

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

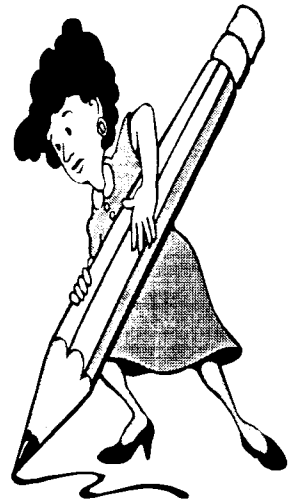
East and Central Africa: Mary Getui, P. O. Box 52979, Nairobi, Kenya Fax. 254- 2-726976

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

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

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

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



PUBLICATIONS (David Westerund)

In the previous issue of this Newsletter (no. 7, May 1997) the two first books in the AASR series 'Religions of Africa' were presented. Volume three in this series, *Rational Ancestors: Scientific Rationality and African Indigenous Religions* by James Cox, is scheduled to be published before the end of this year (1997). *Rational Ancestors* is divided into three parts. Part One contains the author's own analyses and application of theories relevant to the study of African Indigenous Religions, while Parts Two and Three consist of edited versions of oral literature and ritual descriptions obtained by Phenomenology of Religion students in the University of Zimbabwe in the early 1990s. Cox has received the permission of the students to edit and reproduce their work and has listed above each account the name of the student and the region from which the story and ritual was secured. Their material is a wealth of valuable field data on myth and ritual from different parts of Zimbabwe.

Part One demonstrates the book's primary concern with methodology in a religio-phenomenological tradition. It unfolds a scholarly means for achieving an understanding of African Indigenous Religions that can be applied generally and tested empirically. Inspired by Raimundo Panikkar and David Krieger, Cox develops a method of "diatopical hermeneutics" and "methodological conversion", thus endeavouring to pursue an intra-personal dialogue by embracing two traditions at once (a "Western scientific" and an "Indigenous Zimbabwean"). The author's analyses are most relevant to Zimbabwean Indigenous Religions. However, since the book endeavours to elucidate a formal systematic approach, the methodological conclusions are intended for a larger African context.

An AASR referee concludes that, concerning the themes of myth, ritual and method, Cox "shows a good and extensive knowledge of the relevant scholarly literature and settles on a stance of his own, though I have no doubt that it will provoke interesting questions as well". A good number of complimentary copies of *Rational Ancestors* will be distributed to institutions in Africa. For further information, please write to Dr James Cox, Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, The University of Edinburgh, New College, Mound

Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LX, Great Britain. The publisher of *Rational Ancestors* is Cardiff Academic Press, St Fagans Road, Fairwater, Cardiff CF5 3AE. Great Britain.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

At a meeting of the IAHR Executive Committee in Turku, Finland in August 1997, it was decided to give additional funds to the African Association for the Study of Religions for the next three years to support the production of the newsletter. The AASR newsletter will be an important tool in disseminating information about the upcoming IAHR Congress in Durban from August 5-12, 2000 (see later in this Newsletter). The newsletter will also be mailed to all national organizations of the IAHR around the world to promote the activities of the AASR and the study of religion in Africa more generally.

To all AASR members outside of Africa who have not paid their dues in the last year please send your \$50 (\$25 for students or those without full employment) to your Treasurer or local representative (Tayob or ter Haar) as soon as possible. We need your support more than ever at this important time for AASR and scholarship on religion in Africa!

RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES

Harvard African Humanities Institute

The Committee on African Studies and the DuBois Institute have recently received funding from the Rockefeller Foundation to bring visiting fellows from African institutions to Harvard to participate in the Harvard African Humanities Institute. They are looking forward to welcoming from three to six new fellows each year beginning in the fall of 1998.

The Harvard African Humanities Institute is a joint project of the Harvard Committee on African Studies and the W.E.B. DuBois Institute for Afro-American Research. With the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation it brings scholars based in institutions in sub-Saharan Africa to Harvard for one or two semesters during the academic year. Applications for appointments as visiting fellows

are invited from African-based scholars writing, amongst others, in the fields of anthropology, art, history, literary studies and philosophy. Although religion has not been singled out as a discipline, relevant research may take place under the umbrella of one of the disciplines mentioned.

