

Questioning the Status Quo: Defining the African Traditional Religion as Culture

Joel Mokhoathi
Faculty: Theology, Department of Religion Studies
University of the Free State
South Africa

Abstract

There is a growing tendency for African scholars to define the African Traditional Religion in terms of African cultural ideologies and traditional practices. This tends to blur the line between the two systems since they overlap. By definition, culture can be classified as a human construct which evolves over time. Religion, on the other hand, is a permanent construct, and its origins can be attributed to divine entities. Although some of its practices may be varied, its central doctrines do not change. In this sense, cultural practices cannot be used to define a religion; rather a religion can be used to explain cultural practices. If cultural elements could sufficiently account for religion, then there would be no need for the belief in a Supreme Being, since culture emanates from people. But if religious values can be used in the development of culture, then religion can be used to explain cultural norms.

Key words: Religion, Culture, African Traditional Religion, African cultural ideologies

Introduction

Within the African context, a great deal of scholars perceives the African Traditional Religion (ATR) as a product of human experiences - those of former generations (Awolalu, 1979:26; Dopamu, 1991:22; Mbiti, 1975:16). If this is the case, who or what is the object of worship in the African Traditional Religion? Obviously, one cannot out-rightly claim that it is God. God is not a subject of our experiences but our experiences are subject to the awareness of God. There has to be a distinction between a social and divine construct; between a human edifice and the divine responsiveness. Otherwise, the profane may easily be mixed with the godly and the sacred with the ordinary. There are specific elements that distinguish culture from religion and religion from culture. However, the differentiation of religion from culture has largely been contested (McCutcheon, 1995:289). Some scholars prefer to look upon religion and culture as a unit and strongly argue that to regard religion as a category in itself, dissociable from culture, reflects a Western, Christian bias (Cohen, 2009:196). Therefore, I do not intend to dissociate religion from culture in this article. Religion can only be expressed within the context of culture. But my intent is to show that defining the African Traditional Religion in terms of African cultural ideologies and traditional practices threatens the belief in the Supreme Being; a basic doctrine of the ATR.

It is therefore necessary that some distinctions between religion and culture be drawn in order

address this issue. Firstly, the notion of religion supersedes culture. The central focus of religion is worship. Therefore, religion cannot be classified as culture. Secondly, culture is a human product but religion has divine origins. Thirdly, culture is dynamic. It is not static but fluctuates over time. In order to build up an argument in this regard, some specific elements, which distinguish religion from culture or vice versa, will be discussed. Later, the status quo of African scholars who tend to define the African Traditional Religion in terms of cultural ideologies and traditional practices will be questioned.

Religion as differentiated from culture

Even though religion is generally conceptualized as a form of culture, since it contains a set of unified belief systems and practices which are varied across religious traditions (Kleinman, 1995:98), it is however not culture (James, 1997:42). Religion, in the traditional sense of the term, has nothing to do with culture. But has absolutely everything to do with worship. Religion uniquely focuses on the relationship with the divine (Cohen, 2009:195). James (1997:42) asserts that religion regards the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider divine. Religion, in this sense, entails a personalized experience from which individuals build their relations with whatever they consider to be divine. Tracing the etymology of the term, Griffiths (2000), states that the term “religion” comes from the Latin word *religio*. “*Religio*” is a word that comes from another Latin term, “*re + ligare*”, which means “to bind back”, or “to re-bind”. In this traditional understanding, the term religion means to re-establish, by worship, a lost or broken intimacy between God and worshippers (Griffiths, 2000). In this sense, the purpose of religion is “to bind back” or “to re-bind” a lost or broken intimacy between God and worshippers. If this is the purpose of religion, it cannot therefore be classified as culture. According to Sasaki and Kim (2011:402), culture can be understood as a meaning-making system in which psychological processes are configured in various ways across nations, and as a context in which religion can be expressed.

In this sense, culture arises out of the meaning-making processes which are entrenched within the various patterns of social interaction. The ultimate purpose of culture therefore is to bring meaning to lived experiences; whereas the goal of religion is to facilitate a relationship with the divine. In this context, religion is differentiated from culture. Furthermore, the notion of, “to bind back” or “to re-bind”, in the meaning of religion seems to suggest, at least, two things: (1) that humans are either born with the awareness of God, from which their experiences serve as a resource in the process of knowledge acquisition towards their realization of his existence, and/or (2) that humans were originally intimate with God but lost or broke that intimacy in the course of time.

