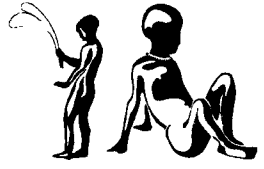


THE
AFRICAN
ASSOCIATION
FOR THE
STUDY OF
RELIGIONS



STEERING COMMITTEE

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

Regional Representatives

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 or 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.



CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

I am pleased to present to you another issue of our newsletter. It is gratifying to know that our newsletter is read not only by our members, but also by members of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR). In the next two years, our association will be but also by members of the International Association for the History of preoccupied with two major programs: a regional conference in Kenya in 1999 and the IAHR Congress in South Africa in the year 2000. The newsletter will be a major forum for disseminating information about these two meetings. The Congress in South Africa in particular will require that you respond to the call for papers promptly.

From May 21-25, the IAHR Executive and International Committee will meet in Hildesheim, Germany, hosted by one of the Vice Presidents, Peter Antes. In conjunction with this meeting, the AASR Executive Committee will meet to review the activities of the Association and plan for the future. One of our major concerns will be how to establish a strong base in West Africa.

I am particularly worried about the lack of AASR activities in places like Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, countries which have relatively strong Religious Studies programs. I have therefore made several moves in the last few months. I am currently talking to a number of scholars in Nigeria to see how to go about this. Professor Ogbu Kalu, of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, currently on leave in Canada and Dr. Dan Fulani, who has recently returned to the University of Jos after a one year leave as a Humbolt Fellow at Beyreuth University, have promised to consult with colleagues in Nigeria. We are also fortunate to have in the United States at this time Drs. Elizabeth Amoah and Elom Dovlo of the University of Legon, Ghana, both currently on academic leave. Both Drs. Amoah and Dovlo have expressed enthusiasm about the possibility of starting something in Ghana. Let us hope that before too long, we will be in West Africa for a regional conference.

Our greatest problem still remains fundraising. We are doing poorly in North America, especially in the United States and Canada. The time has come to rethink our strategy for

membership drive in this region. Toward this goal, I am currently conversing with a number of scholars, and very soon a new plan will be in place.

Please remember to send us news about your activities (conferences, research, seminars, transitions, etc.).

RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES

The **Dorset Press** Announces "Second Chance" Publishing Initiative in Religious Studies.

The Dorset Press is dedicated to publishing and keeping in print serious work written by both established and younger scholars. In pursuit of this goal, we appeal to authors in religious studies victimized by the cutbacks in scholarly publishing during the past decade, to submit their out-of-print or cancelled projects to The Dorset Press for possible re-publication. We will accept comparative studies; religion and the sciences; religion and politics, religion and history; religion and sociology; religion and psychology; religion and ethics; religion and the arts, etc.

We are inviting submission of texts, translations, critical guides, edited collections of documents/readings -- whatever will enhance study in the field -- at all levels. While high quality contributions with contemporary themes will be given preference, all submissions will be considered. For a project to qualify for the "Second Chance" program we ask in general that it meet the following criteria: that your book was published (or placed under contract, but not published) after January, 1985; that it has not since been revised (reissued by the original publisher as a second or later edition); and, that you own the rights to the work. You should be willing to update materials where our reviewers indicate such updating is necessary. Please do not send actual copies of your book at this time.

Submission should be in the form of a brief proposal that would include a description of the book (including Cataloging in Publication data, ISBN, copyright date) along with the table of

contents. It would be most helpful if you would also include a curriculum vitae and such additional material as endorsements from your peers encouraging the reissue of your work, copies of earlier reviews if they are still available, and any other such materials that may influence our decision-making process. Of course, we continue to encourage submissions for our regular publishing programs in mathematics, philosophy, religious studies and political science.

All submissions should be sent to:

Religious Studies Editor

The Dorset Press

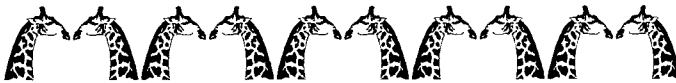
PO Box 440140, Aurora CO 80044-0140

If you would be more comfortable discussing this prior to submitting a proposal, you may call us at 303 750 8374, fax us at 303 337 0952, or communicate via email at daviesgroup@msn.com.



