovers that while some scholars and most especially African traditionalist see it as abnormality some scholars and liberalists consider the same as normal based on fundamental human rights and choice. The work also discovers that homosexuality affects human dignity and African Traditional Thoughts. To achieve the objective of this work the writer adopts the historical evaluative and the phenomenological methods. The paper concludes with the Esan worldview that *ugben su ugben* meaning it is not possible for a thorn to pierce a thorn connoting that in biblical and African context homosexuality is a serious taboo.

Sexual Orientation Discourse Practices in Yoruba Native Culture

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Before the advent of the *World Wide Web*, and other electronic and digital media of communication which publicize and make it possible for people to talk freely about it, in many traditional cultures, sex was a private matter and the discourse relating to it was confined to adults, usually procreative adults. The thesis of this paper is that though the Yoruba traditional civilization was cagey about, and on matters of sexuality, it was not (reflective of the fact that sexuality is a matter of instinctive interest) a completely sexually sacred civilization. The paper develops this thesis through the examination of three discourse methods of communicating sexual information in Yoruba culture: These methods include: erotic songs (with special emphasis on sex inducing *elewendere* song performance in Okuku, a native culture in Southwestern Nigeria),

sex-related riddles, and proverbs. The paper argues that though these media are not as transparent as the modern computer- mediated media, such as the Internet and mobile phones, they are as effective as these modern media in explicitly transmitting and communicating sexuality messages.

**Turning Boys into Men: The Quest for Transformed Masculinities
in Selected Faith Based Organizations in the Context of the
Prevailing Family Crisis in Kenya**

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The Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), and the Deliverance Churches of Kenya (DC) have recently emerged as spaces where discourses on male masculinities are contested, negotiated and appropriated. In these churches, terms such as *“transforming masculinities for Christian men”*, *“turning boys to men”*, *“real men don’t hit women”* and *“real men provide for their families”* have become common parlance. Each of these churches have men fellowship and prayer groups thus signifying new developments where men are consciously taking steps to transform themselves in light of the myriads of challenges facing Kenyan families. This study examines how these churches are negotiating and contesting male masculinities through their sermons, narratives, teachings, rituals and programmes. The study is based on current ethnographic research and in depth qualitative study carried out within the three case studies. The study of masculinities and churches builds upon masculinities and religion which in turn builds upon gender studies and feminist theory.

Sex is a very bad Sin: Sex, Purity and Women Bodies as Sites of Contestation in a Neo-Pentecostal Church in Kenya

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In the Ministry of Repentance and Holiness in Kenya, sexual sin or ‘sins of immorality’ as it is normally referred to in this church is categorized as a grievous sin which attracts the wrath of a vengeful God. In this ministry, women are taught to dress holy as if to embody holiness so as not to tempt men into sins of immorality. In this Church, women’s dress and bodies have become not just sites of contestation, debate and discourse about morality/immorality but also arenas of patriarchal surveillance, control and power, and signifiers of meaning and spirituality. Consequently, by controlling women’s dressing and relating sexual relations to sin, God’s wrath and punishment, this church does not portray women’s bodies in a healthy way and this may in the long run have a negative impact on women’s reproductive health, rights and choices.

From Hegemonic to Transformative Masculinity: The role of the Church in Africa as a Catalyst in Redeeming Positive Masculinity

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The HIV and AIDS pandemic in Africa has exposed a problematic masculinity that has contributed greatly to gender based violence as well as to the spread of HIV and AIDS. To the extent that UNAIDS in the year 2,000 gave a directive that ‘given the urgency of curbing HIV rates

... it is important to challenge harmful concepts of masculinity, including the way adult men look on risk and sexuality and how boys are socialized to become men (UNAIDS, 2000). Gender-based violence (GBV) has proven to be a major public health problem that has resulted to devastating effects on mental and reproductive health and emotional distress of the victims. Gender-based violence also has been found to perpetuate broader structural inequalities that limit social justice and equity. This article will highlight the role that Churches in Africa can play in dealing with the unhealthy expressions of masculinity mainly through addressing the attitudes, values, beliefs and practices that cause violence to be perpetrated by men against women as well as fellow men. It suggests that the Church in Africa needs to review how religion, personal histories and socialization has shaped the understanding of the role of gender and messages on masculinity and the life cycle of violence. It suggests that Churches need to transform men to understand that the use of violence over others is actually a sign of disempowerment and that nonviolent masculinities are possible and desirable and promote a positive, healthy, nonviolent masculinity as a mark of real manhood and not a sign of weakness.

Keyword: Hegemonic masculinities, Gender based violence, HIV and AIDS, Church as catalyst, Transformative masculinities

Great Houses Of Stone⁸: The Body, The Land And The Memory In Chenjerai Hove's Fiction

Gustavo Brito

Pedro Ludovico. Goiânia – Goiás - Brazil.

The present paper will analyse the relations established between the Body, the Land and the Memory in three novels of the Zimbabwean poet and novelist Chenjerai Hove, *Bones* (1988), *Shadows* (1991) e *Ancestors* (1996). The study of the novels revealed the deep relation that the natives of Rhodesia, nowadays called Zimbabwe, had with their lands and their ancestors. The objective of this paper is to present the profound changes that happened in the culture of the Shona ethnic after the arrival of the colonizers and the missionaries in the end of the XIX. The perspective adapted to this critique, observes in each of the novels the characters' native bodies in an intense struggle between two misbalanced forces that used to be the fundamentals of the ancient Zimbabwean reality. In one side there is the Land, considered holy by its mystical aspect. The Land carries the umbilical cords of every new born and the bones of all deceased, and it is the home of the ancestors, called *Pasi*. In the other side rest the Ancestors, responsible for the accumulation of knowledge. The Ancestors represent the collective memory of Shona people; they connect the individuals to nature because of their transcendence. With the Ancestors each Shona can talk to the land and be heard through the religious ears of their ancient fathers. However, when the colonizers arrived, called *those without knees* because of their pants, they imposed, with violence, a whole new culture

⁸ The name *Zimbabwe* comes from 'dzimba dzemabwe', a Shona expression that means *houses of stone*.

to that ancient model of existence. This work will evaluate the consequences of the imposition of the colonizer's culture, present in every page of each novel; what caused the loss of local religious traditions, deeply rooted moral behaviours, farming techniques and so many other aspects of the colonized culture. For the Body; the physical violence, the imposition of the English language and the prohibition of the local dialects; for the Land, the new and imported profit-driven farming cultures; for the memory, the imposition of Christianity. Because of those material and immaterial wounds the new generations are forced to recover their ancestor memory by recreating an updated version of their past. Following this track, this study also dedicates its pages to the observation of the subaltern and peripheral position of the black Zimbabwean woman, being sexually and intellectually discriminated by the patrilineal system in a society that must evolve to solve their own cultural problems of discrimination as well as those created by the colonization.

