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THEOLOGY AND THE SOURCES OF TRANDITIONAL AFRICAN RELIGION.

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The scholarly study of African religious theology began nearly a century ago with the first extensive accounts by anthropologists and missionaries. Over the decades, it has passed through several phases, each involving different purposes and points of view. These developments may be reviewed briefly by examining the meaning and the implications of the words African, traditional, and religion that have shaped the study of the subject. In recent years, scholars have recognized the important ways in which “African” and “religion” and ‘’theology’’ are western constructs involving both misconceptions and changing perceptions, especially concerning religion (Ray:2000).

To understand the theology of Africa Traditional Religion, it is first good to understand the meaning and approach of the theology. Sheehan (1998) in his book, The *Word of Truth-Scripture: Its Origin, Sufficiency and Rrelevance*, observes that there can only be one theology, and truth about God. Theology most be the study of God as far as God has revealed Himself to man. For theology to be possible, three things must be true. First, there must be God about whom there can be facts; second, this God must have made Himself known to man-revelation must take place. Third: man must have the ability to receive this revelation, understand it, and use it.

Theology from the above facts, is therefore the study of revealed truth about God himself and his relationship with to all else. Therefore, when we talk of theology of African Traditional Religion, we talk about the concept of God, the way He was revealed Himself to African people, how people relate with Him and also how they utilize the revelation from God. But we also have other beings in the hierarchy of beings that acts as “helpers to God in African understanding. Therefore, the theology of African Traditional Religion, also comprises of the study of those beings-Spirits, divinity, ancestors etc, the way they relate with the living human beings and the way Africans utilize their revelation.

According to Knfi(-) in his work, *Understanding African Religion*, religion in sub-Saharan Africa is made up of certain beliefs like any other religion in the world. In the first place, there is widespread belief in one God, who is known by various local means, He is a Supreme spirit, for this reason, and there is no image or visible representations of Him. Next to God are deities who derive power from God. In contrast to God, these deities or lesser gods may be treated with respect. They function in a similar ways to the angles in Jewish and Christian cosmologies. In a lower hierarchy are the ancestral spirits who are treated with respect. They are sulks of our forefathers who have walked in this world. They are not worshiped, but have fellowship with the living human beings.-This is in contrast with the western perception of Africans worshiping the spirits. Therefore, theology of traditional African religion entails a deeper and a thorough investigation of the beings within African context.

To start with is ***God.*** According to Emeka and Ekeopora (2010) in their work. *God ,Divinity and Spirit in the African Traditional Religious Theology,* when we refer to the word ‘’God” we are talking about the living eternal Being who is the source of all living and whose life existed from the dateless past. He is self-existance and is the one whose power sustains the universe. This great Being has revealed Himself in different ways and human beings in particular, have always felt his presence and responded to him in the fact that African believe in God as the creator of the universe as reflected on the vastness of the universe. Mbiti (1969) in this book *African Religion and Philosophy*, asserts that in Africa society, God is no stranger and in traditional life, there is no atheist. African concept of God is strongly colloid and influenced by historical, geographical, social and cultural background or environment of each people. This explains the differences and similarities that find when we consider belief in God.

But the question may be possed how did African people come to believe in God? Mbiti (2011) in his book *Introduction to African Religion* there are possible three explanation of its origin. **First**, people come to believe in God through reflecting on the universe. They reflected on the enormity and continuity of the earth and the heavens. It seems to them that the universe must have someone who looks after it, keeps it, sustain it. He must be the creator and without Him there could be have no universe. **Secondly**, people realize their own limitation. Man saw how his powers and knowledge were particularly in the case of the face of death, calamity and the forces which man could not control. This easily made them to speculate that there must be someone greater than them self and greater than the world, which have full control over it. Hence people that they needed the help of this one in their experiences of limitation and powerlessness. **Thirdly,** Africans also observed the forces of nature. As African looked the weather, storms, thunder and lightning and other phenomena such as day and night, sun and moon etc, the Africans began to associate the sky with a great God who is very close to man, supplying man’s needs such as rain for his land to produce abundant fruit.

