

The
African
Association
for the
Study of
Religions



STEERING COMMITTEE

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

Regional Representatives

West Africa: Dr. Friday M. Mbon, Dept. of Religious Studies and Philosophy, University of Calabar, P.M.B. 1115, Calabar, Nigeria; Dr. Christopher Ejisu, University of Port Harcourt.

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

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

North and South America: Dr. Rosalind I. J. Hackett, Dept or Religious Studies, 501 McClung Tower, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-0450, USA

Europe: Dr. Gerrie ter Haar, Dept of Social Sciences & Science of Religion, Katholieke Theologische Universiteit, Heidelberglaan 2, 3584 CS Utrecht, The Netherlands.

The editors of the newsletters welcome any contributions and comments. Please submit entries to Gerrie ter Haar or Abdulkader Tayob, or any of the regional representatives who will pass them on. We would prefer, wherever possible, your contributions on computer disk format. E-mail messages may be sent to TAYOB@socsci.uct.ac.za.

The information supplied in the Newsletter is accurate to the best of our knowledge. We, however, do not take responsibility for errors and omissions.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Prof. Jacob Olupona

This is the second newsletter you will receive this year. It is in fulfillment of our promise to produce two newsletters a year. From now on, we shall be on track in this respect. Let me express here my gratitude to the two editors, Drs. Abdulkader Tayob and Gerrie ter Haar for their extraordinary dedication to the works of this Association, especially the production of this newsletter. One major problem remains the paucity of new items from the continent. The significance of news reports we receive from African Universities cannot overemphasized. The newsletter was established as a forum for the dissemination of ideas among African and foreign scholars studying African religious traditions. What happens in the African universities is of utmost importance to all of us. As a solution to this problem we have requested the secretary to send copies of the newsletter to the Departments of Religious Studies and Theological Studies in the continent. If you are not yet in our mailing list, please get in touch with Dr. Tayob at the University of Cape Town.

We have proposed two meetings between now and 2000. The first conference will take place in 1998 in Kenya, while the second will coincide with the IAHR Congress in Durban, South Africa. Let us hear from you as we plan ahead for these meetings.



PUBLICATION NEWS

by David Westerlund

When the AASR publications sub-committee met in Mexico City in August last year and discussed the question of journals on African religions, it was agreed to contact the editor of the *Journal of Religion in Africa* (JRA), Professor Adrian Hastings at the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, Leeds University (Leeds LS2 9JT, England), and propose some cooperation with the AASR in the continued publication of the journal. I am happy to inform that Hastings and the publisher, Brill in Leiden, have welcomed this proposal. This new cooperation has been announced in the first JRA issue of 1996. The JRA, which was founded by Andrew Walls in 1967, is now an internationally well established journal and has recently grown considerably in size. Yet it may benefit from some further increase. Among other things, we intend to use this Newsletter to solicit articles and reviews. There is also a need to consider possible means of improving the distribution in Africa.

Regarding the AASR book series, Religions of Africa, I am pleased to inform that the first volumes will probably be out in the autumn this year. In particular, it is a pleasure to report that the editorial work on the 'Harare volume' has now been completed by Jan Platvoet, Jacob Olupona and James Cox. It will be entitled *The Study of Religions in Sub-Saharan Africa: Past, Present and Future Prospects (Selected papers presented at the IAHR regional conference on 'The Study of Religions in Africa', University of Zimbabwe, Harare, 15-18 September 1992)*. Once in print, the book will mark another milestone in the **African Association for the Study of Religions**. The second book that will appear in the series is Simeon Ilesanmi's *Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State*, published by Ohio University Press. In both cases, the AASR will distribute a good number of copies to important educational institutions in Africa.

Whenever possible, we intend to offer AASR members the benefit of buying books published in the Religions of Africa series for a discount price. Concerning the two volumes mentioned above, we hope to be able to include order forms in the autumn issue of the Newsletter. We have also received

other interesting manuscripts which we are presently looking at. As some well-known publishers are showing an encouraging interest in cooperating with us, there are reasons to be optimistic about the future of the series. Of course, this will go some way to achieving one of our objectives of improving the distribution of books in Africa. As you may imagine, however, this means that we cannot rely solely on funds derived from membership fees. This is one of the reasons why the AASR fund-raising activities need to be given some priority during the next few years.