The Humanities Institute is co-directed by Wame Anthony Appiah and Robert Bates and has two guiding aims. The first is to create a cross- disciplinary community of scholars conscious of how various disciplines have been informed by scholarship about Africa and on how Africanist knowledge has been shaped by different institutional locations in Africa and in North America. The second is to advance the formulation of research agendas through interaction between scholars based in the United States and scholars working in a variety of African institutions. It is a central assumption of the Institute that there is a need to explore how research agendas are shaped by many concerns on both sides of the Atlantic.

Applicants are requested to submit a proposal of research and writing for the period of their fellowship at Harvard which addresses the central aims of the Humanities Institute. While at Harvard, they will participate in an ongoing Humanities Institute Faculty Seminar, the Harvard Africa Seminar and the DuBois Institute Colloquium Series. They will also present a paper which will be published electronically at the Committee on African Studies Web site.

Eligibility: Scholars based in Sub-Saharan African institutions

Application Deadline: January 15, 1998

Contact: Dr. Rita Breen, Committee on African Studies, 1737 Cambridge Street, Room 202, Harvard University, Cambridge MA 02138.

Tel (617)495-5265. Fax: (617) 496-5183. Email: cafrica@fas.harvard.edu

The **Centre of African Studies** at the University of London announces that the Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial Trust has extended its sponsorship of the Academic fellowship Scheme for a further three years (1998-2000 inclusive). The Centre invites applications from relatively established South African academics, working in the broad field of African studies in the social sciences and humanities, for the Spring (January-April) 1998 Fellowship. For full details on application please contact the Centre office.

Address: Centre of African Studies, University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG Tel (0171)323 6395, Fax (0171) 323 6254, Email: cas@soas.ac.uk

The **Leventis Foundation** is supporting collaborative research between the Centre of African Studies in London and colleagues in Nigerian universities. Presently, one of the (two) 1997/98 Leventis Fellows is Dr. Aliyu Bunza of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University in Sokoto whose research topic is 'Supernatural forces in Hausa traditional medicine.' It is anticipated that further funding for three-month sabbaticals in London will be available for the 1998/99 session. For further information contact the Centre office (see above).

The **Centre of African Studies** also invites academics from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya to visit the centre for a three month period under the East African Visiting Scholarship Scheme in order to pursue research and/or course development in the broad field of African studies in the social sciences and humanities. Preference will be given to academics at an early stage in their career. The scholarship may be taken up during either the Autumn (September -December) or Spring (January-April) terms of the academic year 1998/99.

Applications in the form of a 1,000 word research proposal and up-to-date curriculum vitae (and optional letter of support) should be submitted to the Chairman of the Centre of African Studies by 1 May 1998. For further information contact the Centre office (see above)

The **Kellogg Institute for International Studies** is dedicated to advancing research in comparative international studies. For the 1998/99 academic year, it will offer up to six residential fellowships of one or two semesters at the University of Notre Dame. Visiting Fellows work on individual or joint research projects related to the Institute's themes: 1) democratisation and the quality of democracy, 2) paths to development, 3) religion and the Catholic Church, 4) social movements and organised civil society, and 5) public policies for social justice. While the Institute has emphasised Latin American research, proposals for research on Europe, Asia and Africa will also be considered. The Institute seeks scholars from any country with a PhD or equivalent degree in any discipline of the social sciences or history. A complete application, including references and

all documentation, must be received by 15 November 1997. Awards will be announced by 31 January 1998. Although this announcement is likely to be too late for subscribers to the AASR Newsletter to consider 1998 application, we remind them that similar fellowships will be available for 1999 for which timely application can be made.

Information as well as application forms are available from Gabriela Mossi, Acting Academic Coordinator, University of Notre Dame, The Kellogg Institute for International Studies, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-5677, USA. Fax: +1-219-631 6717; Email: Mossi.1@nd.edu

Young scholars up to the age of 40 who have attained the academic equivalent of a doctorate degree may apply to the **Alexander von Humboldt Foundation** for a research fellowship. Applications may be submitted at any time, directly to the foundation. Address: Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung, Bad Godesberg, Jean-Paul Str. 12, D-53173 Bonn, Germany. For further information please contact Prof. Ulrich Berner, Lehrstuhl Religionswissenschaft, Universität Bayreuth, D-95440 Bayreuth. Tel. (+921) 55 5069/5045; Fax: (+921) 55 84 50 45; Email: Ulrich.Berner@uni-bayreuth.de



NEWS UPDATE

African Christianity Project: Sierra Leone Conference

The African Christianity Project in the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World of the University of Edinburgh in conjunction with the University Twining Project of Utrecht University, sponsored a conference from 3-6 April 1997 in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The conference, which was hosted by the Department of Theology in Fourah Bay College of the University of Sierra Leone, investigated the following theme: 'Christian Engagement with African Cultural Dynamics focusing on African Institutions of Theology and

Religious Studies as Interpreters of Christianity in Africa'. In addition to the sponsoring bodies in Edinburgh, Utrecht and Sierra Leone, delegates attending represented universities and theological institutions in Nigeria, Ghana, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique.