To understand God in African contest, different attribute are studied regarding to God. God is seen as **real**, according to Emeka and Ekeopara (2010), Africans do not perceive God as an abstract entity whose existence is in the mind. He is seen and perceived as areal personal entity whose help is sort in time of trouble and who is believed to be the protector of the people. The reality of God is also seen through the names given to him eg, among the Agikuyu” Mwathani”

which means a King, shows that God holds the authority enhance the quality which is superlative in worth. According to Odorejoye (1997), in African tradition, God is experienced as all-pervading reality. God is a constant participant in the affairs of human beings. The reality is felt on the good things that he gives to the people while the bad things are attributed to his divinities and spirits but not from him, German (2005) in his book *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective*, says that no African community lacks name for the Supreme Being . This demonstrates that God is more than an abstract idea. The name of God is always on the lips of the people, either in short supplication or in acknowledgement of blessings. In case of any problem or emergency, in most cases, an African will immediately say “Ngai”-God. When they use this phrase, it actually means that they do not know what to do, but God is here with them and will help them. He is with them because he is spirit and being everywhere he is here and now.

God is also seen as **transcendent and immane**nt. Africans believe that God is not limited to a particular place as human being are. God also lives outside the natural world in which human beings live,(Emeka and Ekeopara 2010). It also means that human beings can never fully comprehend Him. This revelation or manifestation of God has brought about a living relationship between God and man, leading to what we now call religion. The fact that there are no written scriptures by the votaries of African traditional religion, does not in any way means that the concept of God does not exist in their ontology. Mbiti (1969) explains that though the knowledge of God of the Supreme Being is not documented in any scared book, yet it is not expressed in proverbs, short statement, songs, prayers, names, myths. Gehman (2005), argues that God is highly executed above the creative. He is the one high up, the one who has always been, due to his transcendent nature, God is regardless of mysterious.

God is also referred as a **spirit**, Gehman (2005) God has nobody, He is invisible. God is like wind which cannot be seen, but can be known by its effects. Because of understanding that God is spirit, African have never worshipped idols as others do, Africans do never compare God with material object made by men. Mbiti (1969) observes that many people readily admit that they do not know what God is like, and they do not possess the words of God since words are vehicles of someone’s thoughts and to a certain degree, they give a portrait of the speaker. People might know some of his activities and manifestations, but his essential nature they know nothing. it is a paradox that they know him and yet they do not know him. He is not at stranger to them and yet they are estranged to him. So god confronts men as the mysterious and incomprehensive, and indescribable and beyond human vocabulary.

God is regarded as **merciful and good**. German (2005) observes that the giving of rain, birth of children and the healing of the body etc., reminds people that God is good. When there is good harvest, child is born, good health, people may respond….”God is good, he has worked wonders, he has been very kind”. Whenever tragedy is experienced, may be blamed on witchcraft or the living dead, but not god because he is always good.

The attribution of **holiness** is also seen in God. According to Mbiti (1969), the concept of God’s holiness is also indicated from the fact that many African people have strict roles in performing rituals directed to God. Sacrificial animals for instances have to be of one color, and the priest or the officiating elder must refrain from sexual intercourse and certain foods or activities before and other the ritual. Gehman (2005) says that his attribute is from the fact he is separated from his creatures and he is separate from wrong doings. He is also above any faulty and beyond any reproach of men. Throughout Africa, people believe despite the rain and suffering, the Supreme beings good; evil in whatever form it may take is as a result of witchcraft, evil spirits or the displaced ancestors. Also to add when an African are sacrificing to God, anybody who may be “unclean” should not appear or be involved in sacrificing since she/he is “unholy”. This shows that god is holy and does not mix with unholy.

He is referred as **eternal and immortal**. As Okeke(-) observes it, Africans do not see the Supreme Being as one who will one day cease or ne who will one day die. They rather see him as eternal and who will line foreign to satisfy the human soul e.g. among the Kono people of Sierra Leon, Okeke, observe that they call God ’Meketa’ which means “the everlasting one, one who does not die” People of many generation experience living God. Gehmen (2005) also brings out the attribution of as unique; he sees that no one who can be compared with Supreme Being in A.T.R, He is incomprehensible. Unlike creation, God had no beginning. This God is beyond our ability to comprehend. Further, above all spirits and divinities, there is only one fortune being. Sometime language may seem defiant or unallied, but African understand that Supreme Being is one.

Below the Supreme Being in African understanding, there are the ***Divinities***. It’s Emeka and Ekeopara (2010) puts it, African religion party recognizes a group of being popular known as divinities. The have been given names such as gods, demi gods, nature spirit etc.