ON THE NEWS FRONT

The Society of Biblical Literature- Bible in Africa, Asia and Latin America Group held its meeting in Philadelphia, USA in November 1995:

The following papers were presented:

Dora R.Mbuwayesango (Emory University): "Childlessness and woman-to-woman relationships in Genesis and in African patriarchal society: Sarah and Hagar from a Zimbabwean woman's perspective".

Madipoane J.Masanya (University of the North, South Africa): "Proverbs 31:10-31 in a South Africa context: A black (Northern Sotho) woman's reading".

Malika Sibeko and Beverley Haddad. (Institute for the Study of the Bible, University of Natal): "Reading the Bible 'with' African women in poor and marginalized communities in South Africa."

Mary Getui (Kenyatta University, Kenya): "Zelophehad's daughters: A challenge for the African woman".

Musa W. Dube (Vanderbilt Graduate School of Religion): "Towards a post-colonial feminist interpretation of the Bible: A Motswana perspective".

Grants Announced for Mission Scholarship

The Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, Connecticut, announces the 1996 grantees of the Research Enablement Program. Eighteen scholars received awards for research projects in the study of Christian Mission and World Christianity. The Research Enablement Program (REP) is funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and administered by The Overseas Ministries Study Center. The grants, which will be dispensed for work in the 1996-1997 academic year, total approximately \$266,000.

The REP is designed to support both younger scholars undertaking dissertation field research and established scholars engaged in major writing projects dealing with Christian mission and Christianity in the non-Western world.

Among the grantees are:

Postdoctoral book Research and Writings:

John D. Y. Peel, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London: "The Encounter of religions in Nineteenth-Century Yorubaland and the emergence of Yoruba Identity".

T. Jack Thompson, Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-western World, University of Edinburgh: "True love and roots: black South African Missionaries to Malawi".

Dissertation Field Research.

Erica L. Bornstein, University of California, Irvine: "Economies of Belief: Christianity and Economic Development in contemporary Zimbabwe".

Ruth Cox, Trinity International University Evangelical Divinity School: "The African factor in African Church History: Oral histories of early leaders of the Evangelical Church of West Africa in Nigeria".

Carrie Mary Pemberton, Cambridge University: "Field study of African Christian Women Theologians".

Jennifer A. Seif, University of Chicago: "A Mission of 'Prayer and Work': The evolution of Roman Catholic Missionary Practices and Institutions, Natal, South Africa."

Missiological Consultations.

William B. Anderson, Nile Theological College: "The Church in Sudan: It's impact, Past, Present and Future".

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

The World Congress of Theological Associations (WOCATI) is going to hold its second four-yearly Congress at the Methodist Guest House in Nairobi between June 27th and July 3rd 1996.

Among the themes to be discussed will be issues facing women in Theological education and the issues of academic excellence in theological institutions.

The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians is going to hold its biennial conference from 26-21 August 1996 at the Methodist Guesthouse at Nairobi. Its theme will be "Transforming power: women in the household of God".

AFRICA, The Art of a Continent is an exhibition held by the Royal Academy of Arts in London from 4 October 1995 till 21 January 1996. In association with Prestel Verlag, Munich, a Catalogue has been published, full price: £ 25.00.



NEW PUBLICATIONS

Journal of Adventist Thought in Africa (JATA). For subscription or a free sample, please contact the editor JATA, P.O. Box 2500, Eldoret, Kenya. Tel.: 254 326-2262; Fax: 254 326-2263; Email: UEAB@TT.GN.APC.ORG or UEAB@TT.SASA.UNEP.No.

Studies in World Christianity. The Edinburgh Review of Theology and Religion. In order to promote the active involvement of potential readers and contributors from the widest range of cultures Studies in World Christianity: The Edinburgh Review of Theology and Religion proposes to subsidize an annual subscription for selected institutions (normal cost £33) to the amount of £23 when you take out a subscription for your institution and pay the sum of £10. The Journal would guarantee this arrangement for three years. The Journal is aware that some countries at this time are so badly disadvantaged by currency exchange rates that a subscription of £10 might be impossible. She is therefore willing to receive requests for a larger subsidy, together with a statement of the actual case and circumstances for such a subsidy.

Please write to the Editor if you wish to make a case for special subsidy, at the following address: James P. Mackey, New College, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LX Scotland.

Forthcoming issues are a methodological issue, and an ecclesiastical history issue.

DISKUS is the first disk-based journal of Religious Studies. Each issue is published and distributed on computer disk only. Diskus provides a twice-yearly forum for the publication of research papers, reviews, short notices and research in progress and information on developments in Religious Studies. For more information: Diskus, Freepost (BS 8652), Bath, Avon, BA29JZ, UK.