Both Christianity and the African Traditional Religion hold this view. Christians believe that there was a time, before the fall of human, where humankind had a wholesome knowledge of God, and had enjoyed a measure of intimacy with him; but lost that privilege after the fall. African myths also tell how God used to live with people, but later distanced himself because of their impurity (Crafford, 2015:9). Therefore, If the ultimate end of religion is “to bind back” or “to re-bind” a broken relationship with the divine, it hardly qualifies as culture. In fact, one can argue

that it supersedes culture. Some students of religion contend that humans' religious consciousness was born during the time when man first appeared (Hultkrantz, 1993:22). This entails that religious awareness emerged with the first appearance of man, and that mankind used religious values to develop cultural norms. This makes perfect sense when one begins to think of culture as a human construct. Merrill (1957:116) presupposes that during the hundreds of thousand years when *homo sapiens* were passing through their various stages of development, it may be logically assumed that, at some time, they existed in society but without culture. Evolutionary theories to the origin of religion support this notion. Evolutionary theories begin with the view that religion developed from lower to higher forms, in conjunction with the development of human beings from primitive hunter-gatherer to agriculturalist, and eventually to the modern, cultured person (Crafford, 2015: 3). Therefore, instead of looking at the ATR as a product of the African culture, one ought to think of the African culture as a product of the African Traditional Religion. Since the students of religion contend that religion was born with the first appearance of mankind, it is likely that humans used religious value systems to develop their way of life. In the process, religious value systems overlapped with cultural ideologies and traditional practices, and thus religion was equated to culture. Sociologists however, argue that culture is a social product. This suggests that society came before culture. In this sense, sociologists contend that cultural ideologies and traditional practices originated from society through interaction (Merrill, 1957:116). Bidney (1953:104) explains this process in the following manner:

...if one acknowledges the priority of man in society, as the author of his own culture, one is logically bound to accept the ontological priority of social man to culture. Once begun, the process becomes cyclical, societies developing cultures and the cultures in turn affecting their societies...

The above statement makes culture a product of social interaction. Thus, the sociological perspective maintains that societies develop their own cultural norms. If this understanding were to apply to religion, each society would have its own religion. Then, most religions would be localized instead of being general. Even though the African Traditional Religion is localized - has remained in its original socio-cultural environment - its basic doctrines are generalized - found the same in different geographical locations around the Sub Saharan region.

If they were not generalized, each Bantu tribe in the various tribes of South Africa (Xhosa, Sotho, Zulu, Venda, etc.) would have their own specific deity which is localized. Rather, all the Bantu tribes believe in one Supreme Being, who is referred to by various names. For instance, within the Xhosa tribes, the Supreme Being is known as "*Qamata*"; within the Sothos, the Supreme Being is called "*Modimo*"; among the Zulus, the Supreme Being is referred to as "*Mvelingqang*" and in Tshivenda, the Supreme Being is "*Nwali*" (Mndende, 2009:113). Many other African nations have similar, and/or different names for the same Ultimate Being but their basic understanding of the Supreme Being is cohesive. For the reason that culture is perceived as a social construct by sociologists, it carries a variety of meanings. But the most consistent definitions of culture come from E. B. Taylor and A. P. Fiske. Taylor (1871:1) defined culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other

capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Fiske (2002:85) further said that culture is a socially constructed constellation consisting of such things as practices, competencies, ideas, schemas, symbols, values, norms, institutions, goals, constitutive rules, artifacts, and modifications of the physical environment. These definitions of culture highlight the normative traits of group life such as practices, competencies, ideas, schemas, values, norms, customs, constitutive rules or laws, and institutions which emerge out of social interaction. They further demonstrate the symbolic components of culture which bear meaningful interpretations. These meaningful symbols include the transmission of knowledge, belief systems, and artifacts or art forms. In line with these definitions, culture really appears to be a human construct, which emerges out of social interaction. As a social construct, it cannot give rise to religion. To put this differently, religion cannot be a human construction. This would make religion an anthropocentric system which lacks an absolute authority, since humans determine what their religion should be. Beginning with culture, in the definition of religion, therefore poses a threat to the belief in the existence of the Supreme Being which is the basic doctrine of the ATR.