The conference was opened with a keynote address from Dr Leslie Shyllon, Head of the Department of Theology at Fourah Bay College. Dr Shyllon outlined the history of higher education in West Africa with a specific emphasis on institutions acting both as oppressors of traditional culture and as avenues for enlightenment and understanding. Other special lectures during the conference were presented by Prof F J Verstraelen of the University of Zimbabwe, who outlined and analysed the topics of BA Honours and MA dissertations in his own Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy; and by Prof David Kerr, Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World in Edinburgh, who presented a historical survey aimed at correcting many misrepresentations by Western scholars on the spread of Islam in Africa. The central work of the conference examined the religious, political and societal challenges posed by the Christian engagement with African culture. Major papers were presented by Dr Mercy Oduyoye, President of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, Dr Gode Iwele, formerly of the Catholic Theological Seminary in Kinshasa and now with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Washington, DC, and Dr U D Anyanwu, Head of the Igbo Studies Centre in Abia State University, Nigeria. Each of these was followed by short papers from panel members and plenary discussion.

In its concluding statements, the conference as a whole affirmed that gender issues need to be addressed by institutions and departments in Africa and urged the delegates to work in their own universities to promote the equality of sexes in staff distribution. In addition, exchange programmes between universities were endorsed for research, teaching and the promotion of understanding between different religious traditions.

Out of these discussions, the topic for the final conference under the African Christianity Project emerged. This will consider 'Christianity and Gender Issues in Traditional African Culture' and will be held from 17-21 August 1998 at the University of Botswana.

Fachbereich Erziehungswissenschaft (The University of Hamburg, Germany)

held a special symposium on Religion in the political process in South Africa on 23 June 1997. Papers were presented on African oral histories, Islam and the Dutch Reformed Church by Ezra Tissani, Abdulkader Tayob, and Johann Kinghorn, respectively.

CESNUR (Centro Studi sulle Nuove Religioni / Centre for Studies on New Religions) 11th International Conference with the theme "Magic, Millenium and New Religious Movements" was held at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam between 7-9 August, 1997. ←

A Conference on "**The Significance of the African Religious Diaspora in Europe**" was held between 8-11 September 1997 at Tetley Hall, University of Leeds, UK. It was at the instance of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies (Dr. Roswith Gerloff), University of Leeds, and co-sponsored by the British Academy, Missio Achen and the German Society for Mission Studies.

The 1997 **Annual Conference of the British Association for the Study of Religions** (BASR) with the theme "Religious Experience" was held in Harris-Manchester College, University of Oxford between 11-13 September. It was organised by Peggy Morgan (Westminster College, Oxford).

Deutsche Vereinigung für Religionsgeschichte (DVRG) held its bi-annual Conference at the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität, Mainz between 6-10 October 1997. The Conference theme was "Religion im Wandel der Kosmologien".

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies of the **University of Leeds** organised a consultation on 'The significance of the African religious Diaspora in Europe' which took place from 8-11 September 1997. Participants came from academic and church or church-related circles and included Africans and non-Africans from various European countries. The programme included a number of workshops on different aspects of the religious life of African believers in Europe.

From 1-3 October 1997 a **Seminar on Religion and Politics** in Africa and the Islamic World took place in the University of Copenhagen. The programme included sessions on Religion and State, Religion and Political Culture, Islamism and Society, Religion and Civil Society, and on Islam, Politics and Locality. The seminar arose from the University's long-term North/South Focus Area programme coordinated by the Centre of African Studies.

The Department of Religious Studies at the **University of Cape Town** organised a one-day workshop on Religion in Post-Apartheid South Africa on 21 October 1997. Papers were presented on Religion and the national question in the Western Cape (Philip Dexter, MP); religion and public policy (James Cochrane); challenges facing ATR (Nokuzola Mndende), paradigm shift in religion education (Cornelia Roux); and prospects and issues facing international dialogical research (Wolfram Weisse).