Keywords: Zimbabwe, literature, body, land, memory, subaltern, colonization, post-colonial, independence, violence, imposition.

The Voice of African Women Christian in Korea: Religion and Sexuality Issue of African Diaspora in Korea

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The question of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is still meaningful in Korea. We can change "Can the Subaltern Speak?" to "Can the African Women Christian in Korea Speak?" because African Women Christian is marginalized in Korea. The purpose of this paper is to examine the

voice of African Women Christian in Korea. It is a complex issue with regards to race, culture, religion and sexuality. Because of the short history of African Diaspora in Korea, Korean society does not much space to understand and meet the African. Even the majority of African Diaspora population is Men; Korean still have strange eyes to African Women in Korea. African Women Christian faces difficulties in two categories - Korea society and African Society in Korea. For the women migrant workers, there are many job opportunities in Korea. Many of Chinese-Koreans are working in restaurants, and Asians are working as housekeepers or in food factories, women from native- English speaking countries have equal teaching opportunities available for them. But for the African women, they cannot get such jobs in Korea. Korean still does not know where they would locate African women. They do not offer them “Women Work” but they put them into men’s work. Korean society is not ready to understand African women. Even within the African community, they are not given authority to speak. They are just marginalized helper of African Men. That is why many of them are leaving with men those who help them financially even though they have marital relationships at their home countries. Moreover, it is very difficult for them process their legal matters in Korea.

But there is another dimension for African Women diaspora. If you go to Africa, you can see many women prophets, the spirituality of Women is still present in Korea. A good number of them are making meaningful impact in their respective Christian communities. That is why we can say that there is a possibility for African women to speak in religious circles. Even they don’t have place for make their voice. Church can be the place that could listen women’s voice in Korea. This is the reason why I want to hear from African Women Christian and speak for them.

Since there is no research about it, I will interview them and will use their own word to examine the situation of African Women Christian in Korea. I am sure this paper and presentation will help understand complicate issue of migrant, religion, identity and sexuality.

My Husband is not Abusive it's the Devil in Him: How Women in Pentecostal and African Independent Churches Explain Violence against Them

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South Africa has particularly high levels of violence against women and to date the many interventions and campaigns that have been mounted have not significantly reduced this deeply concerning trend. This paper draws on two years of in-depth interviews in 2014 and 2015 with women who were members of the Zionist Christian Church (ZCC), an African Independent Church, and Grace Bible Church (GBC) a large Pentecostal Charismatic Church. The research included participation in and observation of church services, bible study groups and prayer meetings. In the course of the study a particular rhetoric about violence against women emerged. Women spoke about their husband's or other men who were violent to women as being 'filled with the devil' and said that 'Satan made him do it'. In their eyes of these women, the work of the devil was the explanation for violence against women. These two phrases, which were repeatedly cited as the reason why their otherwise 'good' and 'loving' men were abusive, are layered with inter-related concepts of gender, women, religion and violence. This paper seeks to unpack the deeply complex nature of the concepts gender, violence and

‘the devil’. It does so by examining the multiple social, religious and moral constructs which form each of these concepts in the life-worlds of black women living in South Africa. By unpacking these terms this paper works towards establishing a nuanced and in-depth understanding of how some women in two Christian communities make sense of and deal with violence perpetrated against themselves and/or other women. **Keywords:** violence, Pentecostalism, African Independent Churches, Devil, Witchcraft.

Land and Authority in Postcolonial Africa: Catholic and Muslim Perspectives on Land as Mediating Commodity in Understanding Modernity, Authority and Identity in the Wimbun Community

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Richard T. Talla, University of Bamenda, Cameroon.

"In this paper, we discuss land disputes in the Wimbun area of Donga Mantung Division of the Northwest Region of the Republic of Cameroon. Focusing especially on the land dispute between Ntumbaw and Njirong Villages, we argue that land disputes in Cameroon today offer a lens through which scholars can examine the project of modernity and how it interfaces with authority and religion. Our goal for this presentation will be to offer a brief road map of the contests around land in the Wimbun area. We will then demonstrate that these disputes challenge existing perceptions of traditional and indigenous religious authority. Finally, we will demonstrate that the current dispute between Ntumbaw and Njirong, have necessitated different set of interventions from the Catholic and Islamic communities of Ntumbaw

and Njirong. We explore ways in which both religious communities have taken steps to address the violence that has taken place in both villages." This research project is part of the Contending Modernity Project of the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA.

Dilemmas of the Ethnographer: Researching Women's Roles in Kasena Patriarchal Marriage Practices

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In a patriarchal setting like that of Kasena society, marriage practices have been fashioned out in a manner that will reinforce the notion that men have power over women in marriage and in society in general. Anthropologists have observed that, the marriage institution which exists in many societies in Africa is still a union or partnership between a woman and a man as a married couple; is intertwined with cultural norms which are designed to reinforce the power and dominant role of men as the husbands who control the resources of the family. During my fieldwork in Navrongo in North Eastern Ghana, I unexpectedly discovered that the marriage practices in such a patriarchal system reserved roles for women. Contrary to certain Eurocentric feminist theories of human agency, the evidence from my empirical research points to contextual forms of agentive capacity in women in Kasena marriage. Throughout the process of a Kasena marriage, women play very vital roles without which any marriage in that society cannot be recognised as a legal union. Some of the roles that women in marriage play are ritual roles which are done behind the scenes. It is often the case that during the marriage processes, men are openly seen

negotiating between the families involved but that is not enough to conclude that women do not play any agentival roles in the marriage process. Women and men have their respective space to deliberate on issues. This paper will argue that human agency can be located in Kasena marriage practices through the roles that women play when we conceptualize human agency in marriage with an alternative analytic framework that takes into consideration the structures of power under which Kasena marriage is negotiated in Navrongo.

