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African Traditional Religion: An Enduring Heritage

African Traditional Religion, it hardly needs pointing out, is *part of the religious heritage of humankind*. Born out of the experience and deep reflection of our African forebears, it provides *answers to the stirrings of the human spirit* and elaborates on the profundity of the experience of the divine-human encounter based on the resources of Africa's own cultural heritage and insight. It also provides *answers to the ultimate questions* posed by men and women in Africa, *gives meaning and significance to human life*, explains the origin and destiny of human beings, how everything in the world came into being and the relationship that should exist between them. In short, it is Africa's own way of coming to terms with Reality.

An African proverb says: "Wisdom is like a baobab tree, and a single man's hand cannot embrace it." The tolerant attitude of African Traditional Religion towards other approaches to the Divine as well as to other interpretations of the origin and destiny of human beings, bears out the truth of the proverb, that African Traditional Religion is like a single person's hand which cannot embrace the totality of the divine wisdom and essence. And since the divine truth is beyond the reach of a single religious tradition, wisdom recommends an openness to truth which comes from other traditions. "*There are no boundaries or bifurcations in truth*," as an Akan proverb puts it, and since truth is one and has its source in God, it may be found everywhere God chooses to put it, for truth is not restricted to one religious tradition, whether that particular religious tradition lays claim to special revelation or not.

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Such a view of truth and reality accords more with the limitations of the human personality, since as humans we are recipients of divine truth rather than its source; and the religions which lay exclusive claim to truth and engage in fierce evangelistic campaigns and relentless proselytization, tend to give the impression that the source of the truth resides in them.

This attitude about truth explains the acceptance of the truths of other religions which have come as guests, sometimes as "invaders," of the African continent. Contrary to the impression that the spread of other religions in Africa is due to the palpably clear "weakness" of the host religion, it may be affirmed that the ability to accept truth outside of one's own immediate environment and tradition is a sign of strength and maturity rather than their lamentable opposite, for the truth is rarely a possession in the baggage of religious personalities or protagonists which they generously dish out to the benighted ones who are without it, but rather it is a horizon towards which we are all moving. *It may be compared to a river flowing towards the ocean along whose journey tributaries join to enlarge it before it finally reaches its destination.*

From the African experience, "All men are the children of God, none is a child of the earth." Each people is a tributary of God's truth, for God shares his truth liberally with all people, and as the truth we know encounters others, it becomes stronger and deeper as it continues its journey in leading us to God, the source of all truth and our final destination.

The Place of African Traditional Religion Among World Religions

It is important to place African Traditional Religion in its proper place among the religions of the world. Although many books on "world religions" hardly contain a single reference to the religious heritage of Africa, it is pertinent to point out that the religion of Africa does not live in the pages of books on "world religions," rather it *lives in the hearts and lives of African people who practice it*. It is necessary, therefore, to endeavor

to approach it through the inner life of its practitioners, although one cannot completely ignore its externals. But a word of caution needs to be thrown in about the temptation of looking at African Traditional Religion from the side of doctrine rather than from the side of practice, for theory is not the most significant factor about any religion. The importance of practice in African Traditional Religion was underscored by Mbonu Ojike when he wrote:

If religion consists of deifying one character and crusading around the world to make him acceptable to all mankind, then the African has no religion. But if religion means doing, rather than talking, then the African has a religion.¹

The life of the practitioner of African Traditional Religion has always been interpreted by non-practitioners, both outsiders as well as Africans, who have sought to explain the religious life of Africa by the standards of external criteria. African scholars who have written about African Traditional Religion have been non-practitioners, mostly Christian, who have tended to look at it from the perspective of their religious persuasion. This has often led to African Traditional Religion being described as a *praeparatio evangelica*, which implies that the only worth of African Traditional Religion lies in its being a preparation for the coming of the Gospel which is the final revelation of God. And the fact that such an interpretation of African Traditional Religion represents an unwillingness to look at it as a religion in its own right is often overlooked. Related to this tendency is the evaluation of African Traditional Religion as containing the "seeds of the Gospel," without appreciating the fact that it also contains the "fruits of the Gospel."

But it must be pointed out that the practitioner's own view of his religion is important for a wholesome and unjaundiced understanding of African Traditional Religion. The labels which have been applied to it have all been from the observers' point of view, for it is certain that if the practitioner pouring libation at the foot of a tree were asked to explain what

he was doing, he would not say that he was practicing "paganism" or "worshipping nature," as observers are wont to describe such acts.

