



From October 30, 2014 to  
January 15, 2015

**Vernissage:**  
Thursday, October 30, 2014  
5.15 pm

**Venue:**  
Zentrum Moderner Orient  
Kirchweg 33  
14129 Berlin-Nikolassee

**Opening hours:**  
From Monday to Friday  
10 am - 3 pm

global  
redemption and liberation in the city  
prayers

 **SOAS**  
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CENTRE OF  
AFRICAN  
STUDIES  
University of London

# The Spiritual Highway

## Religious World Making in Megacity Lagos

Photographs by Akintunde Akinleye, curated by Marloes Janson

The 120-kilometre long Lagos-Ibadan Expressway that connects Nigeria's economic hub Lagos with the city of Ibadan – the third largest metropolitan area in the country – is considered the most important and busiest road in Nigeria. Opened in 1979 at the peak of the oil boom, it became one of the most accident-prone highways in Nigeria with the popular label 'Highway of Death'. Since the late 1980s numerous Christian and Muslim movements have cropped up along the highway. With this the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway has succeeded as a stage for the performance of public religiosity to the extent that it can be described as a 'Spiritual Highway'.

During the summer of 2013 Akintunde Akinleye (photographer and prize winner in the prestigious World Press Photo) and Marloes Janson (anthropologist at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London) recorded and explored these centres of religion that have become known as 'prayer cities'. While concentrating on one Christian and one Muslim movement the exhibition challenges conventional assumptions of Christianity and Islam as bounded and distinct traditions and shows the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway as a true crossroad with convergences and blurring distinctions between the two religious traditions.