Religion, Identity and Gender in the African Diaspora: The Quilombola de Coqueiros - Bahia

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The purpose of this research is, to discuss the African-Brazilian religion, Quilombola de Coqueiros located in Mirangaba, a small town in Bahia state, as well as its identity and gender. To realize how community residents alleviate their physical and spiritual pain, by means of work of the women healers, using different rituals such as prayers, baths, candles and singing, seeking the patients healing. These women, considered spiritual leaders are responsible for healing various diseases. They believe they have received the gift of healing from their African and indigenous ancestors. These communities are located in remote places - countryside, where there are no doctors and it is almost impossible one to get there. The population runs to these spiritual leaders searching for alleviation. In the female healers houses (casas de benzadeiras), there is "pejis", a kind of altar where we can see the saints of the Catholic Church, the image of Caboclo and Orishas. In addition to being healers, these women are also rural workers, they work all day long in

the fields, by planting and harvesting agricultural products for their survival. To develop this research, we use the orality as the main source, through the stories told by these women about healing, prayers, difficulties, physical and spiritual pain. We can understand the different experiences of the Quilombola and the preservation of their culture. The Community worships these cultural experiences and views them as tradition. These narratives allowed us to map the historical experiences of the Quilombola de Coqueiros Community, allowing us to understand how the population is building their identity.

Keywords: Religion. African Diaspora, Genre, Identity.

Re-Reading the Old Testament in the context of Gender Based Violence in Botswana

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The Bible forms the basis upon which Christians think about and practice their religion. Thus, even their thinking of and (unfortunately) practice of GBV is to a large extent influenced by their reading of the Bible. Indeed our suggestion of the re-reading of the OT in context of GBV, assumes already that just a reading of it may be a source of GBV. Thus some critics (e.g. Wanjiru and Chitando 2013) think that instead of being ‘good news,’ the Bible has caused havoc in the African continent. Although the whole Bible can be accused of causing havoc in Africa, when it comes to GBV, the OT part of the Bible is the major culprit. Writing in 1984, Phyllis Trible identified four texts from the OT that she described as “texts of terror.” Trible’s description of these four texts can be extended to the majority of OT texts. In this paper I shall

therefore identify some of the texts in the OT that have been read in a way that fuels GBV. It is when we have these in mind that we can suggest a re-reading for mitigation of GBV.

Fanon Contra Sartre: Beyond the Veil of Double Consciousness

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The crisis of Black people, as Franz Fanon conceives it, is even direr than colonial objectification sought to impose. Removed from subjectivity and the center of responsible choice and action, the Black person ceases to be. The goal must be to recover a defining self-consciousness, to transcend a cultural dialectic between Black and White in favor of what Fanon describes as “get[ting] lost in the night of the absolute, the only condition for attaining self-consciousness.” Using Sartre’s *Anti-Semite and Jew* as a foil, Fanon takes exception to Sartre’s characterization of “Negritude . . . as the weak stage of a dialectical progression” in favor of the assertion of a non-objectified consciousness that Fanon says is “committed to experience, knows nothing, has to know nothing, of the essence and determination of its being.” Fanon imagines that Black people can reclaim and reconstitute their self-consciousness only through the evisceration of the objectifying presence.

The primary texts explored include, Franz Fanon’s *Black Skin White Mask*, Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth*, with special attention to Jean Paul Sartre’s introduction. Additionally, I explore W.E.B. Du Bois’s *The Souls of Black Folk*, Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*, Jean

Paul Sartre's "Black Orpheus" and *Anti-Semite and Jew*, among a few others. Authors who have worked extensively on this subject and are engaged in this paper include Lewis Gordon's *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy* and *Existential Africana*, and Jonathan Judaken's "Sartre Multidirectional Memory, and the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization" and *Sartre on Racism*.

Judaken uncovers the interplay between Sartre and Fanon, and Gordon provides careful analysis of these Africana contributors in general, my contribution is focused on showing the significance of Fanon's answer to colonial objectification, which I claim is the assertion of Black Consciousness as a defining identity.

Discourse of Silence! Exploring Gender Based Violence and Religious Intersection in South Eastern Nigeria

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Violence against women is traceable to dateless past and has been the preoccupation of scholars, researchers, activists, and policy makers. This violence is disproportionately directed against the woman because she is a woman. Statistics shows that nearly one in four women would have experienced covert and overt violence by someone known to them. The data for this work draws from south-eastern Nigeria, where issues of sex, sexuality and related discourses are considered as verbal taboo especially by women. Unmarried women in the society are viewed as social outcasts. Women consistently meet with [or: are meted out] this treatment as a result of their subordinate rank in the society. Many laws

and customary practices subjugate women socially, legally and economically. This socially imposed dogma has perpetually left women as social victims who are incapable of expressing themselves or narrating their ordeals. Religion has been the recourse of these embattled women, but unfortunately religion has not provided succour to women but rather has been utilized by men as a tool to perpetuate abuse/violence against the women folk. This paper explores some religious / faith texts that are used to perpetuate gender based violence and seek to unravel the intersection between sexuality and religious discourses as a means of perpetrating violence against women. It concludes with a call to society and religious adherents to confront this social menace.

Mafi-Ewe Indigenous Culture and Environmental Conservation

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The manner in which societies perceive and relate to nature is culturally specific and influenced by socio-political as well as historical factors. Culture theory intimates that culture exhibits the way humans interpret their biology and environment. As a result, ideas about conservation and environmental ethics differ from one culture to another. Some societies are more predisposed to conserving their environment than others. Johannes argues that some cultures, without any shade of doubt, have environmental ethics while others either have little relationship with their environment or have been so affected by external influences to the extent that they have completely lost their traditional environmental

knowledge.⁹ However, Misra maintains that most cultures have their own set of environmental codes, generally referred to as environmental ethics, which apart from sustaining a harmonious relationship between humans' and their environment also ensures the continuing material and cultural enrichment of the society. Thus, human interaction with their environment is to a very large extent determined by ethical values engrained in them through their belief systems and culture, which have enormous bearing on their survival as a cultural group.¹⁰

The Mafi-Ewe has some traditional means by which they lived with the natural environment in harmony and in a sustainable way. This environmental knowledge, from which their environmental ethics is derived, is heavily influenced by the traditional religion. Therefore, any change in the religious orientation of the Mafi-Ewe people has the potential of altering their environmental ethics as well. Given the pressures impinging on traditional beliefs and practices in general, this paper discusses the changes in Mafi-Ewe indigenous environmental knowledge and comes to the conclusion that this knowledge base from which they derive their environmental ethics is at risk.

⁹ R.E. Johannes, 'Did Indigenous Conservation Ethics Exist?' in *SPC Traditional Marine Resource Management and Knowledge Information Bulletin*, 14 (2002), pp.3-7.

¹⁰ R.P. Misra, Concluding Remarks, in R.P.Misra (Ed.) *Environmental Ethics: A Dialogue of Cultures* (Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1995)

Women with Disability (WWD) and Motherhood: Traumatizing Relationships within Pentecostal Movements in Zimbabwe.