African Traditional Religion represents the serious effort of the culture of our forebears in which the "spirit of God was an active agent," for we can affirm clearly and unequivocally that God has not been absent from all our serious efforts to make sense of our own life and destiny from the days of our earliest forebears up to our own time. African Traditional Religion, therefore, is one of the ways in which *Africans have experienced God's salvific activity in their history*, which is an *affirmation of God's presence with African people*. This should come as no surprise since God is the God of all humankind and is not so unkind as to withhold his presence from others. God's divine truth and salvation have not been confined to a favored few; on the contrary, God is God because he is accessible to all, and his revelation does not lead to the denial of his presence in certain areas of the world and an affirmation of his presence elsewhere. Patrick Kalilombe wrote:

The African Bible reader will thus not fear to state that the religious systems of his ancestors were not just tolerated by God. They were the results of the efforts of our cultures wherein the spirit of God was an active agent. And therefore, there would be no fear in me to assert this, as long as these religions were the serious searchings of our cultures for the divinely-given means for salvation, put by God in his will for the salvation of all the peoples.²

It is God who saves, not any religious system. The good elements in African Traditional Religion were put there by God; this clearly demonstrates that God has no favorites and that he shares his truth with all, but does not hide it from others to share it only with those whom he favors. *The African religious experience helps to give us a broader and much deeper understanding of God*. It rescues us from the limitations which par-

tial human appropriation of God's activity and revelation tend to place on God.

While placing African Traditional Religion among the religions of the world, and while seeing the religious heritage as the result of God's activity through which God saves his children, it is borne in mind that all human efforts at understanding the activity of God and his self-disclosure are partial, limited, and subject to error and sin. Furthermore, any understanding of God which comes through one religious system must not be confused with the reality of God, for God remains greater than any religious system, or our understanding of him.

The World View

Everything begins with God, and the African world view which explains how everything in the universe came to be makes this belief quite clear. While everything in the universe had a clear beginning, God has no beginning, and the Akan name, *Tetekwaframo*, He who is there now as from ancient times, makes it clear that God has always been in existence and will continue to be. A Pygmy hymn expresses the same faith:

In the beginning was God (Kmvoum),
 Today is God,
 Tomorrow will be God.
 Who can make an image of God?
 He has no body.
 He is as a word which comes out of your mouth.
 That word! It is no more,
 It is past, and still it lives!
 So is God.³

God goes by many names in African languages,⁴ and these names reflect the nature and attributes of God which have arisen from the African ex-

perience of God. God is essentially a spirit and although there are anthropomorphisms in African Traditional Religion, there are no images or physical representations of God. The names and attributes of God are unique and are not accorded to any other spiritual beings. God's name is always in the singular, while the divinities may be given generic names. In the Yoruba language, for example, *orisha* is the generic name for the gods, but Olorun is not an *orisha*, and the distinction between God and the divinities is very clear.

God is the Creator, for according to the African religious heritage, the universe did not come into being on its own volition. In all the creation stories, God is the principal actor. As Mbiti pointed out, "...there is a concentration of names of God describing him (or her, since in many African languages there is no masculine - feminine dichotomy grammatically) as Creator.⁵ Since God is the Creator, everything depends on him, including human beings, and an important theological insight which comes out of the belief in God as Creator is the limitation which characterizes all creatures.

Since *God is the Creator of everything*, it was not necessary for African Traditional Religion to posit a creation which came out of nothing. Whatever exists came into being by God's creative activity. In the Yoruba creation story in which Olodumare entrusted his deputy, Orisha-nla, with the task of making the ground firm, he gave him some loose earth in a snail's shell and a hen and a pigeon which were to spread and scatter the loose earth over the surface of the watery and marshy ground. The soil and the snail's shell as well as the hen and pigeon had already been created by Olodumare in an earlier creation. That Olodumare used an agent to carry out some aspects of creation does not diminish Olodumare's role in creation, for whatever was done by the agent was done at the command or instructions of Olodumare. Moreover the agents have a limitation as the following Yoruba myth shows:

Orisha-nla was assigned another responsibility of giving physical

features to human beings by molding human physical form from the dust of the earth. Orisha-nla's task was to leave the lifeless bodies he had formed in a room and leave the place. Thereafter, Olodumare would come and give breath to the bodies to make them living human beings.