Divinities are of different nature according to different African communities and different scholars who have studied them .Some like Mbiti (1969), observes that diviners were created by Supreme Being alongside the other categories of spirits. They often stand for creativities or spiritual being in charge of this major object of phenomena of nature. Other like E. Balaji Idohou observes that divinities are intermediate between men supreme and being .They have therefore according to Emeka and Ekeopara(2010) become channels through which sacrifices, prayers and offering are made and presorted to the supreme being.

Gehmen(2005) also observed that above ancestral spirits being that are said to be ministries of God and to the distinguished them from supreme being and lesser spirits, they are called divinities Some communities may regard them as messengers of God. While others look upon them as agent of God, the complexity of the divinities is compounded by their show numbers, e.g., among the West African communities e.g. Yoruba of Nigeria, there are multiple of divinities that are associated with persons, places functional concepts and diseases. Some divinities are the glorified among the hero-defiled ancestors. Who lived and reigned among the people in generations past.

African also believed in recognized and concept the fact of the existence of spirit, who may use materials object and phenomena. Spirit contact are considered as powers which are almost abstract, as shade or vapor which takes on human shape, they are in material and incorporate spirits have different relationship with man,Emeka and Ekeopara(2010). Different studies on the activities of spirits show that they may cause one to prophesy. At the height of spirit possession the individual in effect loses his/her own person ability and in the personality of the Spirit possessing him. It may give information for the larger society in the case of a prophet. Among the disastrous spirit that role. In African society is very creative, powerful and disastrous in the actions and activities.

The world of African Tradition Religion is alive with spirits, all things, whether plants or animals, have own dimensions of spirits, to deny the existence of their own spirit is to deny the existence of African religion. Broadly speaking, In African traditional Religion, Africans believed that they are created spirits by God, many of them are closely associated with objects in nature and hence could “nature spirits” They may be found everywhere and they may live in remote area, unpopulated areas like bushes, forest ,rivers and mountains. They may also dwell on tress these spirits may also dwell on human beings. Whom they balance between the nature spirits and the human beings are upset, the men make sacrifices, offering and prayers to try to restore it. Since spirits cannot be seen, they are feared for they can strike any time. The nameless spirits are always attacking molesting, destroy and harming the living. Since they are unpredictable, the only safest place and step to remain far from whom they exist. Gehmen(2005),

On the other hand, majority of spirits in Africa are of diseased people, they may also be able to “ghost” who were born as human beings. In terms of relationship with human beings, this spirit may be divided into “good and bad” ghost. The bad spirits are angry soul of the dead; they are angry since they were mistreated in life or improperly buried in an alien land where no one remembers them with appropriate offerings. On the other hand, true “good” spirits are friendly because they are members of a family. Who were treated well and given a decent burial, they, are in their home territory and are properly remembered.

According to Mbiti (1969) in African society, men does not or need not, hope to become a spirit; he is inevitable to become, just as a child will automatically grow to become an adult, under normal circumstances. Becoming a spirit is in a sense a social elevation. For this reason, African people shows respect and high regard for their living dead. Human relationship with the spirit varies from society to society. It’s however real, creative and powerful relationship, especially with the spirit of those who have recently died. Various rites are performed to keep this contact the placing of food and other articles or pouring of liberation of beer, milk, food etc.

Mbiti (2011)also observes that people in A.T.R, often speaks about **spirit** in human terms or treat them up through they had human characteristics such as thinking, speaking, intelligence and the possession of power which they use as they will. Whether spirits are felt as good and bad depends on how people experience the forces of nature and how they went toward human beings. They are some societies, in which it’s believed that certain spirits are wholly responsible for some of the evils that people experience in the world such spirits become the scape gouts for people’s troubles. They are wholly associated with death and death itself is often regarded as a spirit.

In most cases the Theology of Traditional African Religion have been misinterpreted especially by the Western scholars. The different between Western and the African ideal God may be understood as different of name due to language. Another major point that obscure a true understanding and acceptance of African beliefs is the false Judeo- Christian-Islamic beliefs that African worship. Many gods and that created all existence. Africans are generously, portrayed as worshipping many gods including trees, rocks, rivers, inanimate objects.