The **University of Malawi** is launching the Kachere Institute for Research on Religion, Culture and Society. The aim of the Institute is the promotion, facilitation and furtherance of research in fields related to religion in Malawi. It seeks the involvement and support of institutions and individuals who find this enterprise to be of relevance to their work. The Institute will be based at the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, and facilitate research by providing archival and reference materials, an administrative office for research assistants, applicable computer hardware and software, comfortable and affordable accommodation, and consultancy services on research in Malawi. The Institute will start

modestly with a one-person, one-computer office but the plan is to build it up steadily. Anyone who might be interested in the Institute can contact Dr Hilary Mijoga or Dr Kenneth Ross at the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, Chancellor College, Box 280, Zomba, Malawi (email: kachere@unima.wn.apc.org).



The **Centre of African Studies at the University of London** 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) 1999 and Autumn (September-December) 1999 Fellowships, sponsored by the Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial trust. For full details on application, please contact the Centre office at SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG (email: cas@soas.ac.uk)

The **Leventis Foundation** is supporting collaborative research between the Centre of African Studies in London and colleagues in universities in Nigeria. It is anticipated that further funding for three-month sabbaticals in London will be available for the 1998-1999 session. For further information, please contact the Centre office (see above).

During the fourth year of the **Commonwealth East African Visiting Scholarship Scheme** (EAVS), academics from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya are invited to visit the Centre of African Studies in London for a three-month period. They will be able 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. For further information, contact the centre office (see above).

CONFERENCES TO BE HELD

The **Fifth Luso-Afro-Brazilian Social Sciences Congress** will be held at the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo from 1-5 September 1998. The Congress aims to promote debate on themes and problems of common interest to Portuguese speaking countries and to create strategies and mechanisms of co-operation between these countries. For further details contact: V Congresso Luso-Afro-Brasileiro de Ciencias Sociais, a/c Centro de Estudos Africanos, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, C.P. 1993, Maputo, Mozambique (email: vcfro@zebra.uem.mz)

The 41st Annual Meeting of the **African Studies Association** (ASA) in the USA will be held from 29 October-1 November 1998 at the Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois. The conference theme is: Africa's encounter with the 20th century. For further details contact the ASA, Rutgers University, Douglass Campus, 132 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1400, USA (email: africa@emory.edu).

The Third **World Parliament of Religions** is scheduled to take place in Cape Town, South Africa, in late 1999. The meeting of the Parliament, which took last place in 1993 was held with the intention of fostering inter-religious understanding as well as action by religious communities on important issues facing humanity today.

From June-October 2000, the International World Fair **EXPO 2000** will be held in Germany, in Hannover and its surroundings, including the traditional city of Hildesheim.

Its theme is in the official English version: Mankind-Nature-Technology. Most of its projects already announced are purely technical or ecological. The religious dimension is widely neglected, though religions have had and still have an impact on human behaviour with regard to nature and technology, sometimes encouraging, sometimes warning and prohibitive. So much the need, therefore, to emphasise this aspect with regard to the forthcoming EXPO 2000 and to explore the History of Religions in Europe with regard to these fields of research.

This will be done at a conference in the city of Hildesheim from May 22-25, 1998. It is expected that participants will attend, for the first time since the IAHR Congress in Rome 1990, from all the countries of Europe with affiliated associations. The Hildesheim conference will therefore provide an opportunity to meet scholars from all parts of Europe as well as from the wider world. Underlining the European character of the conference, three European languages will be used, namely English, German and French.

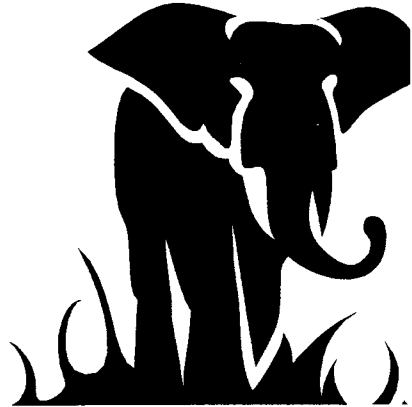
The conference will also be an opportunity for the following business meetings: the executive Committee and the International Committee of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR); the African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR); and the European Association for the History of Religions (EAHR) founded in Bonn in 1995.

For information, please write to Prof. Dr. Peter Antes, Seminar für Religionswissenschaft, University of Hannover, Im Moore 21, D-30173 Hannover. Fax: (+49-511) 762-4025 or 988-6322; E-mail: antes@mbox.rwi.uni-hannover-de



The British Association for the Study of Religions (BASR) will hold its annual conference from 14-17 September 1998 at the University of Wales, Lampeter. The theme of the 1998 conference will be Religion and

Innovation. The BASR Annual Lecture will be given by Dr. Elizabeth Amoah, Head of the Department for the Study of Religions of the University of Ghana, Legon, on 'African spirituality and religious innovation'.



PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

- In February 1998 Afe Adogame (Nigeria) successfully completed his Ph.D programme at the University of Bayreuth (Germany). His thesis is entitled: 'The Politics of Cultural Identity in a West African Prophetic-Charismatic Movement'. The thesis will be published in the series 'Studies in the intercultural History of Christianity' edited by Prof. Sundermeier.
- Wotsuna John Khamalwa from Edgerton University, Njoro, Kenya, is a visiting research student at the University of Bayreuth for the period of one year as a Phd student, on a sandwich-type scholarship by KAAD, Bonn.



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- Snidle, Heather & David Yeoman, *Christ in Aids: an Educational, Pastoral and Spiritual Approach*. Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press, 1997. ISBN: 1899025-09X.
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The Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions published the following in 1993. They are available for sale and could be got from the following officers of the Association. The Books are:

1. Studies in Religious Understanding in Nigeria
2. Religion and Politics in Nigeria
3. Religion and Service to Humanity

The President
Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions
C/o Department of Religions
University of Ilorin
Ilorin, Nigeria.

The Business Manager (David O. Ogungbile)
Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions
c/o Department of Religious Studies
Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile-Ife, Osun State.

FOCUS ON INSTITUTIONS

**King's College, University of London,
Department of Theology and Religious
Studies.**

Courses on African Religions:

Professor Peter Clarke teaches several courses on African religions, 'traditional' and 'new', in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at King's. There is a course in the BA Religious Studies degree on African religions in Africa and the New World. New religions in the West, (1960 to the Present), also taught by Peter Clarke for the same degree includes a section on African and African derived religions in the West (nation of Islam, Rastafari Movement, Aladura Churches etc.). Moreover, a course on religions in Africa and the New World is one of the optional units for the MA in Anthropology and Sociology of Religion.

Peter Clarke spent four years in Nigeria teaching African history, first at Bauchi Teachers College and then for three years at the University of Ibadan as a lecturer in African history. He has been back to Africa several times since leaving, and more recently he was a Visiting Professor at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. He has lectured at several Brazilian universities and has made fourteen research trips to Brazil, where he has spent two years in all studying African-Brazilian religion. His African students in recent times have come from Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Two of the latter - Dr. Ann Kubai (Kenya) and Dr. Ebenezer Adegoke (Nigeria) - have recently successfully completed their Ph.Ds. Another, Daniel Eshun from Ghana, obtained a distinction in the MA Anthropology and Sociology of Religion in October 1997 and is now studying for a Phd on Catholic and Methodist Responses to Traditional Religions in Ghana since Independence.

UNITED LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY - PAULINUM

Theological education in Namibia began in 1922 with the training of pastors and evangelists at Oniipa for congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN). In 1947 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN) opened a seminary at Karibib. In 1963 the two seminaries merged and formed Paulinum. Due to the Odendaal Plan the Seminary was isolated in Otjimbingwe, a small rural community. In 1997 the Seminary moved to a completely new campus in Windhoek, located near the University of Namibia. The opportunities and challenges of this new location will further the aim of the seminary to promote Lutheran unity within the country. Students and lecturers can now visit and work with many local congregations and participate in a variety of community outreach programs.

A Board of members appointed from the two churches governs the Seminary and the Board appoints the Principal for a three-year term. In 1970 the Seminary became a member of the Joint Board for Theological Education in Southern Africa. Since 1974 Namibians have taken up the Principalship. The language of instruction was Afrikaans until 1979 when it was

changed to English. The Seminary has new student intake every two years. Currently there are 46 students enrolled in Years 1 and 3 of the four-year diploma course. Approximately one-third of the student body are women. The faculty includes nine lecturers.

Paulinum has a LAN connecting the student computer lab, faculty and administrative offices and the library, and access to the Internet and to e-mail. The library catalogue has been computerized and will eventually be added to the national catalogue of Namibian libraries on the Internet. With this new technology in place the Seminary looks forward to an expanded role of service to the Church. Continuing education classes, workshops, distance-learning courses, and provision of print and media resources to pastors in the field are among the goals of Paulinum for the next century.

