Multiple Religious Belonging and Identity in Contemporary Nigeria: Methodological Reflections for World Christianity

Corey L. Williams

1 Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, almost 75 percent of Nigeria's population primarily identified with African Indigenous Religions (AIR).[1] According to the statistics presented by Todd Johnson and Brian Grim in the World Religion Database, Islam garnered around 25 percent of the population, while Christianity accounted for only 1 percent (Johnson and Grim 2019). In the last century, Nigeria has become far more multireligious, yet the existent literature is largely silent in terms of detailed and comprehensive accounts of contemporary interreligious encounters.[2] While research on religious life in Nigeria is teeming with broad historical accounts, or studies of politics, violence, and corruption, in many cases, little is known about the intricacies of living, identifying, and belonging within contemporary multireligious contexts, and to what extent religious groups, individuals, and their traditions intersect and are

---

1 While there are numerous alternatives for referring to the indigenous religions of Africa, I opt to use the term 'African Indigenous Religions', which I consider to have four primary benefits: (1) it insists parity with other religions by being a proper noun; (2) it is plural which encourages a heterogeneous understanding; (3) it is generally considered innocuous, whereas terms such as 'African Traditional Religion' have merely shifted crude tropes like paganism, primitivism, and primal to the term 'traditional'; and (4) it highlights that these religions are indigenous to Africa—as in these are religions that originated in Africa. While Christianity and Islam have certainly 'indigenized' in Africa, these religions did not originate on the African continent. It is recognized that these benefits do not eliminate all of the problems associated with the term. For more on this discussion, see Cox (2016: 9–74).

2 'Interreligious encounter' is used here as a broad term to encapsulate the diverse ways that religious traditions, individuals, and groups meet or confront each other. As Soares has noted, "The roots of the English word 'encounter' can be traced to the Latin *contra*, meaning 'against', and to the Old French *encontrer*, which refers to the meeting of rivals. In current usage, 'encounter' can mean 'an unexpected or casual meeting' or 'a confrontation or difficult struggle'" (2006: 3).

influenced by each other. As Benjamin F. Soares has noted on a broader scale in the seminal volume, *Muslim-Christian Encounters in Africa*:

> … their interactions in Africa are still not properly understood … interactions between Muslims and Christians, in Africa or elsewhere, cannot be understood as simply existing at a point on a one-dimensional continuum that runs from coexistence to conflict. There is a vast array of possibilities between the idealized notion of the peaceful coexistence of Muslims and Christians and Bernard Lewis's notion of the "clash of civilizations" that Samuel Huntington has popularized and made to seem inevitable.
>
> Soares 2006: 2

A later account by Soares states it is only recently that "among historians, social scientists and scholars of religion, there has been increased recognition of the importance of studying Islam and Christianity in Africa not separately but together, as lived religions in dynamic interaction over time" (2016: 673). The now completed European Research Council (ERC) project led by Insa Nolte at the University of Birmingham, titled 'Knowing Each Other: Everyday Religious Encounters, Social Identities and Tolerance in Southwest Nigeria', noticed a similar discrepancy. As noted on the project website:

> Since the end of the Cold War, and especially since September 2001, most research exploring religious difference, and especially Muslim-Christian relations, has focused on politics and the public sphere. At the same time, the majority of detailed work on the role of religion for everyday life focuses on the practices and transformations within Muslim or Christian societies. As a result, we know very little about the practices that structure the fine grain of everyday life in religiously mixed societies.
>
> Knowing Each Other Project

In the case of Nigeria, this "fine grain" and "vast array of possibilities" between Christians, Muslims, and practitioners of AIR has hardly been explored. As the ERC project correctly points out, religious communities are often approached discretely and treated by academic specialists in isolation from one another. Marloes Janson and Birgit Meyer add to this by noting: "In research on religion in Africa, the study of both Christianity and Islam is thriving. Alas, these fields exist more or less independently from each other" (Janson and

Meyer 2016: 615).[3] Even less common are studies that research the encounter of Christianity, Islam, *and* AIR simultaneously.[4] While fields based on the study of single traditions can bring attention to polycentrism, pluriformity, and transnational connections within individual traditions, this independent approach lacks a dynamic understanding of what Janson and Meyer term a "'religious field' in which several religious groups coexist in ever shifting dynamics of similarity and difference" (Janson and Meyer 2016). Within studies of interreligious encounter in Nigeria, approaching the 'religious field' in this way is critical because the way lived religious experience cuts across multiple religious traditions. Thus, in order to more fully understand everyday lived religion, the analytical frame needs to be expanded to include multiple religions.

This chapter focuses on interreligious encounter in contemporary Nigeria with this notion of religious field at the forefront. In relation to the broader aim of the volume, this encounter is explored in the hopes of contributing specifically to the study of World Christianity, although the contribution is also applicable to Anthropology, African Studies, and Religious Studies. The bulk of the chapter is split into two sections. The first section utilizes two case examples from the Yorùbá region of Nigeria. Both case examples are based on participant observation and in-depth, longitudinal interviews that explore how two individuals, Ṣadé and Agbo, negotiate multiple religious belongings and identities within the multireligious milieu of contemporary Nigeria. The final section of the chapter shifts the discussion to case reflections, paying close attention to the methodological lessons related to World Christianity that can be gleaned from these cases.

---

3   There are undoubtedly exceptions to this general observation: Boer (2003–2009); Frederiks (2010); Goodwin (2009); Janson and Akinleye (2015); Larkin and Meyer (2006); Mustapha and Ehrhardt (2018); Nwanaju (2008); Obadare (2016); Ojo (2007); Ojo and Lateju (2010); Rasmussen (1993; 2007); Sanneh (1996); Sarbah (2016: 366–385); Soares (2006); Sodiq (2009); and Vinson (2020). There are also the twin studies of Clarke (1982) and Clarke (1986). Clarke's analytical frame largely keeps Christianity and Islam separate, but it does represent an impressive attempt by a scholar engaging multiple traditions.

4   Again, there are exceptions to this general observation with anthropological and historical studies such as Peel (2000; 2016); Nolte, Ogen, and Jones (2017) and Vaughan (2016). Within ecumenical studies and interreligious dialogue, examples include Conteh (2009) and Sarbah (2010).

2   Setting the Scene: Ogbómòsó, Yorùbáland

Betraying the common stereotype that Muslims in Nigeria live in the north and Christians live in the south, Yorùbáland—the cultural region of the Yorùbá people—is a microcosm of the country's multireligious composition.[5] Situated in the southwest of Nigeria, Christianity, Islam, and AIR all have historic footholds among the Yorùbá. This is particularly the case for the city of Ogbómòsó, the location where I conducted the fieldwork for this chapter. Just to the southeast of Ogbómòsó sits the town of Ifè, the cradle of Yorùbá civilization and spiritual centre of Yorùbá AIR. To the west is the country of Benin, one of the very few countries in the world that continues to primarily identify with AIR; an influence that spills over the border into nearby places like Ogbómòsó. Just a short way up the road to the northeast sits the city of Ilorin, the former edge of the Sokoto Caliphate, a once expansive and powerful Islamic empire. While the power of the Caliphate drastically waned with British colonization in the twentieth century, Islam became thoroughly integrated in its territories. Finally, in the south, all the way from the coast to Ogbómòsó's doorstep, the impact of foreign and indigenous mission efforts is apparent, with some of the largest and most influential Christian groups in Africa dotting the landscape. Many refer to this area as the future Jerusalem and there are modern day prophecies about this area being the new cradle of Christendom. Critically, this triple religious heritage is not only historic. Christianity, Islam, and AIR all continue to play prominent roles in contemporary Ogbómòsó, making it an optimal context to research interreligious encounters.