Culture as dynamic

Since the cultural system is a human construct, which occurs predominantly through social interaction, it changes over time. These changes are a result of human and social developments. The more humans are forced to adapt, the more their culture transforms. This means that the cultural system must be able to adapt to forces outside itself. The most common examples of adaptation include physiological needs and the geographical setting. As Meggers (1954:801-824) noted, humans fight for survival, since they must feed, clothe, and house themselves by adapting to their surroundings. This however, does not mean that the environment “determines” the direction of culture, but that culture must adjust to physiological and geographical necessities if it is to continue (Merrill, 1957:127).

Besides the physiological and geographical factors, the method of transmission also plays an essential role in the transformation of culture. The cultural system is cumulative because it can be passed on from one generation to the next (Merrill, 1957:126). This means that the following generations can easily build upon the achievements of the former and thereby transforming certain elements of their culture. This is not the same with religion. Religion does not depend on the adaptation of humankind for continuity. Rather, it remains the same, even when humankind is fighting for survival. The only thing that can change is the attitude in which one approaches the Supreme Being when forced to adapt to his or her surroundings.

The Status Quo in the definition of the ATR

Most African scholars define the African Traditional Religion in terms of cultural ideologies and traditional practices. Sadly, some of these definitions have been widely used to fight against the Western, colonial and derogatory descriptions ascribed to the ATR by those who do not know any better. The concern, however, is that the very definitions of the ATR, offered by African scholars, the people who are supposed to know better, do not do any justice to the inviolability of the religion. But their definitions instead lessen the absoluteness of the religion. Since there are

many definitions of the ATR, I will limit my scope to those highly cited and favoured by African scholars.

The definition of the ATR as a product of culture

Before we can explore how the definitions, offered by African scholars, downplay the absoluteness of this religion, let us first look at the basic doctrinal components of the ATR. According to Mndende (2009:112), there are three basic beliefs in the African Traditional Religion. These include the following: (a) belief in the Creator, (b) belief in the Ancestors, and (c) belief in communal life and ritual performances. Two of these basic beliefs of the ATR - the belief in the Ancestors, and the belief in communal life and ritual practices - will not be discussed here, since the aim is to show that the definitions offered by African scholars threatens the ATR belief in the Creator. Explaining the belief in the Supreme Being or Creator, Mndende (2009:112-113) states the following regarding this basic doctrine of the African Traditional Religion:

People who practice African Traditional Religion believe in the existence of the Supernatural Power who created life and the earth. Neither science nor humans can explain the power of the Creator. The Creator is the Spirit and is neither male nor female. Although the Supernatural Power is believed to be everywhere in creation, it is also believed that creation began in the Spiritual World. The Spiritual World is holy and it is where the laws, rituals and taboos that control the welfare of the physical world originated. The Supernatural Power made all the laws that regulate life; therefore these laws are to be strictly obeyed.

By reading the above quotation, one may easily conclude that the African Traditional Religion is a divine institution, which supersedes the African culture. Again, one may further be tempted to assume that the laws, rituals, and taboos which govern the physical world, in an African traditional sense, emanates from the Supreme Being, who gave out these laws to regulate life. Therefore these laws must be strictly obeyed. But when one goes back to the definition of the ATR, one cannot help but see a disparity. The definition of the ATR does not square to its basic beliefs, particularly that of the belief in the Creator. One would expect worshipers to define or describe their religion in terms of the deity they worship. But in the case of the ATR, this is the opposite. For instance, one of the mostly cited African scholars, P. A. Dopamu (1991:22) argues that the African Traditional Religion is a product of culture, rather than a divine responsiveness. As cited by Mndende (2009:111), this African scholar defines the ATR as follows:

African Traditional Religion comprises the religious beliefs and practices of the Africans, which had been in existence from time immemorial, and are still adhered to today by many Africans. It is the indigenous religion of the Africans, which has been handed down by their forebears... it is a religion that originated from the people's environment and on their soil. It is neither preached to them nor imported by them. Africans are not converted into it. Each person is born into it, lives it, practice it, and is proud to make it his own.

