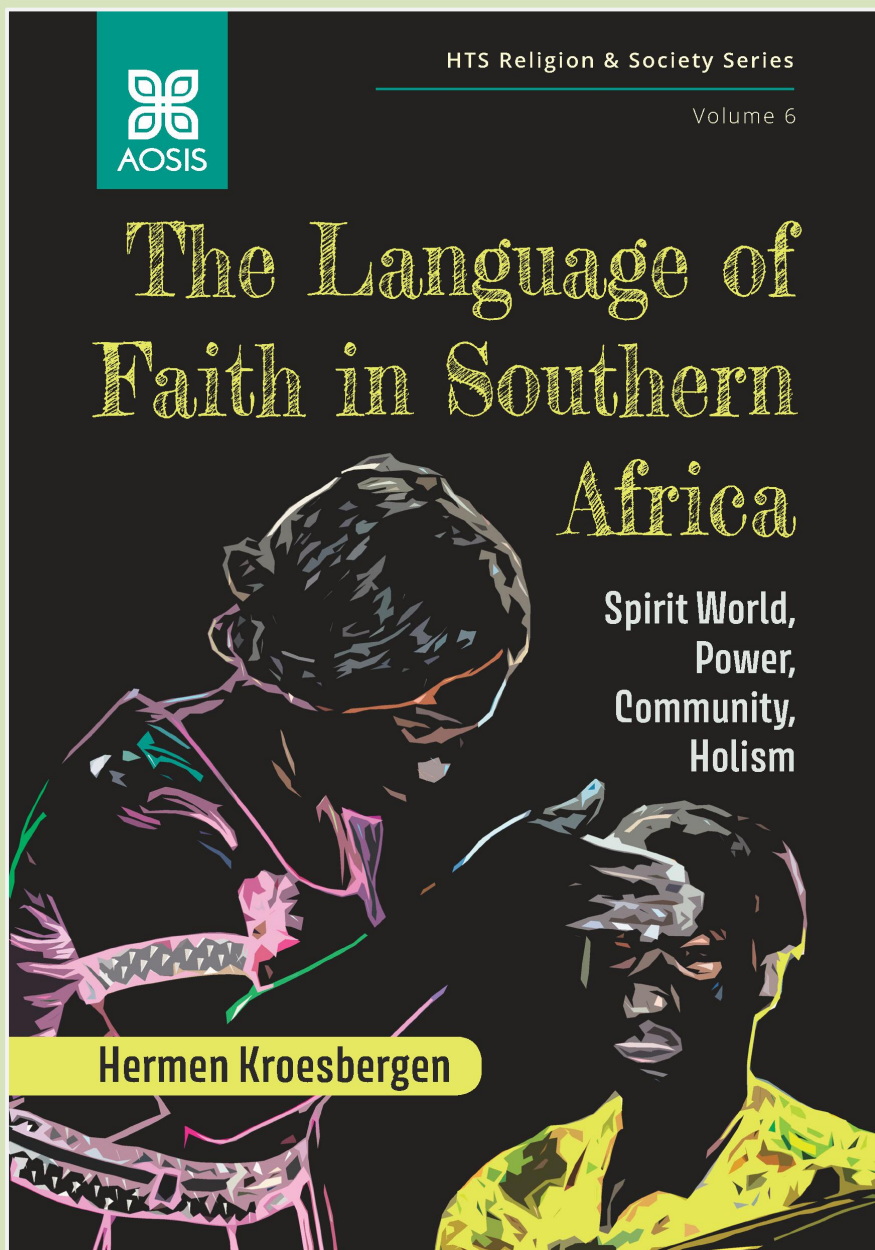


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Generally, for people in Africa nothing happens by chance, but everything is determined by the spirit world. They involve the spirit world in almost every activity of their lives through prayer. In using the philosophy of language developed by Ludwig Wittgenstein, the author asserts that it is important to remember that the meaning of people's words is not determined by what they say or how they understand their own words themselves, but by the wider context. Saying that the spirit world is behind something is a way of expressing the reality of living in a world dominated by chance. Spiritual entities do not represent concrete, external spirits or ghosts but a description of an experience with a negative power that can create havoc. They are personal responses to something bad that happened to people. The spirit world is not something made up, but it is a response to the world, and in that sense the spirit world is real. This book's perspective is relevant for its elucidation of an important aspect of African discourse about religion.  
**Prof. Marius Nel, Unit for Reformational Studies, Faculty of Theology, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa**

This book offers an invitation for scholars to use social scientific tools and religious language to think theologically and philosophically about the belief in supernatural power which promotes fears and accusations of witchcraft and excessive promises of well-being and miracles. This scholarly monograph offers a critical understanding of the nature and function of religious language. It creates a context where members of different religious communities might participate in ecumenical dialogue and pursue justice.

**Prof. Elias Bongmba, Department of Religion, School of Humanities, Rice University, Houston, Texas, USA**

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