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The violence against Women with Disability (WWD) continue to escalate among the people in Zimbabwe because of the multi-faceted factors such as poverty, socio-cultural and economic decline. This challenge is exacerbated further with the ‘motherhood’ concept in the midst of the emancipation of feminist ideas of modern family. There is intrinsic dehumanizing, exclusion and stigmatization for WWD within the Pentecostal movement in Zimbabwe. Subsequently, the idea of motherhood to wwd is viewed with contempt, evil and as a cradle for the cause of disability. Regardless of the Human Rights agenda, and modernity, the well-being of WWD and their sexuality continue to suffer because of the vices, perception and resilience of the Shona culture. In effect Pentecostal traditions of divine healings, curses and exorcisms have inevitably caused traumatizing relationships for the WWD. In such a case the welfare of WWD is brought to responsiveness in this paper. Perhaps, as an alternative departure the feasibility of denaturalizing WWD sexuality, motherhood and marriage is questioned in the light of Pentecostal beliefs, rites and liturgy. Somewhat what is presumed beautiful and lovely between relationships has become traumatizing. This paper through a historical and cultural perspective seeks to investigate how WWD reify their relationship amongst the people in Zimbabwe. This paper utilizes the sociological perspectives and data collection for this paper is gleaned through random interviews of WWD. This paper contributes positively to the complex inter-relationship of religions, cultures, and a morality in the construction of gender in Africa and the consequences of this has on the lived experiences of people.

Sexuality and Marriage in Islam: The Ghanaian Muslim Experience.

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The discourse about Sexuality and Marriage in Islam has attracted a lot of debate by both classical and modernist Muslim scholars. Marriage is an institution which plays a very significant role in Islam. It is a religious duty and an act of worship enjoined by God to be observed in accordance with the rules and regulations stipulated in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW). This paper aims to examine how the understanding of sexuality in Islam and the socio-cultural norms within the Ghanaian Muslim *ummah* inform the attitude of Muslims towards human sexuality. It discusses the concept of sexuality and marriage in Islam by highlighting the influence of Islam on human sexuality and how socio-cultural norms and practices in the Ghanaian Muslim *ummah* inform marriage practices. Using the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW), the paper outlines the foundation of gender relations within the marriage institution as against the actual practices within the socio-cultural rules in the Ghanaian Muslim context. I argue that lack of knowledge on the part of Muslim women in many Muslim communities about their rights and the male dominated nature of the interpretative communities to a large extent mirror the religious practices within the matrimonial relationship. These have contributed to the discrepancy in the understanding of the rights and responsibilities of women in marriage, hence the negative impact on the wellbeing of the Muslim *ummah*.

Keywords: Islam, Marriage, Sexuality, Qur'an, Sunnah, Ghanaian Muslim.

Gauging the Interface between Religion and Sexual Orientations among Students in Nigerian Universities: Lagos State University as a Case Study

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The Nigerian social and religious spaces have been dominated in recent times by discourses on sex and sexuality especially with prevalent homosexual advocacy that dominated both formal media and the social media in recent past. The response(s) and engagement(s) of religious leaders in the matter heated the polity such that a bill was promulgated by the legislature and signed into law (2014) by the former president Goodluck Jonathan. The law is popularly known as antigay law. Although Igboin (2010), Oyekan (2013) and Laguda (2013) have academically engaged the issues of sexuality and sexual orientations in relation to religious beliefs and practice in Nigeria, not much has been done to examine the issue among Nigerian youths especially the students of universities. The main claim has been that the Nigerian culture(s) only approves heterosexual practices thereby denying other forms of sexual orientations. Using critical analysis of data (quantitative) derived in Lagos state university, this paper propose that youth(male and female) in Nigeria universities often abandoned religious ethics in their sexual engagements and practice homosexuality among other forms of sexual orientations. The paper shall use data instruments of questionnaire (100) and oral interviews (50). The data collected shall be subjected to critical analysis to show that religious beliefs do not regulate sexual engagements of Nigerian youths but rather it is the social environment that determines it.

Keywords: Religion, Sexual orientation, Students, Nigerian Youth, and Critical Analysis

**Culture, Religion and Politics: A Tripartite Discourse on
Homosexuality in Nigerian Public Space**

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The contemporary age is witnessing dramatic changes in cultural practices, religious traditions with new meaning entering into the socio-cultural aspect of human life. There is a paradigm shift in approaches to the way of life, most especially with regards to liberation movements, and agitation for human rights. The modern age has also opened the doors for the human race towards societies where everyone could have equal opportunity and a sense of belonging in all ramifications. This has resulted in the re-orientation of the societal values system in different dimensions. The contemporary concept of sexuality has no doubt gone beyond the traditional belief in the sex relation as it was popularly known and practiced in the past. Changes and development in this dispensation are not limited to science and technology but are also seen in social and human interaction in family life. Different family life styles are seen to be emerging globally, ranging from single parenting to contract marriage, to association and non-religious celibacy. The most widely debated of this is homosexuality which is drawing global attention from religious, cultural and political point of view

This paper proposes to describe the tripartite discourse on homosexuality in the Nigeria public space in the area of cultural beliefs

and practices, religious teachings on sexuality, and the politics that comes into play in this subject. The implications of this for the traditions and religious thought of the people are considered. The re-definition of moral value or value system by the emerging populace will be presented. It also presents the practicability of homosexuality within the purview of cultural practices, religious/moral teachings and the political undertone in Nigerian public space.

African Acts of Worship, Identity and Transformational Experiences: The Case of the Kalabari Women's Choir

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In this paper, acts of worship in African society can be broadly divided into three: the traditional indigenous worship, the Islamic religion, and the Western influenced Christian religion. With distinctive peculiarities associated with various religions in Africa, it is desirable to ask some pertinent questions. Is sexuality an issue in African religion? Does act of worship reflect African identity? What are the transformational experiences, changes and initiatives evident in the African music ministry and the religious? This paper investigates and interrogates sexuality and identity within religious framework in Africa with reference to the all-female indigenous Nigerian traditional Kalabari choir of the Niger Delta. It also looks at the composition, repertoire, instrumentation, and organizational and performance structures of the choir.