Religions of Africa. Religions of Africa is a book series of the African Association for the Study of Religions covering all forms of religion found in Africa. Works on religion of African origin in other parts of the world may also be included. Special attempts are made to encourage African scholars to contribute to the series. It is open not only to scholars of religion but also to other academics who write on African religions. For more information, contact Professor Jacob K. Olupona, African-American and African Studies Program, University of California, Davis, CA 95616, USA, or Associate Professor David Westerlund, History of Religions, Faculty of Theology, University of Uppsala, Box 1604, S-75146 Uppsala, Sweden.

The South African Theological Bibliography, developed by the Research Institute for Theology and Religion, University of South Africa (UNISA), Pretoria is now available on CD-ROM. Editors are J. Kilian and J. Liebenberg. For more information contact NITR/RITR, University of South-Africa, PO-Box 392, 0001 Pretoria, South-Africa.

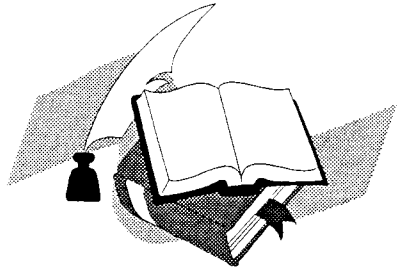
BOOKS

Bediako, Kwame. *Christianity in Africa. The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 1995. ISBN 0-7486-0625-4

Bureau, René. *Le peuple du fleuve. Sociologie de la conversion chez les Douala.* Paris: Karthalia, 1996. ISBN 2-86537-631-1

Bureau, René. *Le prophète de la lagune. Les harristes de Côte-d'Ivoire.* Paris: Karthalia, 1996. ISBN 2-86537-632-X

Hiskett, Mervyn. *The Course of Islam in Africa.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 1995. ISBN 0-7486-0461-8



- Houk, James T. *Spirits, Blood, and Drums. The Orisha Religion in Trinidad*. USA, Luisana: Temple University Press. 1995. ISBN 1-56639-349-3
- Imo, Cyril O. *Religion and the Unity of the Nigerian Nation*. Uppsala Research Reports in the History of Religions, 6. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1995
- Kruger, J. S. *Along Edges: Religion in South Africa: Bushman, Christian and Buddhist*. Pretoria: Unisa Press, 1996.
- Ncozana, S.S. *Sangaya*. Malawi, Zomba: Kachere, 1995.
- Nzunda, M.S. & Ross, K.R. (eds). *Church, Law and Political Transition in Malawi 1992-94*. Malawi, Zomba: Kachere, 1995.
- Perez y Men, Anres Isidoro. *Speaking with the dead. Development of Afro-Latin Religion among Puerto Ricans in the United States*. A study into the Interpretation of Civilizations in the New World. AMS Press, 1995. ISBN 0-404-19485-0.
- Ross, K.R. (ed). *Church, University and Theological Education in Malawi*. Malawi, Zomba: Kachere, 1995.
- Ross, K.R. *Gospel Ferment in Malawi: Theological Essays*. Malawi, Zomba: Kachere, 1995.
- Vikør, Knut S. *Sufi and Scholar of the Desert Edge. Muhammad b. Ali al-Sanusi and his Brotherhood*. 1995. ISBN 1-85065-218-X
- Waruta, D.W. (ed). *Caring and Sharing: Pastoral Counseling in the African Perspective*. ATIEA Publications. 1995. ISBN 9966-855-36-X.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Dr. Kannah Kinoti, Chairperson of the Department of Religious Studies, University of Nairobi, has been a visiting fellow at Harvard Medical School -Department of Social Medicine from September 1995 till June 1996.

Prof. J.J. Ongong'a former Chairperson of the Department of Religious Studies, Kenyatta University, was elected Dean of the Faculty of Arts in February 1996.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

1. NAME

The name of the association shall be the African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR).

The Association acts in association with the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) and is based upon the statutes of the body (which may be subject to modification under article 8 of those statutes.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Association will be

to promote the academic study of religion in Africa and

the study of the religions of Africa more generally through the international collaboration of all scholars whose research has a bearing on the subject.

