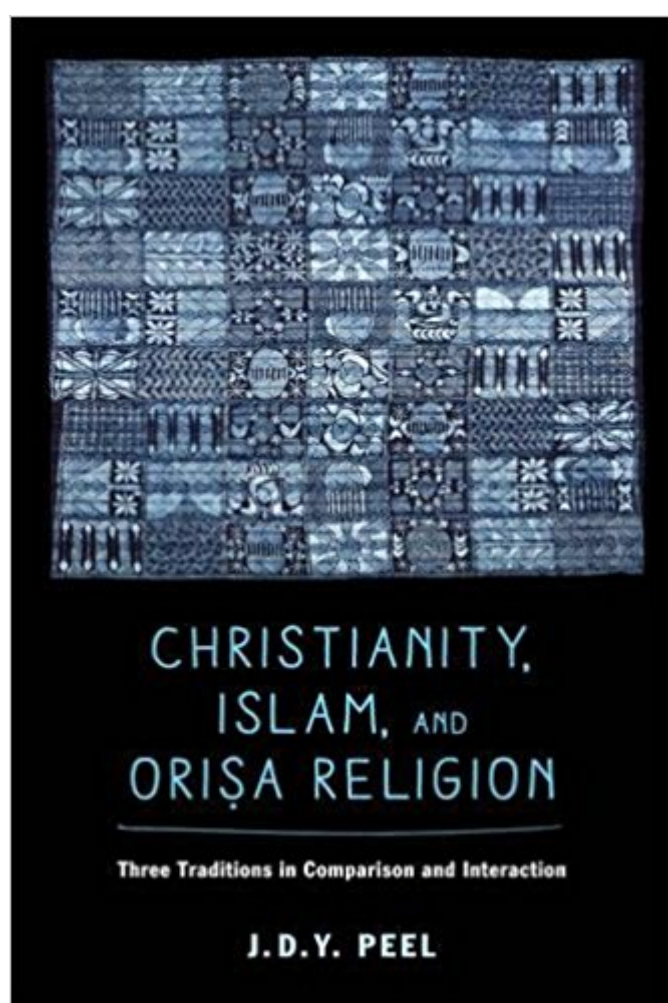


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Christianity, Islam, And Orisa-Religion: Three Traditions In Comparison And Interaction (The Anthropology Of Christianity)



Synopsis

A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's open access publishing program for monographs. Visit www.luminosoa.org to learn more. The Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria are exceptional for the copresence among them of three religious traditions: Islam, Christianity, and the indigenous orisa religion. In this comparative study, at once historical and anthropological, Peel explores the intertwined character of the three religions and the dense imbrication of religion in all aspects of Yoruba history up to the present. For over 400 years, the Yoruba have straddled two geocultural spheres: one reaching north over the Sahara to the world of Islam, the other linking them to the Euro-American world via the Atlantic. These two external spheres were the source of contrasting cultural influences, notably those emanating from the world religions. However, the Yoruba not only imported Islam and Christianity but also exported their own orisa religion to the New World. Before the voluntary modern diaspora that has brought many Yoruba to Europe and the Americas, tens of thousands were sold as slaves in the New World, bringing with them the worship of the orisa. Peel offers deep insight into important contemporary themes such as religious conversion, new religious movements, relations between world religions, the conditions of religious violence, the transnational flows of contemporary religion, and the interplay between tradition and the demands of an ever-changing present. In the process, he makes a major theoretical contribution to the anthropology of world religions.

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Customer Reviews

"Clearly written, cogently argued, and offering deep insights into the interwoven trajectories of three different religious traditions in one society, this book undoubtedly constitutes required reading for scholars and students of religion, both in Africa and beyond." (Anthropos Reviews)

"The book demonstrates a rigorous analysis of the social character of religion in light of historical changes and enduring cultural practices. Focusing on the Yoruba of Nigeria and in the Diaspora, Peel examines the role of culture-specific factors in the transmission and reception of Christianity and Islam in Nigeria, setting out a convincing case for how the cultural past shapes and is shaped by contexts and circumstances. The book uses comparative analysis to engage the 'doctrinal' system of religion in relation to its concrete and dynamic expression, providing guidelines for a wider application for that approach to the study of religion in other parts of the world. The essays are lucid and probing, a work of real skill and erudition, and a critical standard of scholarship." "Lamin Sanneh, D. Willis James Professor of World Christianity and Professor of History at Yale Divinity School "This superb collection of essays brings together John Peel's fifty years of research and reflection on religion in Yorubaland, and then goes further, pushing into previously untrodden ground. It presents a comprehensive view of some of the biggest issues, and yet is informed and illustrated throughout with meticulously researched empirical detail. It is thus able convincingly to counter a number of prevailing misconceptions and generalisations about Yoruba culture and history. It is a revivifying shot in the arm for comparatism, and an invitation to think afresh about the relations between Christianity, Islam and orisa-religion both within Nigeria and in the wider world." "Karin Barber, Professor of African Cultural Anthropology at the University of Birmingham "Three great religious traditions are brilliantly united in path-breaking analyses that are cogently grounded in the long history and diverse experiences of the Yoruba, including current manifestations. Powerfully communicating an unparalleled understanding of religious conversion, education, progress, modernity, new movements in Christianity and Islam, religious co-existence and violence, this great book restores value and merit both to comparative methodology and the historical approach, while uncompromisingly affirming the centrality of religion to all aspects of society." "Toyin Falola, President of the African Studies Association at the University of Texas at Austin and editor of Christianity and Social Change in Africa: Essays in Honor of J.D.Y. Peel

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