An Examination of Homosexual and Sex Abuse: African Christian Perspective

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The issue of homosexuality, sex abuse and lesbianism in the African Community is one which is a challenging to the cultural integrity and moral fabric of Africa societies. The challenges are not new to any society. Homosexuality and sexual abuse in various degrees has been a long companion of civilization: With varying degrees of tolerance and accommodation. But nowhere in the general history of Africa, now or then, has a homosexual lifestyle have been advocated or encouraged. But now, we faced with the problematic relationship of the Christian Church and homosexuality, Africa has fifty-four countries, and more than a billion people. One of the most ridiculous myths about Africa is that homosexuality did not exist in the continent until white men imported it. Within Christianity, there are a variety of views on the issue of sexual orientation and homosexuality. The objectives of this paper were to evaluate various purposes assign to homosexuality and sex abuse and to investigate the biblical position on homosexuality and sex abuse, to find out the concept of homosexuality and sex abuse in the Bible and in the contemporary Nigeria society.

The research methods adopted in this work were historical and empirical methods. Historical method helped to unravel some past and present documentaries. While empirical method is carried out through questionnaire by simple percentage and interview of selected members and leadership of different denominations. The study concluded that if same sex marriage were legalized, schools would teach that homosexual relationships are identical to heterosexual ones. Freedom of conscious and religious liberty will be threatened, and fewer people will marry. The paper recommended that additional efforts should be made by African Christians, governments, schools, and parents to effectively

emphasized and preaching against the practices of homosexuality and sex abuse.

Teaching African Sexualities in Africa: The Case of Rastafari in Zimbabwe

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The history of African sexualities in Africa is long and intricate. Arguably, this history was alive in traditional songs, folklore, clothing, body markings, dance and names, among other forms. However, part of this history has been portrayed in negative light by the colonial explorers and missionaries in order to exploit the black race and to justify their claim to civilize the indigenes of Africa. The practice and discourse of African sexualities have been tackled from different angles by, among others, social scientists, medical experts, policy makers and agro-economists. This study seeks to add a voice to the existing scholarship on the discourse of African sexualities from the discipline religious studies with particular focus on Rastafari. The research uses the case study of Rastafari in Zimbabwe to illustrate their teaching on sexualities in Africa. The research takes cognisance of the fact that the subject of sexualities in Africa is usually wrapped in silence, taboos and privacies. The study posits that Rastafari communities in Zimbabwe use *binghi* reasoning sessions to generate an open dialogue that teaches on human sexualities among Rastas and non-Rastas in Africa. The study established that Rastas teach that what is good, normal and natural is heterosexual, procreative in a monogamous marriage in contradistinction to what is bad, abnormal and unnatural such as homosexuality, being non-procreative, unmarried and promiscuous. The study concludes that Rastafari teaching on sexualities of Africa is highly conservative, homophobic and non-tolerant to 'deviant' behaviour. Given that there is no monolithic way of experiencing

sexualities within cultures, communities and individuals, it is further concluded that ‘queer’ Rastafari voices remain cloistered and muffled under the pedagogy of heteronormativity for fear of being criminalised and or stigmatised in contemporary Zimbabwe.

The Privilege of Passing: The Historical Erasure of Black Queer Masculine-of-Center Women in Africa and the African Diaspora

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The assertion that black queer subjects epitomize anti-blackness mitigates a conclusion that there is only one type of “black,” and if this is true, who has the authority to articulate what character composition this “black” person should inhabit? The same myopic understandings and teachings that guided Eurocentric thoughts on blackness are now inserting a visceral girth in the understandings of what it is to be a black queer. Despite lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) rights being overwhelmingly relevant in the current discourse, black masculine- of-center women are often isolated from the history of their cultural communities.

As we move further into the 21st century, understanding the contemporary and historical affects of the African independence movements on the queer subject reinforces the importance of black queer masculine-of-center women asserting their own narratives and reclaiming their humanity without the neoliberal agenda of the ‘gay international’, as termed by Sokari Ekine; and further perpetuating black respectability politics adhered to post-independence. This qualitative research seeks to investigate and explore the ways in which black queer masculine-of-center visual artists intentionally use images and art to interrogate possibilities of a future that rests in dissolving heteronormative notions of blackness, sexuality, and identities that

combat invisibility and silence and evoke a futuristic aesthetic in an era that proclaims LGBTQ rights to be the new human rights movement of the 21st century.

School, Social Class, Sexuality, Security and Reading Ruth with Young Ghanaian Women

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Many young people attending secondary schools in Ghana come from hometowns which are less economically developed than the towns where their school is located. Young women find they are able and encouraged to use their sexuality to attract wealthier men as ‘sugar daddies’ to help provide for their basic needs and to raise their social status in the new environment. Some young women navigate this scenario successfully resulting in greater economic security and a better life for themselves and their families, but many others are victimized by wealthier men in a ‘sugar daddy’ system stacked against them with social and economic results that bring further destitution to the young women and their families. This paper recounts a Contextual Bible Study on the Biblical book of Ruth done in the village of Gbintiri, in the Northern Region of Ghana from the perspective of young women attending school. The study offered young women from five schools an opportunity to critically analyze their situation by closely reading details in the text of Ruth and interpreting those details in light of their socio-cultural knowledge about their own societies. The reading of their situation as young women at school along with a close reading of an analogous situation in the book of Ruth offered them a way to think critically about their own agency in the hopes that they can find ways as individuals and as groups to navigate their sexualities in the current system in order to secure better, more life-giving futures. The study facilitators were challenged to consider how to extend the experience of

reading Ruth from a young woman's perspective across age and gender groups in the community.

**Explicit Secularism, Implicit Religious Violence: the LGBT
Community and Politics of the Ivory Coast**

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For its first 33 years, the Ivory Coast had been hailed as a positive anomaly in West Africa because of its level of ethnic and religious harmony, as opposed to its neighbors. This is thanks to Felix Houphouet-Boigny, founding president of the Ivory Coast, who not only led in the democratization of his own country but the decolonization of Africa as a whole. Starting in the early 2000s, political leadership was in the hands of Laurent Gbagbo for a decade—again, a stable time frame compared to many African states. Thus, the events that transpired in 2010 and 2011 came as a shock to the international community. The so-called Ivorian Crisis involved political upheaval, during which incumbent Gbagbo purportedly rigged the elections, sparking a violent coup led by the electoral runner-up, Alassane Ouattara.

Many journalists are quick to posit that religion has played little to no role in this recent political battle, perhaps wanting to hold on to the legacy that Houphouet-Boigny left. However, given a ratio of 1:1 of Christian-Muslims, this claim is highly unlikely. I argue that religious violence has served as a political tool used by each side. Moreover, specific religious violence is targeting the LGBT community, with homophobia being utilized by the Republican Forces of Ivory Coast (FRCI) and politicians, such as the Minister of Public Service who states

that gay marriage “will make the end of the world”¹¹. This paper will explore the political scene in relations to the LGBT community and Christian-Muslim demographic to explore the country’s violence.

