

Conversion in African Religions

By

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Introduction

The concept of conversion is as relevant to African indigenous religions as it is to many other religions of humankind. This may sound something of a surprise to some people. After all, the indigenous religions of Africa do not fall within the category of religions generally referred to as universal or missionary religions. They are rather, classed within the family of *traditional or folk* religions of the world.(1) And this for many people, is another way of saying that African traditional religions admit of little or no change. They thrive in stable and homogenous ethnic societies. They have no founders, reformers, or prophets, and are handed on much in the same form from one generation to the next. In the words of Mbiti, African traditional religions "have no missionaries to propagate them". As folk religions, they are said to be community-based. "People simply assimilate whatever religious ideas and practices are held or observed by their families and communities"(2). This viewpoint assumed that African traditional religions were more or less fossil reality. Against that backdrop, the discussion of the subject of religious conversion made sense for the protagonists only within the context of the encounter of the indigenous religions with the missionary religions that are available now in the Continent, mainly Christianity and Islam (3).

While this later contemporary stage in the religious history of Africa is important and of relevance to us in this paper, our discussion of the theme of conversion in African religions proposes to focus on the type of change brought about by dynamic impulses in the differing religious experience of indigenous African groups prior to the encounter, as well as on the phenomenal movement of former adherents as converts to the missionary faiths. This later development clearly amounts to a religious revolution. Both strands of religious change are signalled by and implied in the topic of conversion in African religions. We shall therefore, be handling the two dimensions in this paper. But first, the key concepts ought to be clarified and the scope delimited.

Clarification of Terms

The first is conversion. As a religious concept, it refers to change in the religious life and behaviour of people. It generally involves a positive interior change in one's religious conviction, moral and spiritual fervour, from a state of unbelief, weak or

lukewarm faith, to a holy and ardent religious life (4). Conversion therefore, usually implies a change from one religious state (*a terminus a quo*) to another religious state (*a terminus ad quem*). The change could be a permanent one, or it could last for only a period of time. Conversion could take place within the same religious system to which an individual or group already belongs or professes, or it could involve a change away from a religion to which one was previously affiliated to another one all together.

In studying religious change or conversion scholars are usually interested in accounting for the causality, as well as the course and consequence of change(5). They are keen to explain the impulses that motivate conversion as well as the process, and also the resultant effect of the experience in the life of individual adherents and groups. Furthermore, Professor Humphrey Fisher identified a three-phase stage of "adhesion", "mixing", and then "full conversion" in the process of conversion from a non-prophetic to a prophetic religion (6). In his study of conversion of Africans from traditional religion to Islam and Christianity, he had noted that people could pass through the stage of "adhesion" during which they stood "with one foot on either side of the fence adopting their new worship as useful supplements" to the old. There could be a lapse from the orthodoxy and religious ardour of the first converts to a mixing stage, and people could later regain their fervency after a reform movement (7).

It is pertinent also to point out that by African traditional religions in this paper, we refer specifically to indigenous religious forms and systems which the different peoples of sub-Saharan Africa cultivated as part of their total experience of life within their particular ecological environment, society and history. The indigenous religions pre-date any other forms and articulations of the sacred that have been brought into the Continent from outside(8). The religious traditions differ one from another largely on account of differences in language, ecosystem and overall historical circumstances of the groups. But they possess a lot of similar essential characteristics. The vision of reality as a whole which they engender is very similar indeed. They possess an essential holistic vision of reality. Traditional Africans perceive life as an integral whole with the sacred flowing into all facets, underpinning and investing every worthwhile event with meaning and significance. There is no dichotomy between the visible and super-sensible world. Spiritual beings and cosmic forces manifest their presence and power through visible events and experience of life. African traditional religions are equally oral in nature. They are codified not in any sacred writings but in the living experience of people and various oral forms of communication.

I am aware that a number of scholars have argued in support of the term African traditional religions as applicable also to Christianity and Islam because of the long period of time the two religions have existed as well as the kind of following they have in the Continent (9). The issue is still a debatable subject. In any case, in this paper the term indigenous religions designates as well as distinguishes the original religious faith of Africa from the missionary religions that have arrived the Continent from other parts of the world.

