

colonial school, many harbored an anti-technocratic vision of development, which may have been incompatible with the modernization model entailed by the TVA model. These issues are less limitations of the book than topics that the author might further consider. Indeed, Bamba's research is the foundation of an outstanding and significant book, which will be of interest to historians and political scientists who focus on Africa, development, and corporations.

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## RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN NIGERIA

*Beyond Religious Tolerance: Muslim, Christian and Traditionalist Encounters in an African Town.*

Edited by Insa Nolte, Olukoya Ogen, and Rebecca Jones.

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**Key Words:** West Africa, Nigeria, religion, Christianity, Islam.

This book is the product of a remarkably successful project of North–South collaboration between the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom and Osun State University in Nigeria. The result is something quite different from a standard edited volume in which the chapters reflect the preoccupations and perspectives of individual authors rather than of the common theme of the book. Instead, the different chapters articulate closely with one another, exploring a single concrete problem from different but complementary angles.

The problem the contributors seek to understand is the modes of peaceful (and sometimes even harmonious) coexistence between members of different religious communities, specifically in the Yoruba town of Ede in western Nigeria. Ede is a predominantly Muslim town with a sizeable Christian minority that is also home to practitioners of traditional religion, especially the cult of *Ẓàngó*, whose annual festival is intrinsically linked to the town's identity. Siyan Oyewoso's chapter, detailing the reign of three notable *Timìs* (rulers) – one a worshipper of *Ẓàngó*, one a Muslim, one a Christian – demonstrates how the office and the institution serves to integrate all three religions, overriding the rulers' specific allegiances. Some of the chapters examine the modalities of interreligious interactions from the perspectives of particular religions: the cult of *Ẓàngó* (Adermei Suleiman Ajala and Insa Nolte; George Olusola Ajibade); Islam (Amusa Saheed Balogun; Adeyemi Balogun); and Christianity (Olukoya Ogen and Adeyemi Balogun). Two chapters examine the dynamics of interfaith relationships within familial contexts, either over time within one specific extended family (Ibikunle H. Tijani) or in terms of the dynamics of interfaith marriages (Insa Nolte and Tosin Akinjobe). A chapter by Akin Iwilade and Oladipo Fadayomi details the different integration of Christian and Muslim students on a university campus. Finally, a chapter by Rebecca Jones and Insa Nolte analyzes survey data on attitudes within the community, and the introductory and concluding chapters co-authored by Insa Nolte and Olukoya Ogen provide a general overview.

If there is a single thread that runs through the various chapters, it is that the modalities of interreligious interaction in Ede are extremely varied, context dependent, and the result of particular histories that cannot necessarily be replicated, even within the town itself, much less more generally. For example, the annual festivities associated with the cult of *Şàngó* involve, aside from traditionalist cult members, the active participation (at least as enthusiastic spectators) of a substantial part of the Muslim community. On the other hand, some Muslim movements active in town consider such participation entirely inappropriate. Additionally, on one (but only one) occasion, the former *Tîmì*, a Christian, invited the *Şàngó* cult members to a Baptist service during the festivities. The very possibility of such an occasion depended on a specific and non-replicable set of circumstances; the *Tîmì* died soon afterwards and his successor was Muslim.

Balogun's chapter on the contrasts between three Muslim compounds in the nature of their relationships with other religious communities illustrates most clearly the ways in which the very specific microhistories of institutions constrain if not determine the policies and attitudes of specific groups. The compound most closely associated with the Islamic history of Ede, whose very name signifies 'the Muslim compound' and that has provided many of the town's chief Imams, has no Christian residents whatsoever, though the participation of some members in traditionalist festivities, particularly *Egúngún* masquerading, is tolerated. A second Muslim compound, located near the campus of the Polytechnic University campus, has Christian residents, especially students, but restricts public manifestations of non-Islamic religious activity, while a third compound, associated with a segment of the royal family, is more open to manifestations of both Christian and traditional religiosity. Clearly, the particular history of each compound shapes the nature of interreligious interaction that takes place within it. The kinds of variability detailed in this chapter and analyzed with finesse is quite typical of the dynamics described in the other chapters, though of course with different parameters and different outcomes.

One of the principal aims of the book is to counter simplistic narratives of interreligious conflict, especially between Muslims and Christians, by providing a detailed and convincing account of religious coexistence (if not inevitable harmony), particularly in a Muslim-majority town. At a very broad level, of course, the book succeeds, but in many ways it suggests that interreligious coexistence, however peaceful, is anything but a unitary phenomenon, that its modalities are so varied and contingent that it is difficult to generalize, even within a single town. Moreover, the chapters demonstrate the tremendous importance of histories – of the town as a whole, of the kingship, of different Christian churches and Islamic movements, of institutions such as schools and universities, of different compounds, and indeed of different families. All of these histories, micro and macro, matter tremendously, but they also suggest that there is no ready-made model for religious coexistence. Historians, but not political scientists, may find some comfort in these conclusions.

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