Between Contradictions and Gender Equity: A Discourse on Disparity in Male and Female Sexuality in Islam

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The prohibition of celibacy in Islam is hinged on its appreciation of the indispensable role of man’s pro creative capability to the perpetuation of the human race. This and the need to provide legitimate means of gratification of sexual desires have been the basis of the elaborate provisions of Islam on sex and sexuality matters. However, there are seemingly contradictions as regards the disparity between the male and female on such issues as the laws of evidence on adultery, *Hijab/Purdah* and inheritance. Our attempt here is to examine these contradictions relying on the Qur’an and Hadith with a view to determining the gender equity inherent in Islamic traditions.

¹¹ Littauer, Dan. “‘Gay marriage will mark the end of the world,’ warns Ivory Coast minister”. <http://www.lgbtqnation.com/2013/07/gay-marriage-will-mark-the-end-of-the-world-warns-ivory-coast-minister/>

Sustainability Of Traditional Religion Among The Yoruba Race In Nigeria And Diaspora

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Religion is the root of African culture as well as a major determinant of social stability and unity. Africans generally tend to superimpose religious touch on whatever they do, be it farming, fishing, marriage, hunting, leisure, celebrations, travelling and so on. Religious belief gives meaning and significance to their lives both in this world and hereafter. Regrettably, the ancient importance attached to the traditional religion in the days of our fathers has been denounced in favour of the hegemonic religion of the modern world. This paper therefore examines the roles of traditional religion in promoting cultural stability and social justice among the Yoruba race. It also predicts how to resuscitate a positive attitude towards the traditional religion in the Yoruba social milieu. The study argues that traditional religions are important sources of stable social norms and values; and embracing them can stabilise the people's faith in the gods they worship. It then recommends that the society, especially, the Yoruba group, should eschew total alienation from their traditional religious beliefs. The study adopted sociological approach which portrays the worldview of the people in a given society. Among the key participants enlisted for this study were traditional rulers, chiefs, family heads, traditional priests and priestesses and prominent community leaders. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews to find out the social significance of traditional religion in the Yoruba social settings and how the belief can be sustained in the present age of modernity. The paper concludes that traditional religious practices like: the worship of Ogun, Oya, Egungun, Obatala, Yemoja should be protected from going into total extinction.

Keywords: Religion, Traditional Religion, Yoruba, Religion and Sustainability

Thou shalt bear a Wild Man: Conceptualizing Hagar's Sexuality over Her Life Course

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Hagar is the concubine to Abram, before his name is changed to Abraham. She can be traced in three significant religious traditions namely, Christianity, Islam and Judaism. This paper shall not explore the debates on whether she was an actual person who existed, rather it shall use her representation as a religious and literary typology from which we can draw lessons. This paper is a critical assessment of Hagar's sexuality as found within the Christian and Islamic traditions. Sexuality is learned from peers, families, popular culture to produce a variety of sexual attitudes and behaviors (Caplan 1987). Hagar's sexual behavior at a point in life is imposed on her from the patriarchal slavery familial context she finds herself in, serving as a turning point. During pregnancy, she is told by an angel that she shall bear a wild man. This Egyptian slave somewhat embodies the convergence of sexism and racism which portray women of color as oversexed creatures of passion deserving and even asking for enslavement (Wilson 1993:66). How can we conceptualize Hagar's sexuality as unfolding over her life course in her specific socio-cultural context? Drawing from relevant literature in Christianity and Islam, this paper shall adopt a life course approach to sexuality (Rossi 1994), the sexual scripting approach (Simon and Gagnon 1986) and the concept of turning point (Browning and Laumann 1997), in order to critically examine Hagar's sexuality as found in Christianity and Islam.

Keywords: Hagar, Sexuality, Life Course Approach, Sexual Scripting, Turning point, Abram.

Complexities in the Margin: Queering Black Feminism in Canada

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In Canada, Black women experience unique forms of marginalization and oppression. Beyond the intersection of class and race however, queer Black women are further discriminated against and often positioned as deviant ‘outsiders’ within an already ‘othered’ group. When we combine this ‘othering’ with an often subordinate position ascribed to queer issues within the hierarchy of oppressions, intensified oppression of queer Black women results within Canadian society in general, and within the Black community specifically. Although writing and resistance has emerged out of the queer community, some members of African Canadian community are not “comfortable having a discussion on sexuality. More importantly however, is the absence of representation of racial gay women and women in activist scholarship. The absence of writing that reflects, and is generated by the experiences of queer Black women, is even greater. So as queer Black women struggle for a place within mainstream society, they fight a simultaneous battle for agency in the queer community/movement, a movement which is largely constituted as white. This complex hybridity of oppression was revealed in a series of interviews conducted nationwide with African Canadian women. The first section of this presentation juxtaposes the voices of these women with an analysis of relevant literature by queer writers of colour who are resisting the processes of marginalization imposed by various sites of heteronormativity in the US and Canada. The second section of this paper makes the case for locating the voices, struggles and accomplishments of queer Black Canadian women as one of many constituent centres within Canadian Black feminism, by taking up a number of key questions arising from the interviews and literature outlined in section one. The presentation is based on research on Black Canadian feminisms in Canada.

The Reproductive Rite: Female Fertility in Context

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Fertility is an experience that transcends time as well as cultural groups: it is an experience that knows no cultural boundaries. Yet, the time and place in which a person lives can significantly nuance the ways in which they experience fertility. The variety of beliefs and responses to reproduction make it a complex experience with economic, social and cultural layers. Modern Western discourse about women's fertility is often placed in the context of reproductive rights. Such rhetoric is quite different from the ancient and contemporary non-Western worldviews of reproduction.

In ancient and contemporary non-Western context(s), female fertility is a rite of passage. This paper will explore the place of fertility in the Ashanti tribe of the Akan cultural group, Ghana. The social dimension of fertility, in these contexts, is inextricably linked with a spiritual dimension and significance. For many women, then, fertility is not only an individual biological issue but also one that is perceived to significantly affect her wider family and community. An examination of reproduction in a world such as the Ashanti culture not only gives us a window into women's lives, but also highlights the ritualistic and ceremonial meanings attached to reproduction. It will be argued that traditional non-Western cultures, ancient and contemporary, view fertility primarily as an essential custom and ceremony. This paper proposes that in ancient contexts, and even in current traditional non-Western cultures, reproduction is primarily *the* rite of passage for women, and that the notion of women's reproductive rights is chiefly a construct of modern Western culture(s).