This definition makes the ATR a cultural product since “it is a religion that originated from the people’s environment and on their soil” (Dopamu, 1991:22). By arguing that the ATR originated from the people’s environment, Dopamu actually describes the adaptive quality of culture. As stated early, it is essentially a cultural system that needs to adapt to its geographical environment in order to ensure its continuity, not religion. If this is the case, then the ATR has been incorrectly defined. Religion cannot be regarded as a human product. Then it would be culture. And the primary goal of culture is to regulate behaviour between the interactive processes of society.

Another African scholar, who obscures the definition of the ATR, is J. O. Awolalu. This scholar looks upon the ATR as an institution whose founder is neither known nor worshipped. He does not look upon the Supreme Being as the ultimate source or the founder of the African Traditional Religion. As cited by Kanu (2014:6), Awolalu (1979:26) states the following regarding the ATR:

When we speak of African traditional religion we mean the indigenous religion of the Africans. It is the religion that has been handed down from generation to generation by the forebears of the present generation of Africans. It is not a fossil religion (a thing of the past) but a religion that Africans today have made theirs by living it and practicing it. This is a religion that has no written literature yet it is “written” everywhere for those who care to see and read. It is largely written in the people’s myths, folktales, in their songs and dances, in their liturgies and shrines and in their proverbs and pithy sayings. It is a religion whose historical founder is neither known nor worshipped. It is a religion that has no zeal for membership drive, yet it offers persistent fascination for Africans, young and old.

Apart from highlighting the essential components of the ATR such as oral tradition - its transmission through myths, folktale, songs, pithy sayings and proverbs, and its meaningful symbolic interpretation - such as art or dance, liturgies and shrines; this definition questions the basic belief of the ATR in the Supreme Being. If the ATR was founded by an unknown entity, which is not worshiped, where does the belief in the Supreme Being feature in the basic doctrines of the ATR? If the Supreme Being is not the founder, then who is? Had the scholar said that the ATR originated with the awareness of the existence of the Creator, the belief in the Supreme Being would be validated. But since the origins of the ATR are attributed to an unknown source which is not God, the basic belief in the Supreme Being in the ATR has been challenged. The last example of the definitions which construes the nature of the ATR and reduces it to a product of culture comes from a well-known African scholar, J. S. Mbiti. Like the African scholars already cited in this article, Mbiti (1975:16) looked upon the ATR as an anthropocentric system. When explaining the foundations of the ATR, Mbiti (1975:16) stated the following:

Some of the world religions like Christianity and Islam have founders who started them. This is not the case with African Religion. It evolved slowly through many centuries, as people responded to the situations of

their life and reflected upon their experiences. Many factors must have played a part in its development. These include the geographical environment - mountains, rivers, deserts, and forests - the change of the seasons, the powers of nature (such as earthquakes, thunderstorms, and volcanos), calamities, epidemics, diseases, birth and death, and major historical events like wars, locust invasions, famines, migrations and so on.

By far, this is the most obviously construed definition of the ATR. It pays no regard for the belief in the Supreme Being. It bears the notion that without a founder, like Christ in Christianity and Muhammad in Islam, religion has no absolute source of authority. This is disturbing because, even the founders of Christianity and Islam acknowledged the presence of a Higher Being, to whom worship must be directed. Furthermore, the ATR is not the only religion which was not founded by a particular deified character. Judaism, for instance, has no founder like the ATR but the role of the Supreme Being is clearly defined. For the lack of a founding figure, Judaism is not perceived as a cultural system, but as a religion which informs cultural ideologies and traditional practices. The foundations of the Jewish faith are attributed to God, as the Supreme Being rather than an unknown entity.

This kind of a definition restricts the findings of the ATR to subjective and external forces which influenced the lives of people at a particular point in time. By arguing that the ATR “evolved slowly through many centuries, as people responded to the situations of their life and reflected upon their experiences”, Mbiti (1975:16) regards the ATR to be a product of adaptation and communal experiences. This is a feature of culture. If a religion can evolve, for many centuries, with people’s responses to external situations which affect their lives at different stages of development, and from people’s reflections based on their personal experiences, how genuine can that religion be? Considering that archaeologists trace the observable patterns of religious life from the Neanderthal man who lived 30, 000 years BCE (Hultkrantz, 1993:24).

