

Jacob K. Olupona

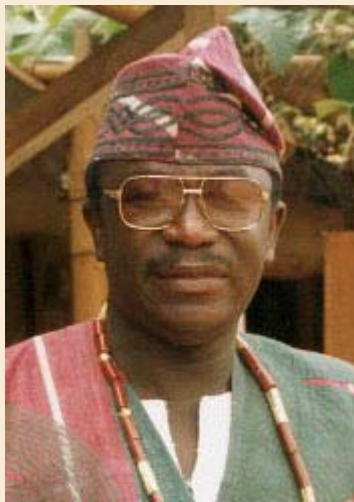
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“My work challenges the notion that there are no Africans in America. People think there are only African Americans here – there is no identity at this point for African immigrants, although they are a sizable number and have a number of different issues that need addressing. My research will enable us to make visible an apparently invisible religious community in America.”

Areas of expertise

- African immigrants in the U.S. and their religious practices
- African traditional religion
- Religious pluralism in Africa and the Americas

Topics in the News

- Reverse missionaries: Africans who come to the United States to establish churches
- African influence in church services
- The growth of Christianity in Africa



Biography

Jacob Olupona is an expert on the myriad African religious communities that support approximately one million Africans who have immigrated to the U.S. over the past four decades. Through mapping the locations of these communities and the activities in which they are participating, he challenges the assumption that Africans come to America and assimilate into the established African-American community. Jacob is studying the religious pluralism within America's African communities, particularly the African presence in U.S.-based Pentecostal churches; U.S. branches of African independent churches; the ethnic ministries of mainstream U.S. Christian churches; mosques serving African immigrants; and the rise of indigenous African religious communities in America.

Resources by this expert

- *Beyond Primitivism: Indigenous Religious Traditions and Modernity* (Routledge, 2004)
- Foreword to Oyeronke Olajubu's *Women in the Yoruba Religious Sphere* (State University of New York Press, 2003)
- *African Spirituality* (Herder & Herder, 2001)
- *Religious Pluralism in Africa: Essays in Honor of John Mbiti* (co-edited with Suleyman Nyang; Mouton de Gruyter, 1993)
- *Religion and Peace in Multi-faith Nigeria* (African Books Collective Ltd, 1992)
- *Kingship, Religion and Rituals in a Nigerian Community* (Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1991)
- *African Traditional Religions in Contemporary Society* (editor, Paragon House, 1991)

Recent Interviews & Articles

- *Chicago Tribune*, October 6, 2006, by Emily Stone, [Keeping the faith in a new land; Nigerian immigrants feel right at home in Rogers Park church with ties to Africa](#) 
- Associated Press, March 26, 2006, by Rachel Zoll, "[Boom in African Christianity spills over to America](#)" 
- *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 24, 2005 "Catholic Church must pay heed to Africa"
- *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, April 18, 2005 "A Third World Pope? Developing Nations Worldwide Have Serious Candidates"
- *Sacramento Bee*, April 16, 2005 "Picking the Pope, A Look Into The Cardinals' Conclave Reveals Ancient Roots, Modern Twists"
- *St. Louis Dispatch*, April 16, 2005 "Papacy Carried Many Challenges And Much Power"
- *The Houston Chronicle*, April 14, 2005 "A Church In Transition"

Organizational links for this expert

- [Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School](#)
- [University of California, Davis](#)

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