Mediatizing Sexual Scandals: An Analysis of Print Media Coverage of Clergy Sexual Scandals in Nigeria

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This paper examines the print media coverage of clergy's sexual scandals in Nigeria. Having carnal knowledge of wives of church members or single female folks in the church nowadays by pastors, or by the respected church leaders is no longer news. The religious leaders, clergy in particular, who are saddled with the responsibility of maintaining the sanctity of marriage often indulge in this sacrilegious act with impunity and the coverage of such by the Nigerian newspapers is becoming alarming in our society. Employing content analytical method, the paper shall critically examine the reportage of this immoral and ungodly act as perpetrated by the clergy. Past studies have revealed that the print media only reported the offence and covered the consequential effects on the culprit either from the government or the umbrella body of the Christians' organization, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). The paper shall argue that sexual rights, problems or consequences of divorce, and separation should attract more reportage by the media as this will help in educating the generality of the people on the side effects of this unfortunate act. Issues of such dimension, the paper shall conclude, must not only be reported for entertainment purpose, but for an opportunity to apply strict legislation against any offender, regardless of their statuses.

African Christianity and Homosexuality: Beyond Rhetoric of Sin

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In 2013, during the Catholic Lenten Season, the Archdiocese of Douala (Cameroon) initiated a "Prayer for the respect of life and the human

family.” The last paragraph of this prayer mentions explicitly the issue of homosexuality as a sin against life:

Very Merciful God, forgive the sins committed against life: induced abortion, incest, pedophilia and homosexuality. Save from destruction the human family that you created by love. (National Episcopal Conference of Cameroun, 2013)

The Anglican and the Evangelist on the continent share the same position allegedly founded on the Bible. This position fuels homophobia and violence against people identified as homosexuals. Strangely enough, Catholics, Anglicans and Evangelists overseas are developing another attitude towards homosexuality. This attitude is mainly tolerant and goes far to provide another hermeneutics of biblical passages that deal with same-sex relations (Brawley, 1996; Brown, 1997; Gagnon, 2001; Harrington and Keenan, 2005). This double standard in the same Christianity nurtures my question of research. Can the Churches in Africa think anew the issue of homosexuality in order to safeguard life and the dignity of homosexuals?

I would like first to substantiate this double standard on homosexuality. Then I will argue that the different sets on the same issue could inspire African Churches to make a critical and anthropological analysis on homosexuality in the continent in order to make a distinction between different forms of same-sex practices. As I give a glimpse of these practices, I will argue that Christian Churches should denounce abuses in those sexual behaviors but also break homophobia with two concepts: “compassion” and the “Church as Family of God.”

Socio-Anthropological Analysis of Gift Exchange and Gender Relations among the Yorùbá of Southwestern Nigeria

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Since its original formulation by Marcel Mauss and Malinowski, gift exchange has been regarded as an acceptable part of human sociality and a universal feature of socio-cultural system. Although practiced differently from culture to culture, gift exchange or reciprocity partakes in how society is structured or stratified and also contributes to understanding gender relations in any given society. Earlier ethnographers privileged men as active givers to the total neglect of women's account of reciprocal exchange (Malinowski 1926) or worse still interpreted gift exchange in terms of men exchanging women among themselves (Levi-Strauss). My purpose in this paper is to use socio-anthropological method to demonstrate through local examples that contrary to these theoretical assumptions, women are as active givers as men in the Yorùbá socio-cultural life. Based on active ethnographic field research spanning more than six years, my argument will be that women and men are alternatively subject or object for each other in their continuing efforts to create and sustain social relations. If as theorized, gift exchange has the capacity of creating social relations; the interaction between mother and child on the one hand and wife and her husband on the other have shown this very clearly among the Yorùbá of Southwestern Nigeria. This paper shall be considered in four parts; defining and theorizing gift exchange; explaining Yorùbá concepts of gift and its practice; showing concrete examples of gender relations and the gift; analyzing the moral and spiritual dimensions of the gifts to the sanctification of the society and finally concluding with suggestions that gift exchange should be seen as social aspect of life in maintaining positive gender relations especially with respect to the Yorùbá society.

Keywords: gift exchange, gender relations, Yorùbá, sociality, socio-anthropology.

Nigeria Leadership of Orthodox Anglican Movement against Homosexuality in Global Anglican Communion

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The study aims at investigating the leading role the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) plays against homosexuality in global Anglican Communion. The consecration of a retired Bishop of New Hampshire, Gene Robinson in 2003, generated some ripples in global Anglican Communion. Robinson is an acknowledged homosexual and a member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community. Religious liberals in the Global North see his consecration as a welcome development, while religious conservatives in the Global South regard it as sinful and satanic. The issue has exposed a deepening fault lines between revisionists and traditionalists in Anglican Communion. The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is leading the resistance against accepting gays as clergy in the Church. Anglican Bishops in Nigeria have been unequivocal in condemning same-sex relationship, particularly among church ministers in the Episcopal Church of United States of America (ECUSA). In 2008, a former Primate of Anglican Church in Nigeria, Peter Akinola and conservative Bishops from Global South, boycotted the decennial assembly of Bishops of the Anglican Communion in Canterbury. The conservative Bishops met in Jerusalem in June 2008 to establish a parallel body Known as Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) in response to the liberal attitude in the West to the homosexuality crisis in the church. Akinola became the pioneer president of GAFCON. In 2005, in a direct remonstrance to the Episcopal Church of United States of America, Akinola established the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA) as an offshoot of

his Nigerian Church in United States for dissatisfied Episcopalians, some of whom are Nigerians. This development has led to what is now known as the “Anglican Realignment.” The study adopts historical and sociological research methods.

Keywords: Anglican Communion, Conservatives, Homosexuality, Revisionists, Traditionalists.