Specific to an African context, archaeologists suppose (if taking burial as an indicator of a concern with life after death) that the earliest record of religion may be 100, 000 years old, for that is the date which has been attached to the remains of a small child, found in a grave in a Boarder Cave in Northern Natal (Kruger, 2012:18). Within the South African context, Kruger (2012:14) states that the first observable practice of the ATR can be traced from the Bushman (San) who lived 1000 years ago. By looking at Mbiti’s definition, and by counting the years in which religious life can be traced in Africa, it is hard to imagine the changes that the ATR would have undergone to its present form.

If this is the case, that the ATR is an evolving system, then there is no consistency in the basic doctrines of the religion. Since its central ideas are being refined over time. This is probably why Mbiti (1975:16) states that many of the ideas and practices of the ATR were later abandoned when they were found to be inadequate. The dynamic feature of the ATR makes it difficult for it to be regarded as a religion. It resembles a cultural system.

Religions do not change over time. It can only be the methods of worship that changes, not the

essence of religion. They are structured and maintain some form of consistency. Otherwise, what would be deemed a good reason for anyone to remain faithful to an ever-changing system? If the ATR is ever a genuine religion, with an ultimate object of worship, which is the Supreme Being, it therefore needs to be depicted as such.

Towards a proper definition of the African Traditional Religion

As a divine system, the African Traditional Religion supersedes culture. Just as Mndende (2009:113) noted, the laws, rituals and taboos that govern the physical world emanates from the spiritual. Therefore, these laws are to be strictly obeyed. The spiritual world is holy, comprises of a higher order of beings (spirits or ancestors) and has a great influence on the physical world. Because the bodily are aware of the power possessed by the spiritual, they make it their task to live in a manner that will not upset the balance of the cosmos. They try to maintain harmony between the physical and the spiritual. The best way in which this is done is through obedience to the laws, rituals and taboos that govern the physical world. Where these laws have been broken, the spiritual entities must be appeased. From this, one can realize that the African Traditional Religion is not a mere invention of the African people, but is a sacred religion which derives its origins from the spiritual realm - the domicile of the Supreme Being. The African Traditional Religion is therefore a responsive religion. Not merely to the geographical environment, seasons of time or historical events but to the awareness of the Ultimate deity, the Supreme Being. One of the few African Scholars, who shares this impression, is A. N. O. Ekwunife. As cited by Kanu (2014:6), Ekwunife (1990) defines the African Traditional Religion as:

... those institutionalized beliefs and practices of indigenous religion of Africa which are the result of traditional Africans' responses to their believed revealing Superhuman Ultimate which are rooted from time immemorial in the past African religious culture, beliefs and practices that were transmitted to the present votaries by successive African forebears mainly through oral traditions (myths and folktales, songs and dances, liturgies, rituals proverbs, pithy sayings, names and oaths), sacred specialists and persons, sacred space, objects and symbols, a religion which is slowly but constantly updated by each generation in the light of new experiences through the dialectical process of continuities and discontinuities.

The above definition is far from perfect, if there is perfection in definitions, but it encapsulates the essence of the African Traditional Religion. *Firstly*, it posits that the ATR is composed of responses of the African people to the awareness of the Superhuman Ultimate. *Secondly*, it states that these responses are rooted, from time immemorial, in the past African "religious culture", beliefs and practices. *Thirdly*, like the definitions noted earlier, it references the method in which this religion has been transmitted (orally) and preserved over time - handed down from one generation to the next. What sets this definition apart, therefore, is that it does not begin with culture but with the awareness of the Supreme Being in defining the ATR. At the surface, this may appear to be insignificant, but it speaks directly to the heart of the religion. The ATR

revolves around the belief in the Supreme Being. Without a belief in the Supreme Being, the ATR would be void. It is to the Supreme Being that Africans make their sacrifices (Mndende, 2009:88). It is due to the Supreme Being that Africans call upon ancestors to mediate on their behalf (Mlisa, 2009:62). It is because of the Supreme Being that Africans must strictly obey the laws, rituals and taboos that govern the physical world (Njoku, 2004:57). And it is to the Supreme Being that Africans must respect sacred spaces, observe religious ceremonies and live in harmony with the rest of creation (Mbiti, 1975:149). The belief in the Supreme Being is the essence of the ATR.