During October, November and December 1997, the **October Gallery** in London holds a season of exhibitions of paintings, prints, photographs and sculpture by Yoruba artists in Britain, Brazil, Haiti, Nigeria, Trinidad and the USA. In connection with that, the Centre of African Studies hosted a one-day conference on 'Yoruba Identities and Diasporas' on 6 November. For information: see the address above.

African Christianity Project Research Fellows

The Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, University of Edinburgh, announced the award of three Research Fellowships for 1998 under the sponsorship of the African Christianity Project. Those receiving awards are: Dr Elizabeth Amoah, Chair of the Department of Religion in the University of Ghana, Legon; Dr U D Anyanwu, Director of Igbo Studies, Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria; and Mrs. G S Ntloedibe, Lecturer in the Department of Distance Education, University of Botswana.

Each scholar will spend up to six months in Edinburgh completing research already begun in Africa. The aim of the programme is to assist scholars at various levels to complete the

writing of manuscripts and to achieve publication of substantial works relevant to Christianity in Africa

The Significance of the African Religious Diaspora in Europe (*A Consultation held in conjunction with the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Tetley Hall, University of Leeds, 8-11 September 1997*) The fifty-five or so delegates represented several European countries including Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland and came from a wide range of cultural, national, religious and linguistic backgrounds within the African Diaspora. Besides resource people from the African continent, they comprised various cultural traditions such as from Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Congo/Zaire, and the Caribbean. The objectives of the meeting were to help networking between scholars and students and African religious communities; stimulate research into hitherto under-researched regions; encourage dialogue between these communities and Western secular and church institutions; help Europeans to perceive people's religion and spirituality as central to their survival in dignity and identity; and contribute to policy-making in terms of mutual support and encouragement across European borders. It culminated in the question how significant, locally and globally, the African dimension is both for the societies in which Africans live, and in the present transformation of religion and Christianity.

And it brought together, for the first time, both Anglophone and Francophone communities; simultaneous translation helping to build human relationships. Since the majority of participants were African (including Caribbean), the conference, although aiming at academic excellency, was not 'Western style academic' but gave space to self-definition, helped people to come out of isolation and strengthened the dialogue between scholars and practitioners. For more information, contact Dr. Gerloff, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS29JT, Tel. 0113 2333651; Fax 0113 2333654. E-mail: r.gerloff@leeds.ac.uk.

It is important to note the participation of African scholars / foreign scholars on Africa in some of conferences and events. With some notable exceptions, African activity (participation or presentation of papers on African issues) in Conferences was very low and almost non-existent. The invitation and sponsorship by the organizers of the Leeds Consultation of some

African scholars from the continent (i.e. Nigeria) was highly commendable and worthy of emulation. Incidentally, this came as a 'quick' response to the chairperson's (AASR) message in the last issue of AASR Newsletter (No. 7, May 1997). African scholars abroad as well as foreign scholars on African religion and culture should make it a priority to disseminate information on Conferences promptly to our colleagues in Africa. Secondly, and more pragmatically, organizers of Conferences relating to African issues or even with a global religious scope (i.e. New Religious Movements), should endeavour to sponsor at least one scholar from Africa to attend and participate in their discussions.

Afe Adogame



The **Faculty of Religion and Theology** at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, held a symposium on the "Study of Religion and Theology in the South African Context" on 3 November 1997. The purpose of the symposium was to locate the study of religion and theology in the context of South Africa's new educational curriculum. A morning session was devoted to place the items on the agenda. Papers were presented by the Deputy Minister of Education, Father S. Mkhathswa, Assoc. Prof. Abdulkader Tayob, Prof. Denise Ackermann and Dr. R. Petersen. This was followed by an afternoon session where the implications for faith communities, particularly Christian communities, were workshopped.

The **Journal of Theology for Southern Africa** recently celebrated its twenty-fifth year of publication. During that time it has seen Soweto, the banning of the Christian Institute and the slow march of democracy through to the 1994 elections, all through the eyes of a changing South African Christianity. At a recent conference held at the University of Cape Town's Centre for African Studies to mark its anniversary, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu noted this consistently contextual characteristic of the Journal's work. Indeed as the theme of the

conference and its special anniversary issue highlighted, the future of the Journal, like the future of Christian theology in South Africa, is bound up in the processes of and debates around Africanization characterising South African life and culture. The lively debates that accompanied the presentations at the conference confirmed this point. For more information, contact:

Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, Department of Religious Studies, University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch 7700, South Africa. Telephone: 021 650 3458, Facsimile: 021 689 7575. Subscription rates for the Journal are set at R35,00 for individuals, and R40-00 for Institutions.