Conversion Within The Indigenous Religions

Contrary to the general impression created in many existing works, especially writings with anthropological bias (10), a number of recent studies have drawn attention to the inherent dynamism of African indigenous religions (11). They have also highlighted internal impulses and factors that account for significant positive

alteration in religious beliefs and conviction of individual adherents and groups, as well as the interchange of religious ideas and cultural forms among people in traditional African societies prior to the advent and interaction with other races and religious cultures. The factors include the people's acute sense of the sacred, initiation rites, special life-needs like health, sickness and off-spring, disaster, epidemic, long distance travel and trade, migration and warfare. Even in the contemporary background and context of plurality of religious beliefs and practices in the Continent brought about by the co-existence with missionary faiths, the traditional religions have continued to exhibit tremendous resilience and ability to adapt to the changing circumstances.

Evidence abounds of various forms of experience of genuine conversion by individuals and groups both in the indigenous background of homogenous religious beliefs and practices among the different African groups, as well as during the relatively recent period of intense interaction of African indigenous faiths with missionary religions. The oral corpus of the different groups yields a lot of relevant materials. There are striking stories of people changing from lukewarm religious state to fervent religious adherence and strict ethical and moral life. There are equally clear examples of people switching from one traditional religious convictions and cult to another.

The mythical story of the origin and evolution of the cult of Ezemewi and Edo, two arch-divinities of Nnewi people, a typical Igbo language group in Nigeria, makes a good illustration. Ezemewi, otherwise known as *Ugi1i Nwa Onye Olu*, was reportedly a mythical being, the son of Eze Agana in far-away Ndoni, a coastal town in the lower Niger River basin. Long ago, he appeared as a hungry-looking and unshaven young man at Nnewi. He expressed the desire for food to a number of people who had spotted. Ezi-Abubo, the primeval ancestor of the village group with the same name was able to provide him nourishment promptly, while another man, Akwa, in an attempt to prepare a delicious meal for Ezemewi arrived late with food. Ezemewi was pleased with the hospitality accorded him and finally settled at Nnewi. As a reward for the attention shown to him by Ezi-Abubo, he bestowed several gifts, including off-spring and wealth to him and his descendants. More importantly, he gave them the right to visit him and attend to him daily, while the others who were not prompt in meeting his acute need for food, including Akwa, he gave fewer blessings. They could only visit him occasionally. On account of the many blessings that people received from attending to his residence at the present site of the shrine of Ezemewi in Abubo village-group, the power influence of Ezemewi spread rapidly through the Nnewi and beyond.

Ezemewi married his first wife a mythical being, known as Ogwugwu Eze Kwuabo. Ogwugwu was very powerful as a young lady with numerous admirers and attendants. She had only two issues, Uzuoke and Mgbodo. Ezemewi was dissatisfied. He sued for another very pretty and influential lady. With his powerful influence he was able to win over Edo who had been living with Omaliko. Edo gave birth to a very pretty daughter, a mythical being known as Asala. With that, her power and influence became widespread. From time to time she left Ezemewi to consort and enjoy the affection of some powerful male deities in neighbouring communities. On one occasion she returned from such sorties only to discover that her home had been overgrown by grass. Obaisedo, the ancestor of the kindred with the same name, gained the confidence of Edo who allowed him to clean her compound and thereafter, earned the invitation to visit pay her nocturnal visits for food and other pleasantries. From initial nocturnal visits to eat food in the home of Edo by Obaisiedo, members of his lineage gained the unique privilege to minister as priests at the shrine of Edo

(12).

Edo (female) and Ezemewi (male) have since been the two arch-divinities of Nnewi. Significantly, their cults rose to prominence by successfully displacing pre-existing cults of other deities such as Ulasi and Uzuoke. Ezi-Abubo and Obaisiedo village groups though they are not the most senior clans in the town have been specially dedicated to the worship of Ezemewi and Edo respectively. To this date, they alone of all the numerous clans that comprise Nnewi provide candidates for initiation to the priesthood of the two deities. And any male chosen by the deities to serve as priest from the groups would have to undergo a prolonged ceremony of ritual initiation before assuming office at the respective shrines. The conversion of the candidate to serve as *Isiedo*, the traditional priest of Edo from Obaisiedo village group, was always a dramatic religious experience. He would have to physically depart his original family home in the village with a few belongings, travel slowly through sacred groves and forests for several nights before emerging at the shrine of Edo. He would be dressed totally in white and migrate to the Edo shrine with only one wife. His permanent abode thenceforth, would be at the sacred grove of Edo. His choice by Edo require total commitment to the deity. As such, he had to undergo a physical and ritual disconnection with his kin-group in order to achieve a full change of his religious, spiritual ethical and social relationships and pattern of life.

