



# Introduction to African Religion, Second Edition

By John S. Mbiti

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## Introduction to African Religion, Second Edition By John S. Mbiti

In his widely acclaimed survey, John Mbiti sheds light on the survival and prosperity of African Religion in different historical, geographical, sociological, cultural, and physical environments. He presents a constellation of African worldviews, beliefs in God, use of symbols, valued traditions, and practices that have taken root with African peoples throughout the vast continent. Mbiti's accessible writing style sympathetically portrays how African Religion manifests itself in ritual, festival, healing, the human life cycle, and interplay with the mystical and invisible world. The account embraces foundational traditions, while touching on elements that spawn transitions, including migration, the spread of Christianity and Islam, political-economic development, and modern communication. This popular introduction leaves readers with informed knowledge of the riches of African heritage.

### Brief Table of Contents:

1. The African Heritage 2. What Is African Religion? 3. Where African Religion Is Found 4. African Views of the Universe 5. Belief in God 6. How God Is Approached by People 7. The Spirits 8. The Origin and Early State of Man 9. Birth and Time of Youth 10. Marriage and Family Life 11. Death and the Hereafter 12. Rituals and Festivals 13. Religious Objects and Places 14. Religious Leaders 15. Health, Magic and Medicine 16. Morals in African Religion 17. The Meeting of African Religion and Other Religions 18. The Value of Religion

Appendixes: Questions / Books for Advanced Reading on African Religion / Examples of African Proverbs and Wise Sayings

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## **Introduction to African Religion, Second Edition** By John S. Mbiti **Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

From Library Journal

This revision of a standard text ( LJ 7/75) provides an excellent overview of native religion in Africa. It also offers a useful and up-to-date list of books for more advanced reading, questions for each chapter, and a collection of wise sayings to illustrate oral tradition. The comprehensiveness of the treatment of where African religion is found, the discussion of its god, spirits, and cosmology, and of how human life is related to the religion make this book especially helpful to those familiar only with religions having sacred scriptures. Highly recommended for all libraries, whether or not they have the earlier edition.

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Review

"Mbiti's masterful retelling of Africa's religious history and heritage makes for compelling reading. A brilliant book penned by a brilliant man." --Darren Middleton, Texas Christian University

"Mbiti's *Introduction to African Religion* gives richness, boldness, and pride to Africa's religious heritage in the face of proselytizing religions like Islam and Christianity. It adequately fills the void that confronts people (not just students) meeting African traditional religion for the first time, and addresses the true nature of the religion. It is comprehensive and accessible in language. The questions in Appendix A and the proverbs in Appendix C are excellent for teachers, students, and religious leaders. Every institution, whether secular or religious, that teaches religion should use this book. It has my unwavering endorsement." --Peter Ukpokodu, University of Kansas

About the Author

Canon Professor John Mbiti, an Anglican priest from Kenya, taught Theology and Religion for many years at Makerere University in Uganda. After that he served as Director of the Ecumenical Institute Bossey, of the World Council of Churches near Geneva, Switzerland. He has been visiting professor at many universities in Europe, America, Canada and Australia and has travelled widely in many countries. Professor Mbiti has published over 400 articles, reviews and books on theology, religion, philosophy and literature. Currently he is part-time professor at the University of Bern, and parish minister in Burgdorf, Switzerland. He is married to Verena and they have four children: Kyeni, Maria, Esther and Kavata.

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