3   Setting the Scene: Egúngún

As in other regions of the world, there are certain spaces and times in contemporary Yorùbáland where the multiplicity and complexity of religious belongings and identifies are impossible to avoid. These include pilgrimage sites, healing shrines, special events (e.g. revivals, crusades), and life-cycle rituals (e.g. wakes, funerals, weddings). It is not uncommon to come across those who identify as Muslims at Pentecostal revivals, Christians at Muslim funerals, and AIR at Catholic shrines. The same boundary crossing is also common during religious festivals and holidays, which are an important and regular part of community life in Yorùbáland. From Easter to Christmas, *Eid al-Fitr* to *Eid-al-Adha*,

---

5   Despite the overall multireligious composition of Nigeria, there are certainly sub-regions where interreligious encounters are less common due to the dominant influence of one tradition.

and the indigenous festivals of *Ole*, *Ilus*, and *Oro*, such events offer participants opportunities to solidify social and religious bonds, while also commemorating, celebrating, and reenacting important rituals and historic moments.

One of the most popular and well-attended festivals in the country is known as Egúngún. The term, Egúngún, is a plural Yorùbá word meaning 'ancestral spirits masquerading' (Falola and Genova 2009: 112–113). While the content and purpose of each festival varies and is dependent on evolving local distinctions, a central unifying theme and practice are the ritual Egúngún masquerade performances dedicated to ancestor veneration.[6] As Rosalind I.J. Hackett comments in *Art and Religion in Africa*, "the most dramatic representation of Yorùbá beliefs concerning the afterlife is found in the form of Egúngún masqueraders. Egúngún masks are considered to be representations of ancestral spirits" (1998: 181). At the same time, Egúngún festivals are also corporate events that provide a political platform, entertainment, and communal bonding opportunities, with varying degrees of religious significance for each individual. Indeed, much has been written on the complex historical-political (Drewal 1992; Kerr 1995; Bascom 1993; Olajubu and Ojo 1977: 253–75; Adedeji 1972: 254–276; Na'Allah 1996: 59–68; Johnson 2010: 29ff; Hart 1993: 136–146; Bentor 1994: 323–338), artistic (Bell 2010: 19ff; Adedeji 1969: 60–63; Houlberg 1978: 20–27; Schiltz 1978: 48–55; Pemberton III 1978: 40–47; Wolff 1982: 66–70; Cordwell 1983: 56–59; Rea 2008: 10–25), and touristic components of Egúngún (Oxford Business Group 2010: 243ff; Makinde 2011).

While Egúngún's origins are linked to AIR, the contemporary festivals are known for their multireligious participation. In fact, a majority of participants are those who identify on surveys as either Christian or Muslim. Intrigued by this participation and predicting that I would be able to explore cases in which individuals had multiple religious belongings and identities, I started attending Egúngún festivals in different parts of Nigeria. This led me to cities like Ogbómòsó, where I attended the annual festival from 2010–2013 and conducted participant observation and in-depth, longitudinal interviews with twelve interlocutors who claimed to have negotiated belonging and/or identifying with multiple religious traditions. In the following section, I highlight two of those cases (Ṣadé and Agbo).[7]

---

6 Egúngún typically takes place as an annual festival, but it can also occur at funerals throughout the year.

7 While all twelve cases would have been suitable, I include only these two due to space constraints. The formal interviews with Ṣadé were conducted in 2011 (21 September; 14 November), 2012 (10 July), and 2013 (30 January). The formal interviews with Agbo were conducted in 2011 (23 August; 8 December), 2012 (12 July), and 2013 (15 February).

4   Case One: Ṣadé

Ṣadé is a quiet mother of three in her early thirties whom I met during the 2011 Ogbómòsó Egúngún festival. She was born in Ogbómòsó and has lived there her entire life. At the time, I lived nearby Ṣadé and her family and we all ended up spending a lot of time together socializing and attending religious events. According to Ṣadé, her religious upbringing in Ogbómòsó was similar to many other families in the area:

> We were a very religious family. We could be at our [Baptist] church three or more times in a week … in Nigeria we like to say that we are the most religious in the world. I think this may be true. We have churches on every street you see. Everyone is religious that you meet … we were also religious in the home. My father would lead us in [Bible] study and we could sing songs in the night. Even in the morning we had to say prayers together, my brother and sisters … we could not leave until we said our prayers … all families would go to church … there were many Muslims and some Traditional[ists] too. Everyone had religion and practiced freely.

Beyond the Baptist church they attended, her family was also involved in activities related to AIR. While many in their family and neighborhood were aware, they kept this secret from most in their Baptist church. Ṣadé claimed this was because their pastor and a majority of the people who attended the church looked down upon most participation in AIR. It was viewed with suspicion and was believed to be antithetical to Christianity. For Ṣadé, instead of being burdensome or confusing, she enjoyed the family secret and was fond of going to church and AIR sites and events:

> My parents would tell us [siblings] to fib to our friends about our whereabouts. We would say we'd gone away to see some friends or family, but we were really visiting some shrine, you see? … I liked this. We would go to interesting places and meet interesting people. It felt like we were doing something wrong, okay, not in a bad way, just breaking some rule … the Traditional ceremonies were not fun like church, okay, not like the music and dancing … but the [indigenous] festivals I liked very much. We could run about and eat sweeties and have fizzy drinks … it was even better than church.

Festivals like the Egúngún were important in Ṣadé's family. While the pastor and members of the church were generally opposed to involvement in AIR,

attending Egúngún was allowed because most church members viewed it as a community event. Thus, her family and many other members in the church attended openly. However, Ṣadé noted that other Baptist pastors and churches disagreed and that some even threatened to revoke membership if they attended Egúngún:

> This has become a major problem for the Baptists. You know many Baptist pastors they tell their members that if they go to Egúngún, uh huh, they can no longer be a member at their church. Some pastors go to Egúngún to try to catch their members in the act … we did not have this, so many people [from our Baptist church] would go to Egúngún. This was no problem, not like we have today.

When Ṣadé was around fifteen years of age, she recalls experiencing a dilemma regarding her religiosity. She questioned whether or not it made sense to consider herself Baptist and participate in AIR. This dilemma was particularly brought about by a sermon at her church:

> I can still remember this sermon, it was from the book of, eh, Revelation … now, the pastor said you must be either in or out of the church. There is no in between. He said God does not allow the lukewarm to enter the kingdom of God … I started to think, huh, is this me? Am I not fully one or the other … my parents calmed me down after. They said slow down now, this is not you … okay, I said, and I went on and believed again that I was okay.