Orisha-nla was envious of the right of Olodumare to be the only giver of life and so he decided to spy on Olodumare to see just what he did to the lifeless bodies to make them living human beings. After completing his task one day, Orisha-nla hid behind the lifeless bodies in the room, but since Olodumare is omniscient, he knew what Orisha-nla had planned and he forestalled him by putting Orisha-nla to sleep and by the time he woke up the bodies had already become human beings. Orisha-nla has since then contented himself with his own allotted part of the work.⁶

The Creator is also the *Sustainer of creation*, and in African Traditional Religion there is no indication or thought that although the universe had a clear beginning it will come to an end. This thought is based on the firm faith that the Creator will not destroy his creation, and that just as a mother will not drop the child on her lap, so will the Creator not drop or destroy the universe which he has created and sustains. Some African proverbs which confirm the Creator's sustaining activity in relation to the universe are: "If God removes his hand the world will end" (Ibo);⁷ and the Bambuti of the Congo affirm that, "If God should die, the world would also collapse."⁸

The belief in an unending universe is not based on mere speculation, for it is concretely reflected in the life and rituals of African societies. As Mbiti pointed out:

The idea that the *universe is unending* is also depicted in rituals and art forms by African peoples. For example, the drawing of

snakes with their tails in their mouths symbolize the unending universe. There are many rituals all over Africa that celebrate and re-enact the rhythm of birth — death — and rebirth. Thus in African views, the universe is *permanent, unending, and eternal*. God sustains it. There is no reason to imagine that it will ever end, let alone how such an ending would come about as long as the universe is sustained by God who Himself is everlasting.⁹

God and Man

According to the insights of African Traditional Religion, God created man and placed him at the center of the cosmos, not as its master but as its caretaker, in a dependent role; and man is expected to remain in harmony with the universe since he is part of it.

In the relationship between God and man, there are innumerable myths which explain the position, status and being of God as being outside and beyond the universe. These myths are not mere fables which have no bearing on the truth of human life; on the contrary, as Diana Eck put it:

...myth expresses profound multi-dimensional truth. Far from being those outworn stories that are inherently false, myths are...those timeless stories that are inherently true. They are true not because they “happened” once, but because they go on happening everyday. They shape the ways in which we think about our place in the cosmos and our relation to the Divine. To come to know a people — and that includes ourselves as well — is to know their stories, especially their true “stories” or myths.¹⁰

The “withdrawal” of God from the world or the “separation” between God and people, as many African myths¹¹ narrate it, do not tell of a physical separation of God from man. Such stories allude to the otherness of God,

for God is above his creation but is at the same time involved in his creation by upholding and sustaining the universe, creating the children that are born, and is involved in the daily lives of people. The involvement of God in the world is further borne out by the personal names of African people, such as *Olusanya* (Yoruba) — God compensates for suffering; *Chukumeka* (Ibo) — God has done much; *Senagbe* (Ve) — God is the Giver of Life; *Nyamekya* (Akan) — God's gift — a name given to the first child born to a childless couple.

Quite apart from alluding to the otherness of God, these myths also make it quite clear that religion is essentially communication. As Zahan wrote:

All African ritual practices concerning rainbow, clouds and rain are based on the "distance" which separates the sky and the earth. Similarly, all relations between the Creator and created are acknowledged. Thus, far from representing an action which unfolds two eras, paradisiac life and fall, these themes contain the element which establishes the possibility of religion as communication: distance. In other words, in order to understand the significance of these mythical accounts it is necessary to reverse what they seem to suggest at first glance. The period of man's "religiousness" is not at all the "paradisiac" era when God lived in the 'village' of man, but the period following, when God lost his earthly and human qualities in order to live separately from mankind.¹²

But there is the direct relationship between God and man that we find in the concept of man. In the Yoruba creation story, to which we have already referred, Olodumare puts his breath into the lifeless bodies which Orisha-nla had formed to make them living human beings. There is, therefore, a direct relationship between Olodumare and people, for it is Olodumare who gives life to people.

Similarly, the Akan concept of man¹³ is that *every human being has an okra*, the part of *Onyame* (God) in each person which makes a person a

living human being. The *okra* links every person directly to God and it has a pre-earthly existence as well as a post-earthly existence. A person is alive when the *okra* is in the body, but dies when the *okra* departs from the body to go back to its source. Death is therefore a return and not an annihilation, and the Akan underscore this by saying "*Onyame bewu na mawu*" — I shall only die if God dies. This is a reference to the *okra*, the undying part of man; and the idea is that since God does not die and since the *okra* is part of God, the *okra* therefore does not die. The Akan also refer to the same idea in the maxim "*Oniṣa wu a, na onwui*", when a person dies and disintegrates, but the most primary and fundamental part of man, the divine spark in each person, survives death and is not subject to the destructive forces of death.