In addition, the contrast between the one universe God and many local gods has raised an important question about the unity and structure of African Religion. Due the widespread belief in a single, Universal creator God, does it mean that African religion are fundamentally monotheistic? Or does the prod eminent everyday concern with the loser gods and spirits mean that African religious are polytheistic? However, in African religion the principle of monotheisms and polytheism are in fact complementary, not contradictory as in the western thought about the theology of traditional African religion, it is question of level.

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**Sources Of Theology Of Traditional African Religion.**

Very frequently, African beliefs and thoughts were and are manifested in artistic expression, which may be called indigenous languages of African beliefs and thought. This is because the form of art is always the expression of the ideas that inspired it. This is partly attributed to the lack of written literature in which case the people have a retentive memory whereby traditions and religious beliefs of generations are repeated by modern practices, particularly in religious rituals and cults. This is where other modes of preservation of thought are developed and medians of its communication evolve. Makumba(2007). Since the theology of traditional African religion involves the study of God, the way he has revealed Himself to African people, how people relate with Him, it also comprises of the study of those beings – spirits, divinities and ancestors and the way they relate with human beings. To know how man belief in these is to study about his environment and also study his mind.

**Symbols And Arts**

According to Ofuafo(2013), of all the creatures of both animals and vegetable kingdom, Man is the only one who possesses the creative power in mental and psychic forms. Man is the only creature that has the ability to reflect on his experience and express it symbolically. This creative power is part of his divine consciousness. A symbol can be defined as “an overt” expression of what is behind the veil of direct perception. It is quite usual for a perceiver to express his inner experiences, sight or visions and mystical or religious experiences in symbols. It is something that stands as a means of communicating an inner essence. Symbols especially those that manifest themselves in ritual context, and in selecting experience for concentration and can mysteriously help the coordination of brain and body. Symbols forms and processes are the principle media of expressing inner and emotional feeling resulting from religious experience. Thus symbols arise from subconscious such as imaginations, memory and perception.

As Afuafo(2013) puts it, symbols can be classified into natural, artificial communication, artistic and ritualistic. Natural symbols are mainly the results of some past experience or consciousness e.g thunder and lightning are of God. Artificial symbols are created by an individual or a group of people to represent ideas. Such symbols usually relate to a believer’s own experience. Ritualistic symbols are those that are used to instruct and indoctrinate the divotee about the article of their faith and it is mostly returgical. According to Mbiti(2011), symbols in traditional African religion helps to maintain order and coherence and this in turn could be a powerful instrument or indoctrination or as a tool for impressing religious dogma in the minds of the devotee. Symbols of religious art can also be used as a means of preserving knowledge of historical and religious occurrence. They could also help to achieve higher mystical exercise and spiritual developments such as divination, medication and education.

Omatseye(2010), in *An appraisal of religious art and symbolic beliefs in traditional African context,* also adds that in Africa, by virtual of their belief system, their spiritual practices have led to the creation of now artistic images. This is in the sense that their various artistic traditions are drawn upon as sources of inspiration significantly. Indigenous African religion have had a greater influence on an art object – In statues, Mask or other forms for use in ritual and worship. These images have religion Meta physical themes, which serves as the focal point of power, which link the African physical world to his belifs on his essence and experience.

**MUSIC AND DANCES.**

According to Samioah(2012), in *The importance of music in the African culture,* music has traditionally played an important role in African culture. It is essentially in representing the strong African heritage and its importance can be seen in many aspects of culture. Dances and storytelling and other religious practices are grounded on the music of the culture. In many ways, African music has a utilitarian function as it is used in vital aspects of life such as child naming ceremony, initiation rites, agricultural activities, national ceremonies, war time, religious ceremonies and burial ceremonies.

In the face of misfortunes, ceremonies and rituals are held in order to communicate with the spirit world to find out the cause of affliction and to appease the spirit(s) in question. The common means by which this communion with the spirits world is achieved through trance and possession, and music and dance provide a means by which trance and possession can be attained within the religious ritual. In some cases of rituals, e.g. Bira ritual among the Bushmen of South Africa, music is believed to have the power to call on spirits world and to send people into trance. In many healing and possession rituals, the success of a ritual revolves around the music and how well it is played. Thus affecting whether or not an individual will go into trance and become possessed. Certain songs can be identified with certain spirits, the reasons for this being that the spirits liked best when they were alive. This means that the music can call on a specific spirit to come and attend i.e call spirit whose presence is appropriate to the ritual being held.

