European Traditions
in the Study of Religion
in Africa

Edited by Frieder Ludwig and Afe Adogame
in cooperation with
Ulrich Berner and Christoph Bochinger

2004
Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

ISBN 3-447-05002-0
# Table of Contents

Table of Contents .............................................................................................................................. v  
Preface and Acknowledgements ...................................................................................................... ix  
Introduction: Historiography and European Perceptions of African Religious History ................................................................................................................................................ 1  
* Frieder Ludwig & Afe Adogame  
“They became slaves of their definitions.” Okot p’Bitek (1931-1982) and the European Traditions in the Study of African Religions .................................................................................................................. 23  
* Henk J. van Rinsum  
Sources in Mission Archives ............................................................................................................ 39  
* Adam Jones  
European Perceptions of Islam in Africa: Missionaries, Administrators and Scholars............................................................................................................................................... 47  
* Nehemia Levtzion (†)  
German Koran Translations and Their Reception in North Africa ................................................ 57  
* Mahmud Haggag  
From Distance to Difference: Modern European Travel Accounts on Religion and Healing in Africa ................................................................................................................................ 65  
* Robert Debusmann & Frieder Ludwig  
Dutch Merchants, Missionaries, & Academics on African Religions, 1594-2000: Their Earliest Contributions .............................................................................................................. 75  
* Jan G. Platvoet  
The Dialectic of the French Enlightenment for Africans: Thinking Alterity in Abbé Grégoire, Condorcet, Ch. de Brosses and Olympe de Gouges ................................................................. 97  
* Jean-Godefroy Bidima  
Fetishists and Magicians – The Description of African Religions by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) ................................................................................................................................................. 109  
* Wolbert Smidt  
Wissenschaft, Africa and the Cultural Process according to Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) .................................................................................................................. 117  
* Werner Ustorf  
Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786-1844): His Impact on Christian Mission in Africa ....................... 129  
* Musa A. B. Gaiya
# Table of Contents

Africa and the Origin of the Science of Religion. Max Müller (1823-1900) and James George Frazer (1854-1941) on African Religions

*Ulrich Berner*

The Sociology of Religion and the Possibility of African Society: Some Theoretical Remarks

*Elísio Macamo*

Germanophone Orientalism Revisited: A Polemic

*Roman Loimeier*

“The Gods Are Dying”: Diedrich Westermann (1875-1956) and Some Aspects of His Studies of African Religions

*Holger Stoecker*

“Friend of Africa”: J.H. Oldham (1874-1969), Missions and British Colonial Policy in the 1920s

*Keith Clements*

A Tale of Two Germans and the Yoruba of Nigeria: Leo Frobenius (1873-1938) and Ulli Beier (*1922)

*Jacob K. Olupona*

“They Have Laid Hold of Some Essential Truths”: Edwin W. Smith (1876-1957), A Wise Listener to African Voices

*W. John Young*

Geoffrey Parrinder (*1910) and the Study of Religion in West Africa

*Andrew F. Walls*

Bengt Sundkler (1909-1995): Sixty Years of Engagement with Africa

*Christopher Steed*


*Kevin Ward*

John Spencer Trimingham (*1904) on Islam in Africa: Integrative or Isolationist?

*Abdulkader Tayob*

From Rationality to Creativity: Ritual Activity and Religious Experience in the Work of Edward Evans-Pritchard (1902-1973) and Victor Turner (1920-1983)

*Till Förster*

From Africa to Africa: The Significance of Approaches to the Study of African Religions at Aberdeen and Edinburgh Universities from 1970 to 1998

*James L. Cox*