The *okra* is distinct from the body and it is that which gives life to the body; without its presence the body is lifeless. This idea clearly explains the meaning which African Traditional Religion gives to life. Life is constant and is not the opposite of death, since the *okra* survives death and continues to live. This is the basis of the relationship between Africans and their ancestors, for there would be no relationship between the ancestors and their relatives if they did not continue to live after their deaths; and there is such a holistic view of life that death does not destroy that wholeness. The dead do not just fade into nothingness; on the contrary, they retain their identity and continue to hold the social, political and religious status which they held while they lived in this world. As this writer pointed out:

This firm belief in the reality of life after death represents a fundamental antidote to the threat of human extinction and the scare of nothingness, which have jointly "conspired" to render life utterly meaningless to many a modern person. In the African understanding, death does not rob life of meaning, on the contrary, it gives greater depth of meaning to life by prolonging it on the spiritual plane.¹⁴

The ancestors live because they return to *Onyame* after death; they would not live if *Onyame* did not live. They do not have an independent existence and they remain dependent on God for their existence, and in fact the ancestors help to confirm belief in the living God. That is why there is no denial of the fact the ancestors help to confirm belief in the living God. That is why there is no denial of the fact that the dead continue to live, and Mbiti's term, "the living-dead," vividly conveys the idea that life continues after death. There is an indissoluble union between the living and their dead relatives. The dead continue to be members of their families, communities and societies, and to interact with their living relatives. Life is not restricted to bodily or corporal existence, for that would be a narrow and fragmented view of life. The reality of life is its wholeness and only a denial of this wholeness could lead to the consignment of the dead to an uncertain place and their being assigned an inactive role in the society. Such a view was expressed by LaRoche when he wrote:

The souls of the departed, once separated from the body have accomplished their earthly destiny, and normally must remain in the place God assigns them according to their deserts. They are wholly disassociated from the living and have no means of remaining in habitual relationship with them. Deprived of the body, the departed soul is also deprived of its rational means of knowledge, that is to say, the senses. It is no longer possible for it to know by its own means what takes place in the world of the living. According to the divinely established order the soul must be united with the body to act upon exterior things. Once deprived of its natural instrument, the body cannot reach out to material places and objects; all action in the sensible world is impossible for it.¹⁵

Since death does not terminate life, the departed have a place of

residence. This is *asamando* — dwelling place of the dead among the Akan; *Unmbwardo* — God's House among the Konkomba of Northern Ghana, or *Ngewo's Bosom* among the Mende of Sierra Leone. The location of the departed is known as well as their identity and between the world of the living and the world of the dead there is constant traffic. The Ghanaian painter, Kobina Buckner, expressed this idea in his painting, *Nsamankwam*, in which he depicted people with loads on their heads, some going and others coming, as if they were on a journey.

Religion and Community

To be human means to belong to a family or community. When the Akan say: "*Onipa fi soro besi a, obesi nnipa krom*" — when a man descends from heaven he enters a town inhabited by human beings — they imply that society is the context of human existence. One's humanity is defined by a sense of belonging, for it is not enough to be a human being unless one shows a sense of, and participation in, community.¹⁶ Religion has a communal orientation which sharply "contrasts with the divisive thrust of the imported religions and cultures, and with the egoistic and materialistic ethics they sustain."¹⁷ Religion is an affair of the community of which the individual is a part, and its moral prescriptions are for the betterment of the whole community. *Religion itself is one with life.* It is not an isolated aspect of the community's life, but permeates every facet of the community's existence.

Undergirding the community is the principle of interdependence, since the human individual is not self-sufficient to the extent that all his needs could be met single-handedly. One needs the assistance of others in order to satisfy one's basic needs. And furthermore, one also needs the assistance of others in order to realize one's full personality.

It is clear, therefore, that cooperation and mutual help are essential prerequisites for individual welfare. Moreover they make possible the achieve-

ment of undertakings which would otherwise be difficult to accomplish. The Ibo underscore the importance of cooperation by saying that "anyone who thinks that to go in pairs (cooperating with each other) is not useful, let him hold his upper lip and see whether the lower one can speak alone."

