



Invitation

Thursday, 15 October 2009, 6 pm

The Dilemma of Yoruba Islam in Contemporary Perspective

Lecture by Prof. J.D.Y. Peel

The Yoruba of S.W. Nigeria are divided roughly 50:50 between Muslims and Christians, and have a notable tradition of cross-religious harmony with considerable mutual influence between the two faiths. For the last century, Yoruba Muslims have had to address two significant others: their Christian fellow-Yoruba, who embody more fully the value of *olaju* (modern "enlightenment"), on which Yoruba in general pride themselves; and their non-Yoruba fellow-Muslims, especially Hausa-speaking Northerners, who tend to look down on them as less satisfactory Muslims. Since the late 1970s, the resulting dilemma has taken a more acute form, as Yoruba Muslims have had to respond to two cross-pressures: promptings from the wider world of Islam to adopt more rigorous or Salafist forms of piety; and the challenge of Born-Again Christianity in the Yoruba market-place of faith. The lecture will explore the spectrum of religious responses to this dilemma.

Prof. J.D.Y. Peel is among the most distinguished Africanists of his generation. His research on religion in the West African Yoruba context combines anthropological and historical perspectives, and his works are widely read within African Studies and beyond. He was awarded the Herskovits Award in African Studies for two consecutive monographs: *Ijeshas and Nigerians. The incorporation of a Yoruba kingdom, 1890s-1970s* (Cambridge UP, 1983) and *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Indiana UP, 2001). He has recently expanded his research on religion among the Yoruba, to include a comparative perspective between Islam and Christianity. He has published books on the sociologist Herbert Spencer and on religious movements in West Africa. He held appointments at Nottingham, LSE, Ife (Nigeria), Liverpool and at SOAS before his recent retirement. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, a former Editor of the journal *Africa*, former President of the African Studies Association of the UK, and he is General Editor of the *International African Library*, the monograph series of the International African Institute.

Venue:

Conference Hall
Zentrum Moderner Orient
Kirchweg 33

14129 Berlin

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