The desire for initiation into the prestigious Ozo traditional Igbo title may include such apparently mundane interest like celebration of wealth and achievement, as well as enhancement of one's status in society. But the elaborate ritual invariably brings the Ozo candidate to a full religious conversion (13). In some localities, the initiation proper involves the physical burying of an initiate. A plank is placed over the shallow grave and earth is thrown on it. The death wail is started and the burial ceremonies are performed. (In some other parts of Igboland, the candidate goes into seclusion for four native weeks, that is twenty-eight days (14). When the uninitiated retire, he is exhumed and bathed and whitewashed with *Nzu* (white chalk). The origin of Ozo lies in the ancient past of the Igbo people. Traditionally, the initiation which was expensive and reserved for upright male members of the society could last several years until a candidate achieved the full title position. Commenting on the profound change that comes about with Ozo initiation, Arazu rightly observed:

- In the solitude imposed by the Ozo ritual initiation the candidate learns to pronounce 'man' with deliberation. He sees that his very nature is a statement from the Supreme Being: 'Let godness exist. The man who does not meditate, who does not contemplate, will never realize what man means ... the Ozo chief attains the meaning of man. Man in his concrete existence is the nearest resemblance to divinity. The resemblance is neither moral nor physical. These concepts are not adequate in this matter. Man's resemblance to God is religious. The Ozo rites of initiation take in every aspect of human activity, political, social, religious (15).

Beside initiation into title positions, severe misfortune like sickness, death and spirit possession are significant developments that motivate religious conversion. B. Ray citing Pierre Verger, relates the case of a Yoruba woman who was chosen by Ogun, a major deity of the Yoruba people of Nigeria to serve as a medium. The woman had lost all her children, one after the other, each dying a few days after birth. Some day while crossing the village square, she began to behave in an abnormal way, making uncontrollable gestures. She then staggered to the front of Ogun's temple and fell like a corpse to the ground. The diviner later revealed that it was Ogun that had

chosen her. She had been called to serve as his medium and "wife" to the entire community. Her preparation for the ritual initiation took about a month. As part of the festival in honour of Ogun, one of the mediums proclaimed the full conversion and status of the candidate Ogun had chosen as his medium:

- See the new *iyaworisha* (medium): it is Ogun that chose her. Is it not good? It is because I have seen the death on her that I took her. Now she is not going to die; no more danger for her; She is going to have a lot of children; boys and girls. I am going to tell her father and her husband what they must do now. Because she is not the same any more; the husband must not beat her any more. He must leave her in peace. If the husband has anything to say, he must tell it to me. It is Ogun now who is the father. Everybody must hear, men and women (16).

The husband and other relations of the woman expressed their gratitude to Ogun for taking the woman into his protection and pledged to abide with all the instructions of Ogun and never to interfere with norms and taboos relating to her in her changed status and role.

For Ajak the young Dinka of Southern Sudan, who had left his home and people in the village to seek greener pasture in one of the urban towns, it was Nhialic, the arch-divinity of his clan that caused him all sorts of misfortune, including throwing him into a dangerous river and seriously threatening to kill him. Ajak had gone to the town against his father's wish. Neither did he bother to get reconciled to his father before the latter died, or to supervise his relations at home. After several sudden bouts of sickness and attacks of evil forces in the town, and unsuccessful attempts at a cure in the town, he was eventually taken to his home in the village. Ajak participated in ritual sacrifices for Nhialic and his ancestral spirits (17). Part of the healing ritual involved the repair of the broken family bonds and a vow by Ajak and his relations to uphold the ancestral norms of his clan. He recovered fully and remained devoted to the clan divinities and the ancestral spirits. No spirit possessed or troubled him again.

There are numerous examples of similar cases of genuine religious conversion within African indigenous religions in the religious history of various traditional African groups. Unfortunately, their significance as authentic religious experience is often ignored or down-played by researchers. Or such experiences are treated or reduced simply to socio-structural, and psychological development.