As Ṣadé turned eighteen a few years later, she experienced a major transition in her religious life. A man named Kehinde courted her for marriage. Kehinde was a Muslim and when they were married, Ṣadé was no longer able to go to church. While she was neither required to convert to Islam, nor give up her Christian identity, Kehinde made it clear that any and all Christian practices were to be conducted within the confines of their home. As Ṣadé recalled:

> My husband is a gentle and kind man. He did not force me to get rid of my faith when we were married. Many women must give up their faith when married, this was not me … my faith in Jesus was too strong and I married a kind man, this was good … I was taught to pray as a Muslim, but remained as a Christian, you see? I have always been Christian, also in the difficult times. I cannot give up my faith.

While Ṣadé claims to have never given up her Christian identity, upon being married her public belonging to Christianity ceased. She was encouraged by her husband to start attending *Jumu'ah*. Despite never being forced to attend, this encouragement from Kehinde combined with social pressure from his family made her feel like she did not have a choice. She attended sometimes, but when she prayed she claims she would "think only about Jesus". As Ṣadé described:

> It was not so difficult. The mosque became my new church. I could go and make new friends. Everyone was so friendly to me. They were excited that I had become Muslim … I did not tell them the truth. I would pray and think only about Jesus. This was not a big sin in Islam, to think about Jesus, okay, I tell you I would pray to Jesus as my savior, as God … Muslims do not agree with this.

Over a period of several years, Ṣadé claimed she "became also a Muslim". According to her, this meant that she kept her Christian identity, while also identifying as Muslim. She was careful not to describe this as a conversion. As she understands it, a conversion would mean repenting and leaving behind Christianity. In Ṣadé's own words:

> I would not say I converted to Islam. Eh, I did not leave Christianity; I did not have to repent of anything. I became also a Muslim. That's it. Kehinde, my husband, also knew this. This was no secret to him … the others I did not tell … when I say the *shahādah*, you know this is our faith confession, uh huh, okay I still believe in Jesus as God. I can pray to Jesus as we say, as *Allah*, this is just God. This is no problem for me.

When I asked Ṣadé about Jesus' roles in the Bible versus the Qur'an, she was quick to respond:

> No contradiction. No problem … these are holy texts and they point us to God, yes? I do not argue with what is said. Sometimes information is not shared between them, okay, like two different stories. So Jesus in the Qur'an looks maybe conflicting in a Bible … this is not understood by many people, so they think there is so many problems. These violences between, eh, Muslims and Christians, this is nonsense. We have no reason to fight, to kill each other.

As for Ṣadé's participation in AIR, this was allowed to continue. Her husband, Kehinde, came from a family who were involved occasionally in AIR activities.

They would attend some festival events and consult with diviners intermittently. Thus, while her public Christian identity was largely suppressed, Ṣadé was able to continue practicing at AIR sites without hindrance. According to Ṣadé, the difference is that AIR do not pose a threat to Islam:

> I can be a Traditionalist and a Muslim, or a Christian. This is no problem in Yorùbáland … we are able to cope with our Yorùbá traditions and these other religions … the Yorùbá religion, people see this as shrinking, it's getting smaller … though many people still are Traditionalists, yes, okay, they are, they do so as Muslims and Christians. This is the problem. Christianity can be seen as a threat to Islam. Christians will try to convert Muslims … Traditionalists do not have this.

After the Egúngún festival in August 2012, Ṣadé and I met together to discuss her current religious life. In particular, I was curious to learn how she identified and what groups she considered herself to currently belong to. She responded as follows:

> Well, you know my story … I am part of everything here in Ogbómòsó. I see myself being a follower of God more than anything. God can come in many different ways and this is why we have these, all of these religions … I was taught by my parents to see God in many different ways. There is no restriction to God, okay, this is how it is. Us, we Yorùbá have known this, we have followed all of these different gods … in every community, a different god … I do not believe I am something more than another, my Christian faith is not bigger than being Muslim for me and I am Yorùbá and still keep to my [indigenous] Yorùbá traditions … I cannot go to church, but, you know, I am still a Christian. It is in my heart. I still read the Bible, you see … this is not unusual in Ogbómòsó. We from Ogbómòsó can be part of many religions all at once. This is no problem.

5   Case Two: Agbo

Agbo is an outgoing Yorùbá man and street trader in his mid-thirties whom I met during the 2011 Egúngún festival in Ogbómòsó. He was born in Ogbómòsó, but left to study in Lagos when he was nineteen years of age. His connection to his family brought him home in his late twenties and he has been living in Ogbómòsó ever since. After meeting Agbo in 2011, we have kept in contact by email and met again several times throughout the years since. As Agbo

describes it, his religious upbringing was complicated, yet at the same time it was not an uncommon upbringing for the Ogbómòsó area:

> My father was Muslim. My mother, she was a born again Catholic and took her faith very seriously. So did my father, of course … now, my grandparents, they were like many during their time, steadfast in their African traditions to their death when I was fourteen years old. I grew up not only around, but even within these different religions. It was very complicated, but at the same time, very common.

Agbo, like many throughout Yorùbáland, grew up in a multireligious family. He describes this as being quite normal and routine. For Abgo this included not only attending events, but also openly participating:

> You know, I would go with my father to mosque on Friday's. I would say the prayers in the Muslim way, praying to *Allah* and reading the Qur'an. My family would also fast during Ramadan and celebrate *Eid al-Fitr*. Of course, even today when you have Muslim friends, even if you are not yourself a Muslim, you may fast and certainly celebrate all together when the fast is broken. It becomes in many ways a community celebration like Christmas or Easter … I never missed a church service with my mother. I would get dressed up in my suit and attended Sunday school even. I sang the songs and read the Bible as I was told. When I was twelve I was baptized and became 'born-again' like my mother. My father came to the service and no one asked any questions about his presence. He was welcome there and was invited by the pastor to say a few words. I will always remember that he was thankful for the church. He said *adupé*, *adupé*, which you know means, 'we thank God', in Yorùbá. He was thanking God as I was baptized as a Christian. Some of my grandparents were also there that day. They were joyous and happy for me. Even later that year I remember going to the Egúngún as a family. There was no tension. After I was baptized I continued to practice as a Muslim as well.

As Agbo grew older, however, and left Ogbómòsó for university in Lagos, he started to have serious questions about his religious background. At university he encountered people who seriously challenged his religious participation for the first time. He was chastised and called a heretic by other Muslims and Christians for belonging to and identifying with multiple religions. As Agbo recalls:

> My family never really talked about these traditions being contradictory when I was growing up. They were seen to be all part of the same, uh, tradition. As if the God of the Bible was the same God as *Olòrún* and the same as *Allah*. But at university this all changed. I was challenged for my views and I did not know how to respond.