According to Ray (2000), In *African Religions, symbols, Rituals and Community*, In the context of religious practices dance seems inspired by music and not vice versa. It is in many ways an extension of music through movement and works alongside it to create the necessary conditions for possessions and communication with the spirit world. Entering into dance, one is able to submit to the energy being generated by music. Also, as Suna(2008) in *Music And Dance In African Religions,* religious processes often entails the “coming together” of a society to address a common cause - usually some sort of misfortune or prevention of misfortune. It is important that tension and conflict is put aside during ritual, for everyone in this world is equally subject to the will of the gods (spirits). Religious practices therefore often reinforces an awareness of unity within society. Music and dances are key components within which manifest this sense of unity.

Omatseye (2010) also observes that, an African, in his/her traditional beliefs expresses his/her faith artistically in songs, music and dances. In other words, there is some creativity in the way worshippers expresses their deep emotions and feelings in the religion they profess. Generally, in reference to his/her god(s), the traditional worshipper expresses his spiritual inclination in dance steps, songs and music. They manifest as praise worship, offering of thanksgiving, confession of sins, proclamation of faith and priest proclamation of blessings. To further articulate these, musical objects like drums, gongs etc are employed to express the greatness of God and its divinities.

**PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS**

African religions are intertwined with African culture; proverbs, folktales, teachings, sayings etc. although there is a diverse variety of African religions, many of them have several themes in common such as ; the sacredness of universe; the relations that things in the universe have between one another; the existence of supreme God – creator and various other gods; various rituals, prayers, ceremonies, temples and shrines; religious significance of the sky, star, sun, moon etc. proverbs and wise sayings in African tradition religion, carries all these philosophical themes.

According to Masaka(2013), in *The Proverb; A preserver of shone traditional religion and ethical code*, proverbs are quite crucial as an embodiment of Shona religion and an enforcer of desirable human conduct In the Shona community. From an early age, upto adulthood, children are continuously instructed directly and indirectly through listening to wise sayings such as proverbs. Such an activity helps to educate one of the religious beliefs systems and shaping one’s conduct. They are commonly used among the Shona to inculcate truth, repremend those who violate the Shona code of conduct and informing people of spiritual presence in human activities.

Proverbs have also key functions in preservations and transmission of religious beliefs and enforcement of moral codes. Most of the proverbs carry out some religious aspects in them e.g one of the proverb among the shone *Dai pasina nyimo, makungoo aizo dyei?(if there were no round nuts, what would the crows eat?)*. the proverb portrays the generous nature of Mwari – their God, who provides everything to what he created. Another proverb *“ Madzimu ishiri, kutokwa uruobhuroruke* (An ancestral spirit is like a bird; it abandons the one who abuses it). The proverb helps to preserve the conduct at whivh the people should treat their ancestral spirits for blessings. These shows that proverbs helps in giving religious and moral guidance to the shone people.

According to Okeke(-) in ,*Proverbs And The Religious Consciousness of Africa.* Says that in African context of religious talk on God, proverbs can be analysed as one of the ways of speaking deeply about the sacred or the divine. Many proverbs in different African languages serve the purpose of bringing forth the mysterious, incomprehensible and transcendent nature of the sacred. There are proverbs that shows the undeniable fact of an existing reality whose knowledge is almost instinctual.. e.g the Ashanti proverb that says that “ a child is not taught about God”. Remarkably, proverbs therefore communicate religious truth and are important vehicle through which fundamental religious lessons are conveyed. Tasie (2014) in *The Heritage Of Mouth; Oral Sources and the Study Of African Traditional Religion.*

***RITUALS AND CEREMONIES.***

Ceremonies, festivals and rituals, according to Olupona(2014), in his work, *Ceremonies, Festivals And Rituals,* embodies, enact and reinforces the sacred values communicated in the community. Community rituals include- agricultural rituals, designed to persuade gods to deliver rains and successfully harvest and guarantee healthy livestock. Other rituals include rite of passage, which mark personal transition; funeral rites, marriage rites etc. Mbiti(2011) in the book, *Introduction to African Religion,* says that a ritual embodies a belief or beliefs, through ritual, people not only act their religion but also communicate it to the younger generations. Through ritual action and word, people feel able to exercise certain amount of control over the invisible world and the forces of nature. In this way, man feels himself to be not just a passive creature in the universe but a creative agent. For the purpose of rituals, he uses almost everything at his disposal, including symbols, colours, incarnations, oral formular – especially invocations of prayers and the help of mystical powers.