Conversion To Missionary Religions

The rate of conversion of millions of former adherents of African indigenous religions to one or other of the missionary religions now available in Africa is nothing short of a revolution. Mbiti captured the general scene of radical change sweeping through the Continent thus:

- Africa is caught up in a world revolution which is so dynamic that it has almost got out of human control ... The man of Africa must get up and dance, for better or for worse, on the arena of world drama. His image of himself and of the universe is disrupted and must make room for the changing 'universal and not simply 'tribal' man (18).

The phenomenal religious conversion that has taken place is certainly the direct result of a complex interplay of diverse impulses, and historical circumstances. There are political as well as socio-structural and psychological factors. But the religious encounter between the indigenous faith and the immigrant religions is of interest to us here. For Christianity, several unsuccessful attempts had previously been made (19). It was, in fact, not until the 18th and 19th centuries that the campaign that yielded the present significant break-through in religious change in the Continent begun.

Christian missionaries had benefited from the favourable climate created by European colonialism in Africa. Urbanisation, Western culture and civilisation, science and technology all played a major role. But the missionaries themselves were equipped with different viable evangelical methods and strategies. 'They proclaimed the Good News of salvation through open-air preaching. They also offered various humanitarian services including rehabilitation of slaves and socially disadvantaged people. They set-up Christian villages where they settled many early converts (20). Medical care equally played an effective part in disposing many traditional adherents to accept the Christian message, so did pastoral visitation and vocational training for young men and women. By far, the promotion of formal school education proved to be the most viable and effective instrument of conversion evolved by Christian missionaries among many traditional African groups. Hundreds of thousands of young men and women who attended such schools, also received instruction in the faith, accepted baptism while in school and thereby broke the ancestral covenant with deities. It was not too long before the missionaries of the different mainstream Christian groups, including the Roman Catholic Church, Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians began to harvest the fruit of their vigorous evangelical efforts (21).

In Liberia, as in the coastal region of Nigeria, the charismatic ministry of the renowned William Wade Hams and the fiery preacher Garrick Braide of Bakana respectively swept like tidal waves across towns and villages with the conversion of thousands of former adherents of African indigenous religions to the Anglican faith. In Igboland, Chief Samuel Idigo abandoned his traditional religious belief, and symbols of indigenous rituals and his staff of office, to embrace the Catholic. He had left his elevated position as the traditional ruler of his people to settle with numerous fellow converts in the new Christian village "Ugwu Ndi Uka" established by the missionaries in Aguleri (22). Presently, Igboland, has well over 80% of its approximately twenty million people converted to Christianity. It has been cited as a typical African society in which the walls of the traditional religion have collapsed Jericho-wise. E.A. Ayandele title his review article, "The Collapse of 'Pagandom' in Igboland". And he described the conversion of a vast majority of Igbo people to Christianity as nothing short of an epic" (23).

The current proliferation and attraction of Pentecostal and Evangelical groups in several parts of Africa is no doubt, one of the intriguing aspects of Christianity in the Continent today. The development is particularly manifest in urban centres. The groups excite, attract and draw their clientele mainly from among the youth and the middle-aged, both employed and unemployed. The founders/leaders are usually charismatic individuals, literate, and often loud and flamboyant in their life-style. They adopt very modern methods of preaching employing electronic gadgets and modern music. Their overall bearing in life is generally Western-oriented. Some of them employ all kinds of modern means of promotional advertisement to propagate their message. Vigorous evangelical bible study, deliverance from evil and demonic forces and counselling are some of their major schemes. 'They propagate the so-called 'prosperity gospel', assuring their followers of quick success and material

prosperity. The Pentecostal and Evangelical groups are probably the fastest growing churches in many parts of Africa. Many of the mainstream Christian churches including the Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Methodists have been provoked and challenged by the fast rate of growth of the Pentecostals to devise schemes to counteract the drain in their numbers. While a considerable number of people who attend the Pentecostal churches appear to experience deep personal religious conversion and are committed to the ideals and mores of their new faith, it is must be pointed out that very many of the people who crowd into the rallies and fellowships of the new groups ostensibly go to search for quick miracles and wonders.