CONFERENCES TO BE HELD

The **Centre of African Studies** in the University of London has announced the following events.

26 November: a film entitled *Memories and Dreams* (about the Masai) by Melissa Llewellyn-Davis will be shown in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at SOAS.

1 December: a seminar will be held on 'Media, religion and the constitution of Yoruba politics' by Karin Barber (Birmingham). On the 24th of September John Peel gave a paper in the African History Seminar about 'The social patterns of Yoruba conversion'.

Seminars in Dept. of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds. Lecture Series on the Significance of the African Christian Diaspora. December, 2: "The Bible, Black Religion and Modernity," by R. David Muir; February, 23: "The African Continuum and Christian Identity," by Dr. Roswith Gerloff; April, 28: "The Significance of the African Christian Diaspora in Europe," by delegates from European countries. Seminars to be held in G20 at 4pm.

THE FIRST AASR CONFERENCE

The AASR Constitution stipulates that the AASR meets at least twice in every five year period: at the occasion of the quinquennial Congresses of the IAHR (International Association for the History of Religions) and at least once in between two such IAHR Congresses. It stipulates also that the meeting in between IAHR Congresses, or at least that one such meeting, take place in the continent of Africa. The AASR Executive has asked Dr. Mary Getui, AASR Representative for East Africa, and me to organize the first AASR Conference in Africa in 1998 or 1999 in East Africa.

The conference will be hosted by the Department of Religious Studies of Kenyatta University in Nairobi, of which Dr. Mary Getui is currently the Chairperson. That department has appointed a committee of four staff members to act as the local organizer of the conference, to wit Dr. Mary Getui herself, as Chair, Dr. J. Gichaara, Ms. G. Wamue and Mr. T. Arudo. Dr. Jan Platvoet will be its international organizer.

No precise dates have as yet been set for the conference, but it seems likely that it will be held in early January 1999. The theme of the conference will be "The Study of the Religions of East Africa in the Age of Globalization."

The purpose of the conference will be threefold:

- (1) to take stock of the present state of the academic study of the religions of East Africa primarily in the universities and other institutes of academic learning in East Africa, but also, though distinctly secondarily, in the rest of Africa and in universities elsewhere;
- (2) to bring together as many academics prominent in the study of these religions from East Africa, the rest of Africa and elsewhere (in that order!) in order to facilitate that stock taking, not only in Religious Studies, but also in History, Archaeology, Sociology, Social Anthropology, and other disciplines relevant to the academic study of religions;

- (3) to lay the groundwork for an Association for the Study of Religions in East Africa that would further the academic study of the religions of East Africa in that region and elsewhere and apply for affiliation to the IAHR at the next IAHR Congress in South Africa in the year 2000

Drs Mary Getui and Jan Platvoet hope to be able to announce all final details about this conference in the next AASR bulletin. Meanwhile, however, we would like to urge anyone with a strong interest in its theme and purposes, especially in East Africa itself, to send us their suggestions, and especially their e-mail and ordinary mail addresses, and their fax and telephone numbers.

Dr. Mary Getui, Chair, Department of Religious Studies, Kenyatta University,
PO Box 43844, Nairobi, Kenya
Fax: + 254 2 726 976 (private), 254 2 891 782 (office)
E-mail: G.Maloba@CGNET.COM

J.G. Platvoet, Gildenring 52, 3981 JG Bunnik, The Netherlands (private),
Departement for the Study of Religions, Faculty of Theology, Leiden
University, P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, The
Netherlands (office)
Fax: + 31 71 527 2571 Telephone: + 31 30 565 2680
(private) E-mail: jgplatvt@worldaccess.nl (private);
Platvoet@bullet.leiden.univ.nl



THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS:

ORIGINS AND VISIONS

The XVIIIth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions in the year 2000 will coincide with several important events. The first is that as a result of political liberation, the IAHR in cooperation with key members of its constituent society the Association for the Study of Religion in Southern Africa (ASRSA) and its regional association the African Association for the Study of Religion (AASR) will be in the position to invite scholars of religion in the world to attend its congress in Durban, South Africa. This prospect has been met with overwhelming enthusiasm and excitement throughout the IAHR network. There is a great curiosity about both the academic study of religion as well as the religious situation in South Africa, and there is no doubt that much can be learned from both. The second important event is that the IAHR will be celebrating the anniversary of its founding 50 years ago in Amsterdam by some of the most illustrious figures in the history of religions. The third important event is that this congress will also mark the 100th anniversary of scientific congresses in the history of religions. The fact that the congress will occur at the turn of the Western millennium provides an opportunity to reflect on the IAHR and the academic study of religion.