Also during rituals and ceremonies, in African traditional societies, there are sacrifices. According to Ojua (2012) in *African sacrificial ceremonies and issues in social- cultural development*, asserts that sacrifices are not one of the ways most African people use to connect or relate their spiritual “father” or “god” for help, healing, direction and guidance etc. hence creating such spiritual recognition and potency for functioning and attainment of effective results conceptually, sacrifice is an act of offering something to a spirit, God, in order to benefit the person. Religious sacrifices are done as an offering to honour or appease a god or God especially of a ritually slaughtered animal. Sacrifices also help ancestral links and togetherness. When sacrifices are done, there is spiritual link of unity between the spirit whose sole responsibility is to protect the living and those within their domain. Through sacrifices, cultural and religious bonds are strengthened.

Frencher (2006) in *Ritual and Sacrifices among the Dinka of Southern sudan; Implications for Christian Evangelism and Discipleship****.*** Observes that Africans in their traditional beliefs seeks to avoid evil or why they deal with it to recapture the original state. Sacrifices is one of the prominent examples of ritual used to control or cope effectively with evil when it occurs. Sacrifices involves the shedding of blood of animal human beings or birds, this is because, as Mbiti(2011) confirms that life is closely associated with blood. So when blood is shed in making a sacrifice, it means human or animal life is being given back to God, who is the ultimate source of all life.

**RELIGIOUS OBJECTS AND PLACES.**

The African sense of religion entering all areas of life makes people feel that many objects and places have a religious significance. Mbiti(1969), some of these are natural objects and places, others are made by people themselves. Religious objects may include: personal religious objects that may be carried in bags or tied to his/her body e.g wrist, neck, an ankle etc or kept in the house, on the top roof, at the gate to the homestead or in the fields; Ritual objects are used in performing the ritual concerned. Some are used by the individual family, community under the ritual leader. These objects embody the beliefs attracted to the ritual they are the external concrete symbols of the external ideas, beliefs which are demonstrated in the ritual. Mbiti(2011).

Religious places also are significant in the African religions. Every African people have religious places that are not for common or careless use because they are considered holy or sacred. They may be man-made or natural places. In both cases, they are used for religious activities like playing, making sacrifices and offerings and major ceremonies and rituals. Among the agikuyu, they worshipped under the Mugumo tree as a sacred place where they offered sacrifices to God(Ngai).

According to Ray(2000), in *African Religions, symbols, rituals and community*, African art is iconic in the sense that it portrays the invisible spiritual world in a symbolic and abstract manner, using some of the features of the natural world. It also embodies spiritual forces. Rituals, through traditional art, often communicate with spiritual forces and to control them for the benefit of the community.

Such art objects also evoke appropriate human responses, such as prayers and the giving of offerings, so that spirits, ancestors, and divinieswill feel honored and respected and respond with blessings. African art also depicts the spirit world in human or partly human forms because spiritual beings are imagined to possess human-like personalities and to uphold human values.

Many traditional African religions have elaborate stories that explains how the world was created, how humans were created, how culture and civilization came about. Myths are popular methods of education, they communicate religious knowledge and morality. Legends by their nature, talks about a historical person who lived in time earlier than, but continuously with our present time but who have remarkably outstanding either because of their strength or weakness. A careful study of the divinities and spiritual forces in the pantheon of African religion, will reveal that a reasonable number of them are no more than defiedheroes and celebrities. Some of the divinities were legendary figures who metamorphosed from ordinary mortal and became deified after his death.

Therefore the discussion on *sources of theology of traditional African religion is a very* crucial one if the discipline is to be thoroughly appreciated and recognized. This is from the fact that African traditional religion is not passive but active. Something else that have to be sacred writings. Whoever would like to observe or study it, has to do it in a practical life. Mbiti(1969) gives a summary of where to find or look for and find A.T.R.; rituals, ceremonies and festivals; shrines, sacred places and religious objects; art and symbols; music and dances’ proverbs, riddles and wise sayings; myths and legends; beliefs and customs. All these sources converge in the religious interpretation of reality, with God at the counter.

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