Community with Nature

The sense of community is not restricted to relations with human beings alone. *There is community with nature since man is part of nature and is expected to cooperate with it.* This sense of community with nature is often expressed in terms of identity and kinship, friendliness and respect. But use is made of nature despite the reverence and respect shown to it.

The need to remain *in harmony* with nature often takes a religious form when features of the environment are personified. This is a way of remaining on harmonious terms with nature instead of living in isolation from it or treating nature as a mere object of exploitation for the satisfaction of human needs. Remaining in harmony with nature also means preserving nature, hence the concept of taboo, as a ritual prohibition designed to protect nature, is found in African societies. When fishermen do not go fishing on Tuesdays in Ghana because it is the day of rest for the god of the sea, a day on which he must not be disturbed, it may be seen as giving the sea a day of rest to replenish itself.

Furthermore:

It is demanded by tradition that fishermen must "sacrifice" some of their catch to Bosompo, the god of the sea, after each fishing expedition before returning home. The fish that are sacrificed must be live fish, not dead ones, and an Akan maxim which supports this ritual says: "*Bosompo ankame wo nam a, wo nso wonkame no abia*" — "if the god of the sea does not begrudge him of your catch." The fish which fisherman "sacrifice" to Bosompo will continue to breed and there will continue to be

fish in the ocean if this ritual is observed. It is therefore taboo for a fisherman not to make a "sacrifice"...¹⁸

The ritual prohibition not to bring back home the whole catch, but to leave some in the sea, expresses man's responsibility in preserving this environment. Other taboos with regard to other features of the environment express the same objective,¹⁹ for it is firmly assumed that the well-being and wholeness of human life depend on cosmic harmony being maintained. The contribution of African Tradition Religion to the ongoing world-wide concern with the environment cannot be over-emphasized. The loss to the world of ideas because of the description of many African rituals as the "*worship of nature*," which did not merit the serious consideration of scholars, is indeed lamentable. Furthermore, in the African perspective the community and its members as well as its environment constitute a complex whole, and there is a moral interrelationship between social relations and natural events.²⁰

An Enduring Heritage

African Traditional Religion, like all religions, has had to accommodate itself to the processes of social change and the effects of modernization. It would not be a human institution if it were not subject to change, and the description "traditional" that has been used in this paper does not imply the idea of ATR/changelessness. It is only to indicate that it is undergirded by a fundamentally *indigenous African value system* and has its own pattern with its own historical inheritance. Moreover,

...tradition is above all the collective experience of the community. It constitutes the totality of all that successive generations have accumulated since the dawn of time, both in spiritual and practical life. It is the sum total of the wisdom held by a society at a given moment of its existence. If we admit that the ancestors do not constitute a closed community, but that

they are seen as an assembly which is perpetually increasing and incessantly evolving, then we must recognize that tradition too is not static.²¹

As the source of life and meaning, African Traditional Religion, as the most vital institution in the past, has continued to manifest its vitality in old and new forms today. The new forms are rooted in the traditional religious customs and they manifest themselves in the preoccupations and deep concerns that are of characteristically African provenance. *The religious heritage represents a truth which offers abiding spiritual values which are essential for life and are not changed by man's increasing control of his environment.* Man remains a creature created by God, "the clearest and most concrete spiritual reality,"²² and who is dependent on the spiritual powers, especially God, in order to be able to cope with life in this world. As Busia pointed out in a discussion of the religious heritage of Africa:

A consciousness of the inadequacy and incompleteness of man and of his ability to cope successfully with life without supernatural aid stands out prominently in prayer and ritual. This may be seized upon as proof of the primitiveness of the African, since there are those who contend that the difference between primitive man and civilized man is that the latter, through the competence which his technology gives him, is able to exercise control over his natural environment, and is therefore much more independent. It is true that technology increases man's control over nature, and gives him greater independence. But there is much more to the consciousness of inadequacy and dependence manifest in African religious rites; it implies a philosophy of man which sees him as a created being dependent on his Creator. The recognition is essential to the religious life and is not altered by man's increasing technological competence.²³

The vitality of the new religious movements in Africa (as is seen, for

example, in the indigenous churches, more popularly called independent churches), is due largely to their being rooted in the traditional religious customs, and are giving Christianity an African expression. The result is a Christianity, originally presented as a religion of mental culture, being transformed into a religion of being and doing. Islam's "success" is also due to its meeting the enduring needs of African Traditional Religion.