An Exegetical Study of Leviticus 18:22, 20:13 and its Implications on African Peoples in Diaspora

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Anyone aware of today knows that there are a considerable number of people who claim that their sexual orientation is towards a person of the same sex as themselves. This orientation, known as ‘homosexuality,’ evidences itself in the development of loving relations with persons of the same sex and in a lack of interest in person of the opposite sex and in normal marriage. Homosexual practices were known in the ancient world. Several Greek philosophers, for example reported their involvement in homosexual acts. Such dubious acts were also found in the Hebrew Torah. This new social context has witnessed an increasing number of persons who have not only “come out of the closet” and publicly affirmed their sexual preference but also actively assert that homosexuality as a sexual preference stands on equal footing with heterosexuality. Gay activists now demand that society not only tolerate homosexual acts but accept the homosexual orientation as a legitimate, alternative lifestyle. The paper uses exegetical, historical and analytical research methods. The data were collected through secondary sources, where books, encyclopedia, journals and published articles are consulted. The paper discovered that, the law of Moses prohibited male homosexual acts and even designated them capital offences for which

the evil penalty was death(Lev.18:22). The new social context in which homosexuality is put forth as a lifelong orientation and as an alternative way of sexual expression presents a formidable challenge to the development of a Christian sex ethic and law.

Keynotes: Homosexuality, Gay, Lesbianism, African Peoples and Sexual Orientation.

Pentecostal Spirituality in Electronic Media as Tools for Curbing Adolescence illicit Sexual life in South-Western Nigeria.

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Teenage pregnancy, Promiscuity and Single Parenthood permeate the African society. As a result of this poverty, polygyny, human trafficking and child abuse among others serve as socio-religious problem that lingers in the society. Most causes of these problem lie on poverty and neglect. Pentecostals occupy a significant position in African and in Diasporas. African social, economic and religious lives are fused together. Religion and Media are daily agents that serve as an educative organ on human skill, value, norms, rules and values in the society. Most existing literature focused on religion and media to the neglect of Pentecostal spirituality as a tool in curbing Adolescence illicit sexual life in Africa the Nigeria Example. Therefore, this attempt, to look into the problem of Adolescence sexuality, causes, effect and way of curbing the socio – religious ills in the society. Home Video film serves as an important tool in educating the society, therefore the research adopted field investigative methods and content analysis of selected home video films that has the case of sexuality embedded in them. Questionnaire will be administered to sexually abused and single parent randomly. In-depth interview will be conducted to Pentecostal pastors and Christian Home Video film producers. Contextual analysis will be done using

sociological theory as framework. Pentecostal spirituality if properly imbibe serve as a strong weapon in promoting our Identity in Africa.

Keywords: Religion, Sexuality, Media, Pentecostal Spirituality and Education.

God Created Them Male and Female: Towards A Theology Of Sexual Identity In Africa

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The question of sexual identity is paramount in every human society as it is indispensable for the preservation of humankind. A society often regulates and institutionalizes its ideas of human sexuality based either on legal framework or theological presuppositions. In the contemporary world, sexual identity is being shifted from religious domain to judiciary platform in pursuant of human freedom and rights. Scholars are faced with the challenge of determining a proper domain of human sexuality: positive (human law) or religious (scriptural norms). Can we design a conciliatory approach to judiciary or religious understanding of sexual identities? Following theological method of enquiry, this paper investigates religious understanding of sexuality from Judeo-Christian perspective. It adopts survey method to explore the significance of Christian anthropology for Africans, and how indigenous formulation of sexual identity is weaved on democratic values in the continents. The paper sustains that issues of sexual orientations are primarily determined by religious worldview, and the freedom of persons to express their sexual feeling is subjugated to the dominant political and religious culture, projected by those who exercise authority or leadership. In this context, contributions from African religious scholars remain at the margin, having little or no influence on politics, law and theology. The paper, therefore, focuses on the development of integral theological framework, capable of bringing religion, tradition and

democracy into dialogue. Such dialogue is indispensable for resolving the inherent tensions and conflicts associated homonormativity, homonationalism, queer study and genuine civilization of love in the emerging democracies. This is an antidote of homophobia. Thus, there is need to foster a narrative theology of love which is not discriminatory nor judgmental but rooted in the perennial acceptance of maleness and femaleness as determined in creation for the future of Africa.

Theological Perspective on Gender Differentiation and Human Sexuality In Relation To the LGBT Debate in Africa

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The issue of gender identity and gender differentiation is becoming a major matter of discourse in Africa. On the other hand, the feminist agenda of the feminist movement has not only altered gender roles but also gender identity. Also, the effort of the feminist movement to eradicate gender differentiation has created the need for a reversal of gender identity and the quest for a redefinition of human sexuality. Existing studies on human sexuality and gender identity have largely been along biological, sociological, psychological, anthropological, historical and gender studies lines. In spite of their beneficial impact, these studies have created the need for a reversal of gender identity and the global acceptance of sexual orientations hitherto considered abnormal. Then, the question is: what determines or should determine gender identity or gender attribution and the expression of human sexuality? Therefore, this paper attempts a theological assessment of relevant Bible passages with reference to gender identity and human sexuality within the ambit of biblical theology and in relation to the LGBT discourse in Africa. Data for the study will be obtained primarily through archival search and secondarily through the administration of a two-page structured questionnaire distributed to about 300 purposively

selected respondents in a Nigerian community housing the three major ethnic tribes of Nigeria as a representative African people. The data will be analysed using simple percentages and correlation coefficient. The paper posits that the theological affirmation of the Bible is that humanity consists of identified male and female genders as distinct creatures of God for the purpose of role differentiation and application. This is in consonance with the African religious perception of humanity and the rejection of theological mandates from outside of Africa.

Keywords: Gender identity, Human sexuality, Theological, LGBT, Africa.

The Agitation for Same-Sex Marriage in Nigeria: Interpreting Selected Bible Passages for the Christian Community

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The quest for acceptance of same-sex marriage as alternative to the traditional heterosexual marriage is a global phenomenon. The popularity of the practise as well as its legal and religious acceptance in the West contrasts the situation in Africa where majority of the countries have officially criminalized it. While most arguments in its favour from the West have centred on the need to respect fundamental human right of people whose sexual orientation prefer same-sex partners, the African's abhorrence of it hinges on its morality as well as cultural alienation. This Paper therefore, examines the issues involved in the context of the current agitation for legal recognition of the practice in Nigeria from a Biblical-Cultural perspective. This effort becomes germane given the fact that the practise is thriving in the West probably because of some ecclesiastical accent it enjoys. Taking recourse to exegetical analysis of Genesis 2:18-25 and Genesis 19:1-13 (using historical-grammatical method of exegesis) we established that the practise is alien to divine idea of marriage and morality, which affirm

gender distinction in marriage as cardinal to social interaction and perpetuation of humanity on earth. This biblical position aligns perfectly with the African cultural sentiment about gender distinction of marriage partners. Therefore, same-sex marriage does not appeal to Christian religious sensibilities and morality.

Keywords: same-sex, marriage, Genesis: 2:18-25, homosexual, heterosexual.