Several questions arise as the year 2000 draws near. First, it would be appropriate to take stock and reflect on our origins and histories as an international body of scholars engaged in common scientific pursuits. What are the central themes, the important empirical areas, and the common approaches that have carried us to this point in time? Second, what local and global struggles have we engaged in to the betterment of our science? In which parts of the world has the field thrived? Why is it thriving in some regions and not in others? Has the history of religions contributed to education and cultural diversity more generally, and if so, how? Third, it will also be timely to discuss critically our future paths. What topics and approaches are important for us to pursue? What methodological and theoretical challenges

do we have to face in the increasingly globalizing context of the 21st century? What scholarly and professional adjustments will be required in order for us to increase our relevance, and is the IAHR doing what it can in these respects?

The congress will consist of a variety of activities, sections, symposia, panels, plenary sessions, and cultural events. Information on these and how to submit a panel or paper proposal will follow in the first circular.

Limited funding will be available to sponsor African participants from selected African countries. The AASR is currently working on this. Intending participants are urged to seek funding from their own institutions or from organizations such as United States Information Agency (USIS), other embassies or funding agencies in their own countries or countries where they may be residing temporarily as students or visiting scholars.

Armin W. Geertz
Aarhus University,
Denmark

General Secretary of the
IAHR

Rosalind I. J. Hackett
University of Tennessee,
USA

Deputy General Secretary of
the IAHR

Pratap Kumar
University of Durban-
Westville, South Africa

Congress Director



PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Dr. **Ebrahim Moosa** of the University of Cape Town (South Africa) is teaching courses in Islam at Stanford University until the end of 1997.

→ Dr. **Gerrie ter Haar** has left the Catholic Theological University in Utrecht, the Netherlands. She is now attached to both the Anthropology Department of Utrecht University and the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR) of Leiden University. Her principal contact address is through the Institute for the Study of Religion and

→ Society (ISRS), Motorwal 33, 1021 PC Amsterdam, Netherlands. Tel. (+31 20) 632 6900; Fax and answering machine (+31 20) 638 0145; Email: gterhaar@pi.net



Dr. **Isabel Phiri** has left the University of Namibia and is now Director of the Centre for Constructive Theology at the University of Durban-Westville in South Africa. The Centre is housed in the Faculty of Theology and issues the Journal of Constructive Theology. This is a biannual publication which publishes reflections which are relevant to the unfolding process of social transformation in South and southern Africa. For more information please contact Dr. Phiri at her Email address: iphiri@pixie.udw.ac.za

Assoc. Prof. **Abdulkader Tayob** will be spending six months at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, where he will be teaching courses on Islam. As one of the editors of the newsletter, he will still be available via his home e-mail: tayob@socsci.uct.ac.za

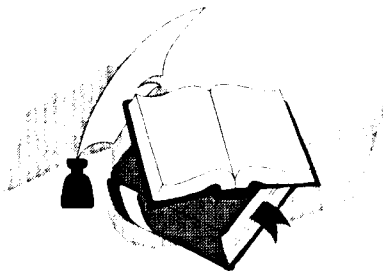
Special Requests:

Dr. **Friday Mbon**, Associate Professor in Religious Studies at the University of Calabar (Nigeria) and Director of the Centre for General Studies at the same university would like to

spend a sabbatical period in 1998-1999 in another university or any other academic institution anywhere in the world. His sabbatical will last from October 1, 1998 - October 1, 1999. His area of research as well as his teaching competence are in the field of sociology of religion and comparative religion, including African traditional religions.

Those interested may contact Dr. Mbon at the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, University of Calabar, P.M.B. 1115, Calabar, Nigeria.

→ **Dr. Tabona Shoko**, Lecturer in African Religion at the Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy in the University of Zimbabwe, would equally like to spend a sabbatical in some other university or academic institution in the world. His sabbatical period lasts from August 1998-August 1999. If you have suggestions for possible places, please contact Dr. Shoko at his Department at UZ, P.O. Box MP 167, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe.



