

who, with funds provided by 'family and friends at home,' had been able to build a block of flats. . . . With the rent from those apartments, he had been able to embark on a whole range of development activity" (48). On an American evangelical organization's motive for opening a theology school: "Shocked by the statistic that 80 percent of pastors in Africa are untrained, ICM opened a seminary in Kitale . . ." (147). On the workings of Cordaid: "So a Dutch tourist visiting, say, the Masai Mara, who en route comes across a Maasai community needing a school roof repaired, can apply for matching funds up to 10,000 euros" (54–55). Additionally, Gifford scoffs at the suitability to poor Kenyans of the new Pentecostal churches' message of personal achievement. Perfected by Western televangelists and commercially packaged as "The Secret" by New Age spiritualists, this message recognizes the very human aspiration to succeed despite the circumstances. Gifford dismisses the appropriateness of that premise for Kenyans.

On the whole, this book is more about the different strands of Kenyan theology than about its stated goal of examining Christianity's impact on Kenya's politics and public life. The study's research design, which gave unwarranted attention to a small group of media-savvy, urban-based church leaders, could not support that goal. It might have been more useful to write exclusively about those churches.

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Steven M. Friedson. *Remains of Ritual: Northern Gods in a Southern Land*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. vi + 254 pp. Photographs. Bibliography. Index. \$22.00. Paper.

Remains of Ritual is a superbly written study of the rituals and music associated with the southern Ghanaian Ewe worship of gods who originally came from northern Ghana. This topic has received attention from a number of scholars.* Friedson, however, brings a refreshingly new analysis to his subject by combining detailed anthropological descriptions of different *gomvodu* rituals with musicological insights.

* See Fritz Kramer *The Red Fez: Art and Spirit Possession in Africa* (Verso, 1993); Judy Rosenthal, *Possession, Ecstasy and Law in Ewe Voodoo* (University Press of Virginia, 1998); Tobias Wendl, "Slavery, Spirit Possession and Ritual Consciousness: The Tchamba Cult among the Mina of Togo," in *Spirit Possession: Modernity and Power in Africa* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1999); Dana Rush, "In Remembrance of Slavery: Tchamba Vodun," in *African Slavery/African Voices* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming); and Alessandra Brivio, "Tales of Cowries, Money and Slaves," in *African Slavery/African Voices* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

The shrines that host the rituals Friedson discusses are located in a three-town cluster of municipalities situated to the east of Ghanaian capital of Accra on the Ewe-speaking Atlantic littoral, and in the interior Ewe town of Kpando. The rituals in question take place at a weekly worship service known as a *salah*, and at a funeral. Discussed as well are animal sacrifices and an *afa* divination. Among the many points emphasized is the notion that the rituals associated with the shrines are constantly being amended and changed. The particular gods that Friedson focuses on (Brekete, Kunde, Adzo, Bangle, etc.) come from the north of Ghana. Accordingly, their worshippers have always included in their rituals vaguely conceptualized notions about the Islamic cultures of their northern gods. Over time, however, gorovodu priests have expanded the number of Islamic elements in their rituals. Women wear the West African version of the Islamic head scarf. Their gatherings include the Islamic call to prayer and the profession of faith, even as these elements are incorporated into a set of beliefs and practices that remain polytheistic.

Equally intriguing is Friedson's efforts to describe these gods and their rituals by emphasizing how devotees themselves understand their own beliefs and practices. In his discussion of Afa, for example, he opts to describe beliefs as fact rather than according to the perspectives of Afa devotees: "We are all born with a *kp li*; it is part of who we are as human beings, part of our *se*, our destiny, though not all of us, Ewes included, choose to find out" (163). He simultaneously maintains both a near and distant presence in his own text by describing his experiences and feelings upon witnessing animal sacrifices while also engaging in an analytical dialogue with other anthropologists and musicologists about how best to understand the rituals and the music he describes. It is an interesting, and to my mind quite effective, approach, which brings together worshipper perspectives with the anthropological techniques of participant-observation. Central to the entire book is his notion of in-betweenness, also described as "being-there and being-away" (36), a term used to characterize ritual possession. When one is possessed, one is in a space outside of time, neither in the spirit world nor in this material world. One is rather in-between, possessed, aware of one's positionality, yet distant consciously from one's own actions. It is a state that he feels competent to describe (although he admits the inadequacy of language truly to convey what possession feels like) because he characterizes his own involvement with Ewe music in the same terms. In learning to play certain Ewe drums, he argues, one must engage in a dynamic synergy with the other instruments while simultaneously playing against them, a state of being in-between.

While Friedson's description of this "in-betweenness" is at times rather opaque (a fact he acknowledges), one still gets the sense that he is definitely on to something. His is a study that is engagingly written and is sure to be a major contribution to the study of Ewe and African music and rit-

ual. In keeping with his emphasis on feeling, I must say, his analysis simply “felt right,” based on my own understanding of Ewe history and religious cultures. It is a book I highly recommend to all who are interested in the interplay between African ritual and music.

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