Agbo went through a period of time when he stopped attending any religious events. He still identified as being religious, but he was confused and frustrated, both at his parents and those who challenged his religiosity. He mostly kept quiet about his struggles until he was invited and started attending a university student group:

> A friend of mine invited me, you see, to this African consciousness group. A pan-African society. I don't want to say the name. They were committed to reclaiming African heritage. We would read books and poetry. We had famous African writers come and give speeches and implore us to stand up as Africans ... for me this ignited a desire and I started visiting a traditional priest when I was back in Ogbómòsó visiting. I grew up around him and he knew my parents very well. He was a family friend. I shared with him my troubles and he was very wise in responding ... he spoke about how the Yorùbá should be open to all traditions, that it was intrinsic to the Yorùbá to be open and accommodating toward everyone. He was aware of my religious past and assured me that my story was truly good and showed how the Yorùbá are able to cut down barriers and use different traditions for good, for easing tensions and showing how we are all reaching out to God, but just in different ways.

According to Agbo, this period of seeking counsel lasted for about one year. He met with an AIR priest on five or six occasions. He also continued to attend events at the African consciousness group, even after he graduated from university. In his mid-twenties, Agbo once again began attending religious events and services. During this time, he viewed himself as a religious explorer, rather than having any concrete or singular religious belonging or identity:

> I was floating between groups and traditions. My friends from university were a diverse lot and came from so many different backgrounds. I explored all of them and greatly enjoyed the experiences. As I explored, I found God in all of them. As the priest had told me, we are all reaching out to God and I found God reaching out to us in these different religions.

When Agbo heard that his father was becoming ill, he left a good paying job in Lagos and moved back to Ogbómòsó. Upon returning, he quickly returned to a similar religious routine he had growing up:

> You know when I came back to Ogbómòsó it was a joyous time. A true blessing to be with my family and with the people of Ogbómòsó … When my father was well enough, we would go to mosque together and read the Qur'an together. My mother and myself went to church together and events like the Egúngún were central to our community life … I have my own family today and I raise my children to respect all faiths, all religions. They can choose which path to take.

When I asked about which religious traditions and groups he now belongs to and identifies with, Agbo had this to say:

> I refer to myself as a born again African. This is a funny term, no? Well, what I mean by it is this: I am African and as a Yorùbá person there is no separating religion. To be African and Yorùbá is to be religious. Now, I belong to my community and believe that God is in all of our traditions. So yes, I belong to a church and a mosque and I see a traditional priest … I would say usually I am a Muslim in public because my father was a Muslim, but because of our history, to be Yorùbá is to be open to God in his fullness … I now realize that my upbringing was not a curse, no, no, but an opportunity to experience the fullness of God.

I was fortunate enough to spend time with Agbo attending various religious events in 2011 and 2012. We met at the 2011 Ogbómòsó Egúngún Festival and enjoyed several days together. According to Agbo, Egúngún attendance is on the rise despite efforts to curb participation:

> You know there are some in Ogbómòsó who want to stop these traditions. They are like those I met in Lagos who challenged my background. They say, "You cannot participate in Egúngún, or you are a bad Christian, a bad Muslim." This is not uncommon, but the younger generation is not listening. In fact, the younger generation, the youths, they see right through this. The Egúngún speaks to our heritage, our ancestors … we commemorate and honor our ancestors, you see. The missionaries and Arabs tried to dispel these practices, but they persist and are growing as we wake

up and are reclaiming our history and culture. Every year there are more people attending … many attend without the blessing of their pastor. They come because they want to connect with their community. So you see Muslims, Christians, all coming together in this festival to celebrate life and our common bonds.

Agbo and I also went together to the Ogbómòsó Central Mosque for *Jumu'ah*. I watched as Agbo and many others prayed together. Afterward we shared a meal with several of his friends. We talked openly about Agbo's multiple religious belongings and identities. Unexpectedly, each of them also shared their own story. While they belong to a mosque and identify as Muslim, their religious life is dynamic and has included instances of multiple belongings and identities. For instance, they have attended Pentecostal revivals in the past and often see a local AIR priest for medicinal and divination purposes. Agbo's friend, Mahmud, shared with us that he continues to participate across multiple religions:

> I was raised as a Muslim and will always be a Muslim. But to be Muslim does not mean that I am blind to claiming *Allah* in my own traditions. As a Yorùbá, my ancestors are part of who I am. So yes, I go to Egúngún and I celebrate. Islam does not restrict my celebration, my family rights … we are fond in Ogbómòsó of saying that *Allah* was among us even before we had the Qur'an.

I also had the privilege of attending a Catholic church where Agbo attends. He informed me that the priest was aware of his religious life and history. We were able to meet with the priest after the service. While he preferred to keep his comments anonymous, he allowed me to record our conversation. It was fascinating as the priest shared his own perspective on religion in Ogbómòsó:

> Ogbómòsó, like much of Yorùbáland, is very religious. We have Christians, Catholics like in this church, and Muslims. We also have our Yorùbá traditions. These are not as prominent as they once were, okay, yet they are ingrained in every Yorùbá person. I use our traditions to explain the Catholic faith, you see? People relate to these traditions because they know them, they trust them. In Yorùbáland, we say that to be accommodating is to be godly. This is what we believe. So we are accommodating to these religions.

He also shared his insight into how the Egúngún festival relates to Catholicism:

> Ah, yes, this is very important. The Egúngún honors our ancestors. These ancestors are specific to the Yorùbá, okay, even to Ogbómòsó. This is based on kinship, on lineage, you understand? So we celebrate each year and receive blessings and guidance from our ancestors … you know, in Catholicism, we have the veneration of the saints. This is really a form of spiritual ancestor celebration as we look to the past and recognize those who have gone before us in death. We celebrate their lives each year on different days and pray to them, asking for guidance, for blessing … I have no problem with Yorùbá festivals. For instance, Egúngún is a celebration of our African heritage and kinship. To be Catholic one must not think that this is somehow off limits. Egúngún is part of our history and we should be sure to make it part of our future. My religion has nothing to say of my participating in my community festival.

Attending these events and meeting Agbo's friends was an education in itself. While Agbo has experienced conflict related to his religious belonging and identity occasionally, he claims this is rare in Ogbómòsó. He believes that even though there are religious leaders who preach against having multiple religious belongings and identities, most in Ogbómòsó are not only respectful toward this religious lifestyle, but also engage in a similar lifestyle on some level. As Agbo remarked on our final meeting together: "My story may not be universal, but it is everywhere to be found here in Ogbómòsó. Go down one street and you will find a dozen of the same story."

6   Methodological Reflections for World Christianity

This final section further unpacks the cases of Ṣadé and Agbo. While there are many directions this could take, the primary aim here is to reflect on how the religious field of Ogbómòsó offers methodological lessons for scholars of World Christianity.