Conversion of millions of former adherents of African indigenous religions to Islam in various parts of the Continent has been no less spectacular. Berber and Arab commercialists and pastors brought Islam to sub-Saharan Africa several centuries ago. In Northern Nigeria for example, it arrived the ancient Kanem-Bornu empire about the 11th-century A.D. Through living together, trade, promotion of holy pilgrimage, Islamic law and learning some indigenous groups gradually began to embrace the Islamic religion. It was however, through *jihad* that Islam achieved a break-through in the religious conquest and conversion of millions of former traditional adherents to Islam especially in West Africa as well as in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. Sheikh Usman dan Fodio inaugurated his jihad 1804 that won numerous indigenous Hausa groups to the side of Islam as well as purified the prevalent syncretism religious practice of the people. Similar developments occurred among the Wolof of Senegal led by Amadou Mbake Bamba, 1850-1927 (24).

Christianity and Islam are clearly the two dominant faiths in Africa today, while the law of diminishing returns have befallen the indigenous religions. A vast majority of former members of the traditional religions have abandoned the ancestral rituals and symbols to embrace Christianity, or Islam or some religious systems. The statistics of the current religious affiliation in an African country like Nigeria, provides an interesting example. Out of an estimated total population of about a hundred (100) million, some forty-eight per cent (48%) or fort-y-seven million people are professing Christians. Some forty-seven (47%) or forty-five million are Muslims, and a little over six million or five per cent (50/o) are traditional religionists (25).

Discontinuity And Continuity

The mass conversion of former adherents of indigenous religions in Africa to Islam and Christianity has evidently brought about the discontinuation of several aspects of the traditional religious culture of the people. 'The homogenous traditional religious background in which the indigenous religions undergirded all aspects of life including the social, political and economic aspects, has more or less disappeared, making way to religious plurality which now prevails in most parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Huge cathedrals, churches, schools, mosques, and public buildings now rise on the former sites of sacred groves and shrines dedicated to powerful traditional deities. Certain brutal rituals like human sacrifice, traditional customs and taboos that discriminated against individuals and groups like women, outcastes, people suffering from various kinds of sickness and disease, the killing of twins among some African groups have been eradicated (26). In Igboland for instance, most traditional communities had, prior to the advent of Christian missionaries reserved dreaded places, *Ajo Ofia*, 'bad forests' as such places were called, where people dumped away tabooed persons and those who had seriously infringed the approved norms of behaviour to die miserable death. Such individuals like leprosy patients, sorcerers, witches, notorious persons

were abhorred by the physically living human beings, ancestors and the gods. Today most of those dreaded places and forests have been cleared. They are now the location of many churches, schools and public institutions. Some important traditional institutions, including priesthood of some prominent deities, initiations and festivals have been abandoned since the people to uphold and continue them have left the indigenous religions of their people to embrace one or the other of the missionary religions.

Some analysts have easily concluded, based on these visible features of the prevailing religious situation in the Continent, that the demise of the traditional religions is a "fait accompli" (27). But statistics do not tell the full story. Religious conversion is such a complex and fluid matter. Particularly in Africa, with the tremendous resilience and adaptability of the indigenous religions, the persistence of vital beliefs among many converts to Christianity or Islam, it is extremely difficult to be categorical about the state of religious conversion of the majority of people. The astonishing stories of phenomenal achievements of the missionary religions and of heroic lives of faith by numerous converts to Christianity or Islam ought to be taken together with the constant complaints against shallowness of faith, nominal membership, syncretic practices among a large segment of the population of new converts. The traditional world-view, including a strong belief in the dynamic presence and activities of spirit beings and cosmic forces in people's lives, belief in re-incarnation persist among most Africans.

The scenario depicted by Bishop (now Archbishop) Albert K- Obiefuna about Igbo converts to Catholicism could easily be said of most other sub-Saharan African groups. In a fifty-one paged pastoral letter titled *Idolatry In A Century-old Faith* published in 1985 to mark the first centenary celebration of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria, the Bishop called attention to the two sides of the picture.

Christianity has made an impact on our people. There is no gainsaying it. Thousands come to our churches. Many also avail themselves of the Sacraments. But times without number the remark reaches us that our Christians are worshipping 'idols', false gods. They swear on idols. They erect shrines in their homes, in their compounds. They hide fetishes in their shades in the market places and in their workshops. Catechists, Seminarians on apostolic work in the towns and villages are stunned at the degree of idol worship and superstitious practices that still exist among a people that are mostly baptised Catholics.