African Traditional Religion is not confined to the African continent, but is firmly and visibly present in the Americas. This came about through the involuntary emigration of millions of Africa's sons and daughters to the New World. These ancestors were sustained, in utterly new and inhuman circumstances as slaves in foreign lands, by their own religious and cultural heritage, for quite some time before their integration into the new societies which were to emerge in the New World. As Barrett wrote:

...the sons and daughters of Africa did not come to the New World from a cultural wilderness but from a land with well-established cultural institutions, and it was the transplantation of these culture dynamics in the New World that enabled the Africans in the diaspora to preserve their sense of humanity in the face of the devastating assault of chattel slavery.²⁴

After their integration, their religious and cultural heritage continued to be an active instrument of culture formation and this vital instrument has produced its effects on every aspect of the civilization which has emerged in the New World.

The *religious heritage of Africa* shares the same concerns with other religions of humankind, *providing a source for humankind's search for knowledge of God, spiritual existence, good and evil, and humanity.*²⁵ For generations of women and men in Africa, the religious heritage has been and continues to be their audience with God and their fellowship, not only with their fellow human beings, but also with the entire cosmos.

Notes

1. Ojike, Mbonu. *My Africa*. New York: John Day, 1946 p. 181.
2. "The Salvific Value of African Religions." *AFER*. Vol. 21, No. 3, June 1979 p. 156.
3. Young, T. C. *Contemporary Ancestors*. London, 1940 p. 140 as quoted by Mbiti, J.S. *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinemann, 1969 pp. 34-35.
4. For a fuller discussion of the names for God and their meanings in Africa, see Mbiti, J.S. *Concepts of God in Africa*. London, 1970.
5. "Creation in African Religion". *Christian Jewish Relations*. Vol. 20, No. 1, Spring 1987, p. 32.
6. See, Idowu, E. B. *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*. London: Longmans 1962, p. 19.
7. Metuh, Emefie Ikenga. *African Religions in Western Conceptual Schemes: The Problem of Interpretation*. Bodija, 1985, p. 25.
8. Mbiti, 1969, p. 42.
9. "Africa Cosmology". in *FESTAC '77*. (Africa Journal limited, London and International Festival Committee, Lagos) 1977, p. 44.
10. "The Perspective of Pluralism in Theological Education" in Amirtham, Sam and Ariarajah, S. Wesley (eds.), *Ministerial Formation in a Multi-Faith Milieu*. Geneva, 1986, p. 60.
11. For accounts of African myths about the separation between God and man, see Parrinder, G. *African Mythology*. London: Hamlyn 1967, especially pp. 34-38.
12. Azhan, Dominique. *The Religion, Spirituality and Thought of Traditional Africa*. Chicago, 1970, p. 16.
13. For a fuller discussion of African concepts of man see Opoku, Kofi Asare. *West African Traditional Religion*. Singapore: FEP 1978. pp. 91-103.

14. "Death and Immortality in the African Religious Heritage," In *Death and Immortality in the Religions of the World*. Paul and Linda Badham (eds.) New York: Paragon House, 1987, p. 13.

15. "Some Traditional Religions and Christianity" in *Christianity in Tropical Africa*. Baeta, C. G. (ed.) London: Oxford University Press, 1968, p. 299.

16. Muzorewa, G.H. *The Origins and Development of African Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis 1987, p. 17.

17. See, "The Place of African Traditional Religions in Contemporary Africa." Uesse, Evan M. in *IRF Newsletter*, Vol. II, No. 6, November-December 1987, p. 8.

18. "Ancient Wisdom in the African Heritage." Opoku, Kofi Asare. *Christian Jewish Relations* Vol. 20, No. 1, Spring, 1987. p. 36.

19. For further reading, see Opoku, Kofi Asare. "Traditional Approaches to the Preservation of the Environment." Unpublished Paper 1982. Institute of African Studies, Legon, Ghana.

20. Appiah-Kubi, K. "Christology" in *A Reader in African Christian Theology*. (ed.) Parratt, John. London: SPGK 1987. p. 76.

21. Zahan *op. cit.* pp. 4-49.

22. Mbiti, J.S. *Prayers of African Religion*. Maryknoll: Orbis 1975, p. 4.

23. Busia, K.A. "The Religious Heritage" in *The African Consciousness: Continuity and Change in Africa*. New York: American African Affairs Association 1968, p. 7.

24. Barrett, Leonard E., *Soul-Force: African Heritage in Afro-American Religion*. Garden City: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974, p. 204.

25. Muzorewa *op. cit.* p. 20.