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

- a) by providing a forum for multilateral communications between scholars of African religions;
- b) by facilitating the exchange of resources and information;
- c) by encouraging the development of linkages and research contacts between scholars and institutions in Africa, as well as between scholars in Africa and those overseas;
- d) by developing publishing opportunities particularly for scholars based in Africa;
- e) by establishing a travel fund to enable African scholars to attend academic conferences both in Africa and overseas;
- f) by organising conferences in Africa on topics relevant to scholars of African religions and panels on the religions of Africa in conferences held outside Africa;
- g) by establishing a newsletter as the major medium of communication between scholars of African religions around the world;
- h) by creating a directory of scholars in the field of African religions.

The primary function of the Association in the early stages will be the newsletter.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Any scholar with suitable academic qualifications in the study of African religions, or in the study of other religions who is appointed to an academic institutions in Africa, is invited to apply for membership with the Association. Membership is open to scholars of religion working in the fields of African traditional or indigenous religions, Islam, Christianity, new religious movements, as well as

other religions occurring on the continent, such as Hinduism and Judaism. Scholars may reside in Africa or other parts of the world.

- b) Applications should show evidence of the required qualifications and be normally supported by at least one member of the Association. This should be directed to the AASR Secretary who may consult about them with the AASR President before sending the letter of admission.
- c) Since the AASR operates primarily at a regional (African) level, it includes and seeks to enhance the work of sub-regional and national associations, such as the Association for the Study of Religions in Southern Africa and the Nigerian Association for the Study of Religion. Members are normally expected to belong to the associations in their respective countries or regions (where such associations exist).
- d) Membership is terminated by
 - 1) death;
 - 2) notice of termination of membership to the AASR Secretary by an AASR member.
 - 3) a decision of the AASR Executive on grounds, made explicit in writing, that the member has acted in gross ways against the aims or interests of the AASR or has failed to comply with statutory obligations. The failure to pay membership fees for more than three consecutive years will constitute such a ground.

4. DUES

- a) Members are required to pay an annual membership fee. Its amount will be fixed at the general meetings of the AASR. There are reduced rates for students and the non-salaried. The proceeds will be used to cover the costs of the newsletter and to support the travel and publication funds for African scholars.
- b) Scholars resident in Africa may apply for exemption from membership dues if their salary level would prohibit their participation in the Association.

5. MEETINGS

- a) General meetings will be held during the IAHR International Congress AND/OR AT AASR conferences whenever these bring together a sufficient number of AASR members.
- b) The AASR will endeavor to organise a major regional conference in Africa at least once every five years. Such a regional conference may be organised in conjunction with a national or sub-regional IAHR affiliate in Africa
- c) The Executive Committee shall endeavor to meet at least once every two years. A quorum shall be formed when no less than a third of the members of the Executive committee are present.
- d) The Executive Committee shall publish an account of its policies and its administration of the AASR funds in the AASR Newsletter well in advance of the AASR General Meeting at the occasion of the IAHR Congress.
- e) The Executive Committee shall also appoint an ad hoc committee of two AASR members that are not members of the AASR Executive for auditing AASR finances in order that they may report their findings and recommendations to the General Meeting.

6. OFFICERS

- a) The officers of the Association who form the Executive Committee shall be:
 President
 Vice-President
 Secretary

Treasurer

Chairperson of the Publications Committee

Regional representatives (West Africa, East and Central Africa, Southern Africa, North and South America, Europe)

Regional representatives may also hold additional office on the Executive Committee.

Other officers may be added as deemed necessary.

- b) The officers shall be elected for a five-year term. They shall be eligible for one more term.
- c) Elections shall be held at the General Meetings of the Association.
- d) Both the Executive and members may propose candidates for office. Each candidate for a particular office must be supported in writing by at least three AASR members. The list of candidates must be made public in an AASR Newsletter before the elections are due.
- e) The Secretary shall draw up minutes of the General Meetings and of the meetings of the Executive.

7. PROTOCOL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

- a) Elections shall be held at the IAHR Congress and the AASR members then present shall be held to represent the total body of the AASR members. However, members who cannot travel to the congress may exercise their voting right either in writing by sending in their votes in sealed envelopes to the AASR election committee (These envelopes would be opened and counted only after the members present have cast their votes.) Or they may delegate, in writing, their votes to AASR members that attend. These members would then cast, in addition to their own vote, as many extra votes as they have been authorized.
- b) Nominations would be handled by a nominating committee appointed by the Executive Committee. Nominations would be sent by AASR members either directly to the President or to the Regional representatives who would then pass them to the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee would publicize the names of the candidates prior to the general meeting.

8. CONSTITUTION CHANGES

Changes can only be made by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the General Meeting of the Association.

***Remember to send your
contributions
to the Editors or your
Regional Representatives***