PUBLICATIONS

A Bibliography of **Swiss Doctoral Dissertations** on Sub-Saharan Africa, 1897-1996 has been published by Roger Pfister (Bern: Swiss Society of African Studies/Swiss National Commission for UNESCO, 1997). This bilingual English/French publication lists in a user-friendly manner doctoral dissertations on sub-Saharan Africa completed in Switzerland between 1897 and 1996. Entries are listed alphabetically by the author's name and include the following information: dissertation title (in the original language), place submitted, degree title, year accepted and number of pages. If the dissertation has been published as a monograph and/or in a journal, details are included. All entries are according to topic and

geographical region. To obtain a copy, contact Roger Pfister, Stockerenweg 15, CH-3014 Bern, Switzerland. Email: roger.pfister@bluewin.ch

There is a printed version available of the African Christianity Bibliography which was published in January 1996 by the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World (CSCNWW) at the University of Edinburgh. This contains over 4000 records concerning materials available in some major libraries in Ghana, Malawi, Netherlands, Scotland and Sierra Leone. By March 1997 the database had almost doubled to 7300 records and is still further expanding. The database can be accessed via the Internet. For information please contact Ms Elizabeth Leitch at the CSCNWW, The University of Edinburgh, New College, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LX. Email: E.Leitch@ed.ac.uk



Religion in Contemporary Africa Series. A new series promoting scholarly research on issues relevant to the varied dimensions of religious life and practice in contemporary Africa has been launched through Cardiff Academic Press. The series editors are Dr James Cox of the University of Edinburgh and Dr Gerrie ter Haar of Utrecht University.

The first book in the series has just appeared. It is entitled, 'Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa', edited by James Cox. The book comprises articles from African and European scholars who met in Harare, Zimbabwe in June 1994 to examine the interaction between Christian and African Traditional Religions. The book is available at highly reduced rates for African scholars or institutions. Information and orders can be obtained by writing to Dr James Cox, Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, University of Edinburgh, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LX, Scotland, UK (email: J.Cox@ed.ac.uk or fax: 44-131-6508952).

Other books in the series now scheduled explore issues around African identity, aspects of healing in Zimbabwe, and the work of Swiss missionaries in Mozambique. Those interested in submitting manuscripts for the series should submit a brief proposal with chapter outlines either to Dr Cox in Edinburgh or to Dr Gerrie ter Haar, Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Motorwal 33, 1021 PC, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (email gterhaar@pi net).

BOOKS

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JOURNALS

RELIGIOSUS ANTHROPOS

A Global Journal of Critical Religious-Literature Reviews (RA-GLOBAL)

RA-GLOBAL aims to publish, and to provide the reading public with, academic critical reviews of books, monographs and journal articles dealing with religion all over the world, particularly in Africa. Priority is given to reviews of scholarly literature, in print and electronic forms, on subjects that directly or indirectly address religion in a questionable or controversial manner.

Publications on Theology, Comparative Religion, Philosophy, Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion, History of Religion and Ethics and on border studies - in which religion dovetails with

Aesthetics, Anthropology, Feminist Studies, Political Science, Environmental Studies, the natural sciences, Peace and Conflict Studies or whatever - will perhaps be the most reviewed works in the journal RA-GLOBAL. It is meant to challenge writers to write carefully and critically and to encourage readers to read scholarly works discerningly.

RA-GLOBAL is to be published biannually. The Editorial Board, therefore, welcomes review articles written in direct response to published debatable material of significance to the study of religion. Both solicited and unsolicited reviews are accepted, provided that they are important. The first number will be published early 1998, but we already have more than enough material for that issue. Ordinary articles – which are not reviews of any already published relevant literature – should, nonetheless, not be sent to RA-GLOBAL for consideration.

A modest contribution towards placing human religiosity and the world-wide study and teaching of religion in a healthy global perspective, RA-GLOBAL (Religiosus Anthropos: A Global Journal of Critical Religious-Literature Reviews) is a sister to the international Kampala-based Journal of African Religion and Philosophy (JARP).

Correspondence about editorial matters (review contributions, books for review, rejoinders to already published reviews, etc) and subscription should be directed to the Editorial Director or to the Managing Editor.

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Pianky Tarharka, PhD STD
E-Mail: ERITY@URGENTMAIL.COM
P.O. Box 16144, Kampala,
Uganda

MANAGING EDITOR

Dziedzorm R. Asafo, Doktorand
(Religiosus Anthropos), c/o
University of Uppsala, Department
of Theology, Box 1604, S-751 46
Uppsala, Sweden
Telephone: +46 18 471 2196, Fax
number: +46 18 71 01 70
E-mail: Reuben.Asafo@teol.uu.se,
or Email:
Dziedzorm.Asafo@hotmail.com

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Professor Oswald Ndoleriire,
PhD
E-Mail:
ERITY@URGENTMAIL.COM
P.O. Box 16144, Kampala,
Uganda

Some Guidelines for Contributors

Among other things, a review of a publication should give emphasis to important contributions, or noticeable lack of them, to human knowledge. More specifically, the reviewer should identify and discuss the detected strength(s) and weakness(es) in the work in relation to the following and other points: (1) presentation, (2) theoretical perspective(s), (3) methodology, and (4) the work's benefit(s) to the target global or African community.