6.1   *Religious Belonging and Identity*
First, while the study of religious belonging *or* religious identity is common in World Christianity scholarship, the case study this chapter draws from, utilizes both concepts to interrogate lived religious experience. As the cases of Ṣadé and Agbo make clear, while religious belonging and identity often go hand-in hand, this is not always the case. Similar to Janson and Meyer's notion

of 'religious field' for expanding the analytical frame, there is added value in employing both religious belonging and identity in a single study in order to capture lived religion more holistically. Additionally, fieldwork in Nigeria has expanded and clarified my understanding of these terms. In the case of religious belonging, it is helpful to broaden the conception to the quality of being a religious member or participant. This broadening allows for a wider range of belonging, which at times is official and formalized, while at other times more serendipitous, at times more public, while at other times mainly private. This more inclusive understanding provides two primary benefits. First, some religious traditions are more institutionally bound and public than others. For instance, participation in AIR is often private and without institutional (i.e. official) acceptance. Second, with a more institutional understanding of belonging, it is often those who exist on the margins of communities or privately belong who often end up being excluded from consideration. Thus, a person that is privately and/or unofficially a member or participant of a group deserves equal consideration alongside those who are publicly and/or officially members. Indeed, the former experience provides an important contrast to the latter experience. This understanding of belonging offers a challenge to scholars of World Christianity, especially in regards to issues of inclusion/exclusion in research projects; namely, who belongs and/or who does not belong in World Christianity scholarship and why?

Relatedly, the definition and use of religious identity as a concept is vigorously contested. While identity can provide a useful analytical framework to categorize religiosity, there are undoubtedly limitations. The work of Stuart Hall and Rogers Brubaker is particularly helpful for both understanding the limitations and providing a useful framework from which the concept remains useful (Hall 2000a: 595–634; Hall 2000b: 15–30; Hall 1996; Brubaker 2006). In terms of defining identity, Mike Morris provides a helpful starting point for how the concept is utilized in this chapter: "the combination of characteristics that collectively demarcate an individual or group, both to themselves and others" (Morris 2012: 127). Two points are worth noting. First, individuals and groups can be considered in discussions of identity. While there are distinctions to be made between individuals and groups, each is influenced by the other and is unable to be isolated completely. Therefore, identity is interactively defined and constructed by both the individual and the other. While this chapter highlights how two individuals identify, the larger case study also interrogates how others identify these individuals, which provides a useful comparison. Second, regarding the "combination of characteristics", the "combination" is inherently flexible, which results in the individual or group lacking a stable, coherent 'self'. As Stuart Hall remarks regarding the nature of this flexibility:

> This produces the post-modern subject, conceptualized as having no fixed, essential, or permanent identity … the subject assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent "self." Within us are contradictory identities, pulling in different directions, so that our identifications are continuously being shifted about … The fully unified, completed, secure, and coherent identity is a fantasy. Instead, as the systems of meaning and cultural representation multiply, we are confronted by a bewildering, fleeting multiplicity of possible identities, any one of which we could identify with—at least temporarily.
>
> Hall 2000a: 598

Hall and Brubaker have pointed out how extreme conceptions of identity—what Brubaker terms as "hard" and "soft" meanings—have produced ambiguity surrounding the term (Hall 1996: 1–17; Brubaker 2006: 28–63). As Brubaker states: "Understood in a strong sense—as implying a singular, abiding, foundational sameness—'identity' tends to mean too much; understood in a weak sense—as multiple, fluid, fragmented, negotiated, and so on—it tends to mean too little." He suggests that when used in this latter sense, the term "loses its analytical purchase" (Brubaker 1996: 28).[8] The fieldwork this chapter is based upon finds some semblance of balance by conducting research longitudinally. While the result is still snapshots of how interlocutors identify, conducting research over longer periods of time assists in regulating these "hard" and "soft" indications of identity. As well, collecting data on religious belongings, which includes the actions of interlocutors also provides a critical comparison.

---

8   In Brubaker's effort to go 'beyond identity', it is perhaps useful to mention that he argues scholars should employ the term 'identification' instead. He states: "As a processual, active term, derived from a verb, 'identification' lacks the reifying connotations of 'identity.' It invites us to specify the agents that do the identifying. And it does not presuppose that such identifying (even by powerful agents, such as the state) will necessarily result in the internal sameness, the distinctiveness, the bounded groupness that political entrepreneurs may seek to achieve. Identification—of oneself and of others—is intrinsic to social life; 'identity' in the strong sense is not" (Brubaker 1996: 41). While I largely agree with Brubaker's assessment, I disagree that 'identity' lacks a conceptual framework that can include, as he puts it, "processual" research and an active understanding that lacks the reifying notions that a strong sense of identity implies. Thus, relating this to Morris's definition, my conception of identity connects the 'combination of characteristics' not just to the result (i.e. identity), but also the process (i.e. identification).

6.2 *Everyday Lived Religion*

Next, an approach that only allows for the possibility of classifying people in single, discrete categories of religion leads to naïve and restrictive understandings of everyday lived religion. Such an approach easily masks the varied, dynamic, and complex belongings, practices, and identities of people, many of who in contexts such as Yorùbáland live across and within multiple religious traditions. For World Christianity scholarship, rather than assuming that Christians are *only* Christians, it must be taken into account that practitioners can and do live across the categorical boundaries of religions and are not necessarily limited to singular religious affiliations. As Catherine Cornille has noted on a broader scale:

> In a world of seemingly unlimited choice in matters of religious identity and affiliation, the idea of belonging exclusively to one religious tradition or of drawing from only one set of spiritual, symbolic, or ritual resources is no longer self-evident … A heightened and widespread awareness of religious pluralism has presently left the religious person with the choice of not only *which* religion, but also of *how many* religions she or he might belong to (2010: 1).

In the case of Ogbómòsó, many of my interlocutors claim that only drawing from "one set of spiritual, symbolic, or ritual resources" has never been self-evident. Peel has described this phenomenon in Yorùbáland as "the religiously-unmarked cultural repertoire of the Yoruba" (Peel 2011: 13). While I would challenge the notion of the cultural repertoire being *completely* "religiously-unmarked", Peel's understanding largely corresponds to the lived religiosity I encountered in Ogbómòsó in which religious belongings and identities are not always singular, nor static. Both Ṣadé and Agbo have negotiated belonging to, identifying with, and drawing from multiple religious traditions throughout their lifetimes. They have also each had liminal phases of transition and even now their status is fluid. Yet, when I asked Ṣadé and Agbo in early 2013 about how they would identify religiously on a survey, Ṣadé responded with "Christian" and Agbo with "Muslim". This is despite their open accounts during interviews of multiple religious belongings and identities. It is this very nuance that typically escapes the range of census and survey data. Depending on the types of questions posed, even practitioners themselves can give singular responses and fail to disclose the full range of their religious life. Thus, some people fall into the trap of essentialized enquiries. This is certainly the case with the available census (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1963: 37) and survey

data (Pew Forum 2009: 19; Pew Forum 2011: 11; The World Factbook 2020; World Religion Database 2020) that uses essentialized categories to produce a clear-cut portrait of religious affiliation in Nigeria. All of the survey data, for instance, indicates that Nigerians now largely identify with either Christianity or Islam when given the choice to indicate their religious affiliation. However, survey responses are only one method for interrogating the religious field. They provide only one aspect of how respondents affiliate, often without any ability to follow-up with qualitative queries.