At every retreat, Catholics bring out from their homes fetishes and charms of all kinds. Idol worship, superstitious practices, fear of witchcraft, charms, and all sorts of vain observances are realities among our Catholics. We cannot simply deny they obtain (28)

The indigenous religions remain very much the living faith of many rural dwellers in Africa. Both in urban and rural areas the religions continue to adapt to the changing circumstances of life of the people. Modern houses built with cement and zinc now feature as shrines of deities. People use such contemporary items like rice, mineral drinks, pieces of cloth as materials for ritual sacrifice. Traditional priests, diviners, mediums and shrine attendants dress in decent outfit for traditional religious cult of deities in present-day African societies. In another development, the beliefs and rituals of several traditional African deities like the Yoruba *Orisha* continue to be maintained by many adherents and practitioners of the Voodoo, Santeria and Cumina cults in the Caribbean Islands, Cuba, and parts of the United States of

America (29). These forms of religious practice by Africans in the diaspora combine indigenous African religious stuff with elements from Christianity. Furthermore, the effort at modernisation of the traditional religions themselves is manifestly evident in such contemporary religious systems as *Godianism* of Chief G.O.K Onyioha in Igboland, the *Ogboni* Fraternity and *Eruosa* National Church among the Yoruba and Edo peoples of Nigeria respectively. The African Independent and *Aladura* churches, including the *Kimbangu* Church of Congo, and the *Cherubim and Seraphim* groups, have also greatly contributed to keeping alive certain vital aspects of the indigenous religious culture of the people such as the belief in the dynamic presence and influence of ancestral and other spirit beings in people's lives, divination, belief in magic and the practice of traditional rituals.

Conclusion

Both in the traditional homogenous religious background as well as in contemporary plural society, religion has always been a major determinant of life of African people. The fluid and complex nature of religious conversion is clearly a reflection of the characteristic dynamic nature of religion itself among the groups. Prior to the encounter with Islam and Christianity, the traditional religions of Africa pervaded and permeated all vital life-interests of people, investing the social, economic and political facets of life with meaning and symbolic significance. Religious change had proceeded not in any dramatic and radical way, but rather in a slow-rate manner. The religious and spiritual fervour of people flowed and ebbed in response to changing circumstances of life. Significant historical situations brought about novel religious ideas, values, beliefs, symbols, taboos and rituals. The cosmology of the different groups was particularly accommodating, as the size of the pantheon of the different groups enlarged or diminished in response to varying stimuli. Individuals and groups had experience of genuine religious conversion. Their cumulative spiritual heritage and religious insight were preserved and handed on from one generation to the next through such oral media as speech-forms, including myths, legends, stories, proverbs, and names, art-forms including sculptures, carvings, and festivals, and important institutions like shrines, masquerades, kingship institution and so on.

The advent and spread of Islam and Christianity precipitated a different kind of religious situation in contemporary Africa. A vast majority of the population have abandoned the religions of their ancestors to convert to one or other of the missionary faiths now available in the Continent. In spite of the many problems and difficulties confronting the converts, it is unarguable that both Islam and Christianity have sunk deep roots in Africa. 'They have made irreversible impact on the Continent's religious and spiritual landscape. The faith of the vast majority of the population now lies mainly with Islam and Christianity. The religious hunger for the sacred which has evolved from the traditional religious background to the contemporary plural society still persists. This is the central value that must not be wasted, but ought to be vigorously preserved and sustained by all well-meaning religious people in Africa.

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African religions have also become a major attraction for those in the diaspora who travel to Africa on pilgrimages because of the global reach of these traditions. 8. There are quite a number of revival groups and movements whose main aim is to ensure that the tenants and practice of African indigenous religion that are threatened survive. These can be found all over the Americas and Europe.Â 10. Indigenous African religions are not based on conversion like Islam and Christianity. They tend to propagate peaceful coexistence, and they promote good relations with members of other religious traditions that surround them. 11. Today as a minority tradition, it has suffered immensely from human rights abuses. â€˜Conversion reconsidered: some historical aspects of religious conversion in black Africaâ€™™, *Africa* 43 (1), 27â€˜40. Fisher, H. J. 1985. â€˜The Juggernaut's apologia: conversion to Islam in black Africaâ€™™, *Africa* 55 (2), 86â€˜108. Fukui, K., and Markakis, J. (eds.). 1994. *Ethnicity and Conflict in the Horn of Africa*.Â â€˜Images of traditional African religions in surveys of world religionsâ€™™, *Religion* 20, 311â€˜22. Markakis, J. 1987. *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa*.