The Rev. Eino Amaambo, Lecturer



IAHR 2000 UPDATE

The IAHR Congress Programme Committee has put together some ideas for panel suggestions for its next Congress in 2000 (Durban, South Africa). With these in mind, we encourage you to begin thinking of proposals:

- For the first time, there will not be the conventional “sections” as in the past in Islam, African Religions, Method and Theory. This is to encourage more cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary fertilization. We want to see more theoretical, methodological and pedagogical issues receiving discussion on a wider scale, within the context of empirical and historical

research. This does not preclude someone wanting to put together a panel on South Asian religion, but wherever possible creative configurations should be encouraged that integrate key issues (such as gender, ethnicity) and challenge restrictive categories. For example, religion and media lends itself in this regard, as would a panel on diasporic religion, or religion and cultural studies.

- Since this Congress is the first to be held in Africa, every attempt should be made to develop panels that reflect the diversity of Africa's religious landscape. As much as possible try to include non-Western scholars so as to challenge the divisions of power and privilege that characterize our scholarly world. This may be done by either inviting known scholars or leaving room on a panel for interested scholars to respond with a paper proposal once the panels have been posted.
- Bearing in mind the theme of the Congress, "The History of Religions: Origins and Visions," panels should be looking back as well as forward. Some topics might cover both such as "Neglected Issues in the Study of African Religions" or "Reconceptualizing the Sacred." "Millennialism" would also perform this function. Also look back at some of the "newer" topics listed on the website.

Please consult the website (<http://www.udw.ac.za/iahr>) and send your suggestions to the Programme Chair, Prof. Rosalind Hackett (rhackett@utk.edu) who will direct it to the relevant subcommittees. You may also send your suggestions to the Newsletter and the AASR representatives.

UPDATE ON THE FIRST AASR CONFERENCE

As was announced in the AASR Newsletter no. 8, the First AASR Conference in Africa will be hosted by the Department of Religious Studies of Kenyatta University. Its theme will be 'The Religions of East Africa in the Age of Globalisation'. The dates and the location of the

conference have now been fixed. It will be held in the pretty setting of the Kenya Coffee College (a World Bank sponsored training institute for coffee growers) at Ruiru (some 20 miles north-east of Nairobi), Kenya, from 5-9 January 1999.

The first purpose of the conference has been reformulated in the very practical terms of the production of a book in which the present state of the study of the religions of East Africa is surveyed by scholars of religions posted in the universities of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda in such a manner that the volume may serve as an important handbook in East Africa and elsewhere in the coming decades. Except for the key note speaker who will deliver the opening address, the papers will therefore be delivered by selected scholars from these three nations who are presently being invited.

There will be five groups of five papers each: (1) on the developments in the African traditional religions of East Africa; (2) on the dynamics in the mainline church, African instituted and charismatic/Pentecostal forms of Christianity in East Africa; (3) on the historical developments in Islam in East Africa; (4) on the Oriental (or Asian) religions in East Africa; (5) on the esoteric and emerging new religious movements, and on secularism in East Africa. It is the explicit purpose of the conference to cover as well as is possible (the academic study of) all the religions of East Africa, or, if that proves not possible, to explicitly point out that certain religions were not, or could not, be covered in order that future research be carried out on them.

Admission to the conference will be limited to some 45 scholars from the three East African nations and some fifteen AASR members from the rest of Africa and other parts of the world. Limited financial support has been granted by the AASR, IAHR, and the Dutch Association for the Study of Religions. Further support is being sought presently for the conference and the publication of the book. The IAHR Secretary-General will soon propose to the IAHR Executive that this First AASR Conference in Africa be granted the special status of 'IAHR Regional Conference'.

For further inquiries, you may contact:

Dr. Mary Getui, Dept. of Religious Studies, Kenyatta University, PO Box 43844, Nairobi, Kenya

Fax: +254.2.726.976 (private), +254.2.891.782

Dr. Jan G. Platvoet, Gildenring 52, 3981 JG Bunnik, The Netherlands

Fax: +31.30.656.2680 e-mail: jgplatvoet@wxns.nl

NEW SECTION: REVIEW *by Jan G. Platvoet*

Krüger, J.S., *Along edges: religion in South Africa; Bushman, Christian Buddhist*. Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1995; VIII + 368 pp.; indices, illustrations; SA-Rand 65; ISBN 0-86981-907-0.

Jacobus Krüger is Professor of Science of Religions and Head of the Department of Religious Studies at UNISA (the University of South Africa) at Pretoria. In the book under review, he has welded twenty essays into a coherent whole. These essays neatly reflect his methodology for the study of the religions, and the fields in which he works: Buddhism and South African aboriginal religion.