Additionally, it is clear that despite having multiple religious belongings and/or identities, people choose to express these differently depending on the setting, or even the instrument of data collection. This is how distinct features of religiosity end up being expressed more prominently than others. For Ṣadé and Agbo, their identification is also revealed to be dependent on the context of their environment and with whom they are speaking. As Agbo quipped in an interview: "one religion for this place, another religion that [place]." Thus, it is clear that the motivations for indicating one's religious belonging and/or identity can be highly personal and context dependent. The reasons can also be pragmatic, as indicated by Ṣadé's limited ability to express her Christian belonging publicly after she was married. This pragmatic feature is comparable with the work of Danmolé (2008) and Peel (2000). This highlights the necessity not to just be aware of the phenomenon, but there is also a need for more multi-method, multi-site, longitudinal studies that are able to take such fluidity and context into account. For studies in World Christianity, this means expanding the horizon of religious life. In fieldwork studies, for instance, what happens in the town hall, forest festival, university club, etc., can be equally as important to research as the Sunday service or Wednesday night Bible study. Finding diverse angles, methods, and points in time to interrogate religious life is integral for a more holistic understanding. As a practical example from my research on transnational African immigrant networks in Los Angeles, I intentionally decided to start my fieldwork by gaining access to Black Lives Matter groups and attending African cultural festivals. While many of the people I met ended up inviting me to their churches, my initial point of entry assisted in expanding my research field beyond the confines of church life.

6.3   *Entangled Religions and Expanding the Analytical Frame*
The lack of nuance in Ṣadé and Agbo's responses to the survey related question is not limited to religious practitioners. The lack of nuance is also a persistent problem with scholars of religion who still primarily focus on a single tradition. Within multireligious settings in particular, this discrete approach

may lead to a problematic disconnect with the lived world of religious prac-
titioners. In the case of World Christianity, this point is particularly relevant
for a field that has its analytical frame focused on Christianity. Yet, to be sure,
despite the focus on Christianity, World Christianity need not be limited to
the study of a single religion (i.e. Christianity). The full range of Ṣadé and
Agbo's religiosity is the domain of World Christianity, as one cannot dissect
and dislocate only the Christian elements. In the case of Ogbómòsó, the en-
counter of multiple traditions has produced what Larkin (2016: 633–639) re-
fers to as religious entanglement. This entanglement means that scholars of
World Christianity must approach their respective religious fields openly and
allow the lived religiosity of the field to direct their focus of attention. As Gregg
and Scholefield have suggested: "We can explore religion as we find it, rather
than mould it to meet the cultural essentialisms of what we expect to find"
(2015: 15). This will undoubtedly vary from context to context. Simply put,
not all religious fields afford the same type and degree of interreligious en-
tanglement as in Ogbómòsó. For instance, in other cases, there may be more
intrareligious entanglement, or entanglement with other belongings and/or
identities such as ethnicity, gender, nationality, or race. Regardless of the con-
text, an 'entangled' approach to social life is required for every religious field.

Relatedly, both cases also reveal how individuals can adapt and form new
religious belongings and/or identities, while also retaining parts of their for-
mer religious life in a process of both preservation and reinvention. As Ṣadé's
experience demonstrates, public belongings can be limited due to various cir-
cumstances, while religious identification remains. One can also imagine sce-
narios in which the opposite is true and how similar dynamics might play out
intrareligiously across the denominations of a religion. This brings issues of re-
ligious conversion and religious switching to the fore. These concepts point to
changes that occur religiously in form, character, or function, but as these two
cases confirm, in the lived world these changes are not necessarily a one-time
event, a one-way process, nor do they necessarily create an immediate change.
Again, notions of constancy and singularity deserve reflection and critique.
Fortunately, there appears to be momentum for this entangled understanding
in terms of recent publications, including an edited volume (Rajikumar and
Dayam 2016), a thirteen-article issue from *Open Theology* (Braak and Kalsky
2017), and a special issue from *Studies in World Christianity* (Williams and
Adogame 2019). The theme of the 2018 European Association for the Study
of Religions (EASR) conference, 'Multiple Religious Identities—Individuals,
Communities, Traditions', also offers some indication of increased focus in this
direction (EASR 2018).

6.4 Of Bias and Hierarchy

Another important issue is that of recognition and status afforded to select religions. The continued dominance of the world religions paradigm treats religions such as Christianity and Islam as interrelated packages of diverse traditions and practices, while AIR are largely viewed as disparate and not given the same status and scholarly attention. This bias is sometimes linked to a perceived hierarchy of religious traditions, in which religions that are categorized as monotheistic and possess a textual canon represent a higher form of development. This bias could as well be part of the reason why Nigerians by and large identify on surveys as either Christian or Muslim—the result of which provides a quantitative rationale for privileging Christianity and Islam. However, the bias can also be linked to the institutional and organization models of different religions. For instance, the various practices and procedures related to attendance, membership, and participation that scholars utilize for their research. Scholars can and should continue to use these avenues for understanding religiosity, but there is a pressing need to adapt research tools to fit different types of religious fields. In the case of most AIR, the organizational structure is informal and diffused, participation is typically on an individual basis, and there are rarely institutional mechanisms in place to track participation. Additionally, as the cases of Ṣadé and Agbo make clear, despite individual religious desires, there are at times familial and societal restrictions placed on the expression of these desires. Such biases and restrictions result in the assumption for many that there are very few AIR practitioners and the conclusion that they are comparatively less consequential to research. While there are valid reasons to (de/re)construct the world religions paradigm (Cotter and Robertson 2016; Magesa 2013), categorizing and comparing on the basis of interrelated packages can prove beneficial as long as 'packages' are approached with equivalence. Yet, despite the continued importance of AIR in Nigeria, Christianity and Islam continue to be viewed as exceptional and receive the majority of scholarly attention. This point is important for scholars of World Christianity because not only is it critical to widen the analytical frame to include other religious traditions, it is just as critical to approach these traditions with parity.

6.5 Multi-directional Exchange

One aspect of interreligious encounter is conflict and intolerance. Conflict, and in particular violent conflict, has received a disproportionate amount of focus in studies of interreligious encounter in Nigeria. As I have noted elsewhere, "... studies of multireligious Nigeria tend to be confined to examining violent flashpoints between Muslims and Christians in a few select regions of

northern Nigeria, portraying it as a place of ruin, with widespread violence and rioting in the name of religion—further entrenching the depiction of a one-dimensional, facile discourse of brutal clash and intolerance" (Williams 2018: 116). While the cases of Ṣadé and Agbo point to instances of conflict and decreased tolerance, these are to be expected in any religious field. Likewise, it should not come as a surprise that their cases simultaneously demonstrate that multireligious contexts provide a habitat of exchange. As Agbo indicated in an interview:

> I am African and as a Yorùbá person there is no separating religion. To be African and Yorùbá is to be religious. Now, I belong to my community and believe that God is in all of our traditions. So yes, I belong to a church and a mosque and I see a traditional priest … I would say usually I am a Muslim in public because my father was a Muslim, but because of our history, to be Yorùbá is to be open to God in his fullness.