A manuscript may be submitted both in hard copy and electronic form on a 3.5 inch diskette. Two double-spaced hard copies should be sent, and the electronic form should be in one of the standard word processing programmes (WordPerfect, preferably 5.1; Word for Windows; Microsoft Word 5.1, or 6.01; Rich Text Format (RTF); WordStar; etc). Both the name and version of the word-processing programme should be indicated. On its first page, a review should show its title, the second should bear the author's name and mailing address, including fax and e-mail addresses. No review text should exceed twenty double-interline foolscap pages, however. Footnotes - which normally appear at the bottom of a page - should be used, not notes. 'Footnote' numbers, in the text's body, should be in superscript and organised sequentially.

Languages of RA-GLOBAL: The major language for the journal is English. The journal also accepts reviews written in French, German, Portuguese, Arabic, Spanish, Swahili, Hausa, Japanese, Runyakitara, Luganda, etc - provided they are each accompanied by a summary, in English, of a half or full page.

A contributor should provide brief autobiographical information on vital dimensions of his or her life and academic career: his/her educational status, significant publications, etc. A good passport-size photograph (coloured or black and white) of the contributor is required for printing along with his or her review.

CONTRIBUTOR'S CONTACT ADDRESSES: While a contributor's physical address is necessary, it is VERY important that he or she provide a fax and email addresses as well for quick correspondence. If one does not have personal fax and email addresses, one could use those of one's friend, institution, etc.



FOCUS ON INSTITUTIONS

Religious Studies at the University of Zambia

At the University of Zambia in Lusaka there has been a Religious Studies section for some years. However, since the late 1980s, we have had Religious Studies as a major and as a minor in the B.A. programmes. We have a preponderantly historical approach here not only to Christianity and Islam but also to traditional religion. Our programme also includes courses on World Religions, Ethics, Sociology and Psychology. We have roughly 200 students with a staff now of six, though this may be reduced soon. On the Religion and Psychology course, could I request the suggestions and recommendations from other African scholars in terms of how one can make it more African. On this note of appeal to other African institutions too, I would like to say that with the Zimbabwean and South African universities we have had difficulties having our best students admitted directly to their Masters' programmes. It seems strange that we have no difficulty having them admitted to British Universities even with a minor for a one-year Masters degree while the African institutions in question demand a one-year pre-Masters course together with a two year Masters programme. Could this issue be clarified so that we can cooperate better together rather than place unnecessary obstacles in the way of developing competent staff?

B. Carmody, Senior Lecturer, Department of Languages and Social Sciences Education.



Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds, England

African Religion and Black Christianity is taught at the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds by Dr Kevin Ward and Dr Roswith Gerloff. Dr Kevin Ward specialises in African History and Religion. He teaches a survey course entitled The Varieties of Religion in Modern African society and also courses in Christianity in Africa and African Traditional Religions, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. He also teaches MA

Modules in Religion, Theology & Development Issues, and in The Theory and Practice of Mission

Dr Roswith Gerloff specialises in Black Religion and Black Christianity in the transatlantic cycle between Africa, the Caribbean, North America and Europe, with special reference to Britain. She teaches two Modules entitled Black Religion and Black Christianity (postgraduate) and The Black Religious Experience and the Gospel of Liberation (undergraduate). In September 1997, she organised a successful consultation on The Significance of the African Religious Diaspora in Europe. Both visited Africa in 1997. Roswith paid a long research visit to South Africa including the UNISA conference on African Initiatives in Mission, grassroots projects and African initiated churches in both urban and rural areas, and visits to several Universities including Venda and Durban-Westville. She negotiated an exchange programme between the latter (Faculty of Theology and Department of Religious Studies) and Leeds. Kevin visited Uganda, Zambia, Namibia and South Africa. In Uganda he directed a conference of international scholars preparing a volume to celebrate the bicentenary of the Church Mission Society in 1999. African students at the Department come from Botswana and Gambia, research students preparing for a doctorate from Uganda, Zambia, the Caribbean and Canada.

Dr Roswith Gerloff