The essays are grouped in four parts. In part I (pp. 19-74), Krüger discusses the philosophical foundation of his methodological position; in part II (75-138), how religions may be studied; in parts III (215-247) and IV (274-333), he paints a vast canvass from long before homo habilis (139-197) to San (or Bushmen) religion and the religious pluralism of modern Southern Africa (79). The book is permeated by Buddhist philosophy (15, 287-290): its 'centreless knowing' (24, 48-50) is integrated into Krüger's 'conditionalist' theory of man, which in its turn is inspired by modern views of the cosmological and biological evolution (143-197), and by such authors as William James (41-43), Jung (43-45, 68-71, 284-287), and Whitehead (45-48, 69-71).

Krüger has devised his conditionalist theory of the human predicament as an instrument for exploring the spaces between the Christian, Buddhist and Bushman religions (98, 258), for recovering the dynamics of the religious history of humankind, for ridding South Africa of its 'religious apartheid' (28, 105, 121, 258, 264), for toppling 'Euro-Christian-centric discourse'

(203), and for constituting 'the religious worldview of the new Homo religiosus africanus' (186).

Krüger's conditionalism conceives of man as a dynamic relationship with God and nature 'comprehended in the widest context perceptible' (23, 43). Presenting his theory as a naturalist and empiricist religious metaphysics (12, 22, 24), Krüger refuses to accept what he terms 'religious apartheid': the nature-supra-nature dichotomy with its 'external God' (63), eternity and an immortal soul, 'in which the church and the biblical text somehow retain supracontextual status' (264). The divine, he says, is not a 'trans-empirical reality' (43), but 'the radical depth dimension of this reality' (26, 184-185, 206, 251). It 'can be probed, or at least suspected, by the highly sensitive ("mystical") outreaches of our sensorium' (29, 39). It can, therefore, be experienced by man as that 'indeterminate "more"' that fringes 'the flux of relationships without definite boundaries between things' by which our experiential world is constituted (42). Following Jung, Krüger holds that God, who is the consensus gentium, is established only by, and in, the human psyche. The latter reveals what lies at the edges of human experience through the workings of the unconscious (44-45). It enables human religious intuition to discern truth in the 'radically contingent matrix of reality itself' (50).

Krüger rejects my analysis, in *Numen* 40, 3 (1993): 322-327, that his is a 'religionist' position (86, 105), perhaps because he restricts that category to positions inspired by 'supranaturalist revelationism' (27). The passages I have cited, however, amply show that his is a religionist position indeed. By that I do not censure it but merely categorise it as basically religiously inspired, and with properties different from other methodological positions in the Science of Religions. With some of the properties prominent in Krüger's 'Science of Religion' I concur wholeheartedly, such as the integration of his thoroughly relativist (117-119, 128-131) Philosophy of Religion (100-137) with his critical Science of Religions (79-107); his call for a (Christian and other) theology informed by Science of Religion (27); his critical reflexiveness in matters of methodology (81-86); and the vast perspectives he opens. But I reject others, such as his Schleiermachiian romanticism, in which the metastable 'mythic' and 'mystical' dimensions of (trans-)cognition are vital (126-134, 145, 147, 287-290); his

extolling of the 'liberating, therapeutic value' (85) of religious inclusivism (55-59, 90, 101, 151); and the combination of the study of religions with the production of new 'conditionalist religion' (108-124, 189, 203), which he defines as 'faith without an object', and as one that has abandoned 'the craving to survive eternally' (193-194, 253). In part II, Krüger proposes a model of eight dimensions for study of religions, the first four constituting a science of religions, the second four a complementary philosophy of religion. Krüger says that his 'integral' paradigm falls 'altogether outside the currently accepted models of science of religions' (78). That view is too modest. It grants supremacy to models (which he fails to specify) which they do not actually enjoy, for in the Anglo-Saxon Departments of Religious Studies several philosophers of religion hold important positions in Science of Religion. Krüger's suggestion, however, that 'religion coemerged with humanity itself' and had already reached 'a fair level of articulation' with *Homo erectus*, i.e., more than 1 million years ago (157), is not, as Krüger thinks, an 'extrapolation within reasonable bounds' (163), but creative hermeneutics (in the meaning which Eliade attached to that term). The discussion of San religion and healing dance in chapters 18 and 19 is the climax of the book, but it ends, unfortunately, in an anti-climax in the brief final chapter 20, on rock engravings as mandalas.

I strongly recommend this passionate and provocative, yet reflexive book. Those who order it are likely, however, to be frustrated, for UNISA seems not equipped to serve customers worldwide. By not improving its distribution, it does a disservice to the academic community.