This exchange is not limited to how individuals practice, belong, or identify. Religions also are under constant revision and reinterpretation. As the late J.D.Y. Peel noted about the ongoing construction of religion and religious action:

> Religions are always realized in practice through the interplay of context and tradition, of the social and the cultural, of the present and the past. Religious action is always doubly constrained: by the features of the context to which its agents have to respond and by what its tradition—beliefs, values and institutions received from the past—makes available to it. But the determination is never complete: all contexts yield options for action, and all traditions are open to revision and reinterpretation.
>
> Peel 2016: 625

Not only are the boundaries of religions not always clear or mutually exclusive for religious practitioners, no scholarly conceptualization of religions is entirely coherent or without blurry boundaries. Conflation of traditions is perhaps the extreme version of the exchange, which can be observed in research on Chrislam in Nigeria (Janson 2016: 646–672; Williams 2019). Although the spectrum of exchange varies, religions invariably change. Christianity is not excluded from this reality. It is not a one-way flow of Christianity impacting other religions. While perhaps most scholars of World Christianity would recognize this on a conceptual level, there is a need to further explicate the multi-directionality of exchange as it relates to Christianity.

7   Conclusion

Taken in the context of World Christianity scholarship, this chapter offers a grounded precedent in avoiding an essentialized, *sui generis* understanding of religion(s) and religiosity. Likewise, it offers methodological insight into understanding religious belonging and identity as dynamic and situational. While it is recognized that every religious field is distinct and needs to be contextualized, the methodological lessons offered in this chapter on religious belonging and identity, everyday lived religion, entangled religion, bias and hierarchy, and multi-directional exchange can be applied broadly in World Christianity scholarship. Combining these lessons into an approach offers scholars a more nuanced engagement with religious fields, but it also problematizes the discrete classification of religions and their subsequent study. These insights expand the analytical frame of World Christianity scholarship, which naturally leads to questions regarding coherence and what is included or excluded. Jacob Olupona's remarks on AIR are apropos here: "If, in our world of increasingly hyphenated and hybrid identities, it has become more challenging to say what African religion *is*, it has become perhaps even more challenging to say for certain what it *isn't*. If we look more carefully, we find manifestations of it everywhere" (Olupona 2014: 122). World Christianity could easily be substituted in these remarks. Yet, as the hyphenated and hybrid belongings and identities of Ṣadé and Agbo reveal, it is within this challenge that it becomes possible to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding—an understanding that is willing to break down restrictive paradigms, confront biases, and reconstruct an approach that prioritizes everyday lived religious experience.

Bibliography

Adedeji, Joel (1969). 'Traditional Yoruba Theater.' *African Arts* 3,1: 60–63.

Adedeji, Joel (1972). 'The Origin and Form of the Yoruba Masque Theatre.' *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 12,46: 254–276.

Adogame, Afe (2004). 'Nigeria.' In Gabriel Palmer-Fernandez, ed. *Encyclopedia of Religion and War*. New York: Routledge: 328–332.

Bascom, William Russell (1993). *Sixteen Cowries. Yoruba Divination from Africa to the New World*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Bell, Deborah (2010). *Mask Makers and Their Craft. An Illustrated Worldwide Study*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Bentor, Eli (1994). '"Remember Six Feet Deep". Masks and the Exculpation of/from Death in Aro Masquerade.' *Journal of Religion in Africa* 24,4: 323–338.

Boer, Jan H. (2003–2009). *Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations*. 9 Volumes. Belleville, Canada: Essence Publishing.

Braak, André van der and Manuela Kalsky, eds. (2017). 'Topical Issue. Multiple Religious Belonging.' *Open Theology* 3.1.

Brubaker, Rogers (2006). *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Clarke, Peter B. (1982). *West Africa and Islam*. London: Arnold.

Clarke, Peter B. (1986). *West Africa and Christianity*. London: Arnold.

Conteh, Prince Sorie (2009). *Traditionalists, Muslims, and Christians in Africa. Interreligious Encounters and Dialogue*. Amherst, NY: Cambria Press.

Cordwell, Justine M. (1983). 'The Art and Aesthetics of the Yoruba.' *African Arts* 16,2: 56–59.

Cornille, Catherine, ed. (2010). *Many Mansions? Multiple Religious Belonging and Christian Identity*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Cotter, Christopher R. and David G. Robertson, eds. (2016). *After World Religions. Reconstructing Religious Studies*. New York: Routledge.

Cox, James L. (2016). *From Primitive to Indigenous. The Academic Study of Indigenous Religions*. New York: Routledge.

Danmolé, Hakeem O. (2008). 'Religious Encounter in Southwestern Nigeria. The Domestication of Islam Among the Yoruba.' In Jacob K. Olupona and Terry Rey, eds. *Orisa Devotion as World Religion. The Globalization of Yoruba Religious Culture*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press: 202–220.

Drewal, Margaret Thompson (1992). *Yoruba Ritual. Performers, Play, Agency*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

EASR 2018. 'EASR 2018: Multiple Religious Identities.' http://www.easr2018.org (accessed 26 June 2020).

Falola, Toyin and Ann Genova (2009). *Historical Dictionary of Nigeria*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (1963). 'Population Census of Nigeria, 1963. Combined National Figures, Volume III.' Lagos: Office of Statistics.

Frederiks, Martha (2010). 'Let Us Understand Our Differences. Current Trends in Christian-Muslim Relations in Sub-Saharan Africa.' *Transformation. An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 27,4: 261–274.

Goodwin, Stephen R., ed (2009). *World Christianity in Muslim Encounter. Essays in Memory of David A. Kerr*. London: Continuum Publishing.

Gregg, Stephen and Lynne Scholefield (2015). *Engaging With Living Religion. A Guide to Fieldwork in the Study of Religion*. New York: Routledge.

Hackett, Rosalind I.J. (1998). *Art and Religion in Africa*. New York and London: Cassell, 1998.

Hall, Stuart (1996). 'Introduction. Who Needs "Identity"?' In Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, eds. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications: 1–17.

Hall, Stuart (2000a). 'The Question of Cultural Identity.' In Stuart Hall, David Held, Don Hubert, and Kenneth Thompson, eds. *Modernity. An Introduction to Modern Societies*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell: 274–323.

Hall, Stuart (2000b). 'Who needs 'identity'? In Paul du Gay, Jessica Evans, and Peter Redman, eds. *Identity. A Reader*. London: Sage Publications: 15–30.

Hart, William A. (1993). 'A West African Masquerade in 1815.' *Journal of Religion in Africa* 23,2: 136–146.

Houlberg, Marilyn Hammersley (1978). 'Egungun Masquerades of the Remo Yoruba.' *African Arts* 11,3: 20–27.

Janson, Marloes (2016). 'Unity Through Diversity. A Case Study of Chrislam in Lagos.' *Africa* 86,4: 646–672.

Janson, Marloes and Akintunde Akinleye (2015). 'The Spiritual Highway. Religious World Making in Megacity Lagos (Nigeria).' *Material Religion. The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 11,4: 550–562.

Janson, Marloes and Birgit Meyer (2016). 'Introduction. Towards a Framework for the Study of Christian-Muslim Encounters in Africa.' *Africa* 86,4: 615–619.

Johnson, Samuel (2010). *The History of the Yorubas. From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kerr, David (1995). *African Popular Theatre. From Pre-Colonial Times to the Present Day*. Oxford: James Currey Publishers.

Knowing Each Other Project (2018). 'The Project.' https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/historycultures/departments/dasa/research/knowing/project.aspx (accessed 26 June 2020).

Larkin, Brian and Birgit Meyer (2006). 'Pentecostalism, Islam and Culture. New Religious Movements in West Africa.' In Emmanuel K. Akyeampong, ed. *Themes in West Africa's History*. Oxford: James Currey: 286–312.

Larkin, Brian (2016). 'Entangled Religions. Response to J.D.Y. Peel.' *Africa* 86,4: 633–639.

Magesa, Laurenti (2013). *What is not Sacred? African Spirituality*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Makinde, David O. (2011) 'Potentialities of the Egúngún Festival as a Tool for Tourism Development in Ogbomoso, Nigeria.' In Carlos A. Brebbia and Syed S. Zubir, eds. *Management of Natural Resources, Sustainable Development and Ecological Hazards III*. Southhampton, UK: WIT Press: 583–593.

Morris, Mike (2012). *Concise Dictionary of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Mustapha, Abdul Raufa and David Ehrhardt (2018). *Creed & Grievance. Muslim-Christian Relations & Conflict Resolution in Northern Nigeria*. Oxford: James Curry.

Na'Allah, Abdul-Rasheed (1996). 'The Origin of Egungun. A Critical Literary Appraisal.' *African Study Monographs* 17,2: 59–68.

Nolte, Insa, Olukoya Ogen, and Rebecca Jones, eds. (2017). *Beyond Religious Tolerance. Muslim, Christian, and Traditionalist Encounters in an African Town*. Oxford: James Currey.

Nwanaju, Isidore (2008). *Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria*. Berlin: Logos Verlag.

Obadare, Ebenezer (2016). 'The Muslim Response to the Pentecostal Surge in Nigeria. Prayer and the Rise of Charismatic Islam.' *Journal of Religious and Political Practice* 2,1: 75–91.

Ojo, Matthews A. (2007). 'Pentecostal Movements, Islam and the Contest for Public Space in Northern Nigeria.' *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 18,2: 175–188.

Ojo, Matthews A. and Folaranmi T. Lateju (2010). 'Christian-Muslim Conflicts and Interfaith Bridge-Building Efforts in Nigeria.' *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* 8,1: 31–38.

Olajubu, Chief Oludare and J.R.O. Ojo (1977). 'Some Aspects of Oyo Yoruba Masquerades.' *Africa* 47, 3: 253–75.

Olupona, Jacob K. (2014). *African Religions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxford Business Group (2010). *The Report. Nigeria 2010*. London: Oxford Business Group.

Peel, John D.Y. (2000). *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Peel, John D.Y. (2011). 'Islam, Christianity and the Unfinished Making of the Yoruba.' Mellon Foundation Sayer Seminar, University of Michigan, 1–2 April 2011.

Peel, John D.Y. (2016). *Christianity, Islam, and Orisa-Religion. Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Pemberton III, John (1978). 'Egungun Masquerades of the Igbomina Yoruba.' *African Arts* 11,3: 40–47.

Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2009). 'Mapping Out the Global Muslim Population/ A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population.' Pew Research Center: Washington DC, October 2009.

Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2011). 'Global Christianity. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population.' Pew Research Center: Washington DC, December 2011.

Rajikumar, Peniel Jesudason Rufus and Joseph Prabhakar Dayam, eds. (2016). *Many Yet One? Multiple Religious Belonging*. Geneva: World Council of Churches.

Rasmussen, Lissi, ed. (2007). *Bridges Instead of Walls. Christian-Muslim Interaction in Denmark, Indonesia and Nigeria*. Minneapolis, MN: Lutheran University Press.

Rasmussen, Lilli (1993). *Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa. The Cases of Northern Nigeria and Tanzania Compared*. London: British Academic Press.

Rea, Will (2008). 'Making History. The Modernity of Masquerade in Ikole Ekiti.' *African Arts* 41,4: 10–25.

Sanneh, Lamin (1996). *Piety and Power. Muslims and Christians in West Africa*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Sarbah, Cosmas Ebo (2010). 'A Critical Study of Christian-Muslim Relations in the Central Region of Ghana with Special Reference to Traditional Akan Values.' Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Birmingham, 2010.

Sarbah, Cosmas Ebo (2016). 'Interrogating the Approaches of Christian-Muslim Encounters in West Africa.' *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 51,3: 366–385.

Schiltz, Marc (1978). 'Egungun Masquerades in Iganna.' *African Arts* 11,3: 48–55.

Soares, Benjamin F. (2016). 'Reflections on Muslim-Christian Encounters in West Africa.' *Africa* 86,4: 673–697.

Soares, Benjamin F. (2006). *Muslim-Christian Encounters in Africa*. Leiden: Brill.

Sodiq, Yushau (2009). 'Can Muslims and Christians Live Together Peacefully in Nigeria?' *The Muslim World* 99,4: 646–688.

The World Factbook (2020). 'Nigeria: People and Society.' *Central Intelligence Agency*. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html (accessed 26 June 2020).

Vaughan, Olufemi (2016). *Religion and the Making of Nigeria*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Vinson, Laura Thaut (2020). *Religion, Violence, and Local Power-Sharing in Nigeria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Williams, Corey L. (2018). 'Religion and Sport in Multireligious Nigeria. The Case of the Kaduna City Interfaith Football Club.' In Afe Adogame, Nick J. Watson, and Andrew Parker, eds. *Global Perspectives on Sport and Christianity*, New York: Routledge, 2018: 114–128.

Williams, Corey L. (2018). 'Chrislam, Accommodation, and the Politics of Religious *Bricolage* in Contemporary Nigeria.' *Studies in World Christianity* 25,1: 5–28.

Williams, Corey L. and Afe Adogame, eds (2019), 'Special Issue. Christianity and Multiple Identities.' *Studies in World Christianity* 25,1: 1–124.

Wolff, Norma H. (1982). 'Egungun Costuming in Abeokuta.' *African Arts* 15,3: 66–70.

World Religion Database (2019). 'Religious Adherents in Nigeria from 1900–2050.' Todd M. Johnson and Brian J. Grim, eds. *Brill Publications and Services*. http://www.worldreligiondatabase.org (accessed 26 June 2020).