Conclusion

Definitions like the ones debated earlier in the article give the impression that African scholars misrepresent the African Traditional Religion or that the African Traditional Religion has not yet established an element of consistency in its basic doctrines. Most of the definitions that have been used by African scholars turn to make the African Traditional Religion appear as an anthropocentric system, which is a product of African cultural ideologies and traditional practices. Due to this limitation, these definitions challenge the absoluteness of the African Traditional Religion and classify it as a social construct. Probably, this is why the African Traditional Religion has always been equated with the African culture. However, as a religion, the African Traditional Religion cannot be classified in this manner. It is a separate system. It can only find expression within a cultural context, but on its own, it supersedes culture.

For the reason that it supersedes culture, the last definition is accurate in contending that the African Traditional Religion emerged out of the responses of African people to the awareness of the Superhuman Ultimate, which is God. From their awareness of the existence of the Supreme Being, African people must have begun to use their religious culture as a way of life. And later, began to combine their religious ideologies with their African cultural practices. This overlap between religion and culture became a standard norm, from which there was no distinction between religion and culture.

Even though this may have been the case, the basic elements of the African Traditional Religion (particularly the belief in the Supreme Being) place it above culture. Since it revolves around the belief in the Supreme Being, the African Traditional Religion is divine. It is a religion that emanated from the awareness of a Higher Being, a Supernatural entity which created and is responsible for all of life. This is the central idea that should be implied by the belief in the Supreme Being, which is entrenched in the basic doctrines of the African Traditional Religion.

References

- Akwunife, A. N. O. (1990). *Consecration in Igbo Traditional Religion*. Nigeria: Jet Publishers.
- Awolalu, J. O. (1979). *Yoruba belief and Sacrificial Rites*. Ikeja: Longman Publications.
- Bidney, D. (1953). *Theoretical Anthropology*. NY: Columbia University Press.

Cohen, A. B. (2009). *Many Forms of Culture*. American Psychologist, Vol. 64, No. 3 (April, 2009), 194-204.

Crafford, D. (2015). African Traditional Religions. In A. Meiring & P. Meiring (Eds.). *South Africa, Land of Many Religions*. Wellington: Christian Literature Fund.

Dopamu, P. A. (1991). Towards understanding African Traditional Religion. In N. Mdende (Eds.). *Tears of Distress: Voices of a Denied Spirituality in a Democratic South Africa*. Dutywa: Icamagu Institute Publications.

Fiske, A. P. (2002). *Using Individualism and Collectivism to compare cultures - A critique of the validity and measurement of the constructs: Comment on Oyserman et al.* (2002). Psychological Bulletin, Issue 128, 78-88.

Griffiths, P. J. (2000). *The Very Idea of Religion*. First Things, Issue Archive, May, 2000. Retrieved from: <http://www.firststthings.com/article/2000/05/the-very-idea-of-religion> (Retrieved May 12, 2015).

Hultkrantz, A. (1993). Religion Before History. In R.P. Beaver, J. Bergman, M.S. Langley, W. Metz, A. Romarheim, A. Wallis, R. Withycombe & R.W.F. Wooton (Eds.). *The World's Religions: A Lion Handbook*. Oxford: Lion Publications.

James, W. (1997). *Varieties of Religious Experience: A study in human nature*. New York: Touchstone Publications.

Kanu, I. A. (2014). *African Traditional Religion in a Globalizing World*. International Journal of Humanities Social Science and Education, Vol. 1, No. 8 (August 2014), 4-12

Kleinman, A. (1995). *Writing at the Margin: Discourse between Anthropology and Medicine*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kruger, J. S., Lubbe, G. J. A., & Steyn H. C. (2012). *Overview of the Religious History of Humankind*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Mbiti, J. S. (1975). *Introduction to African Religion*. Oxford: Heinemann Publications.

McCutcheon, R. T. (1995). *The Category "Religion" in Recent Publications: A critical survey*. Numen, Vol. 42, No. 3, 284-309.

Mlisa, L. N. (2009). *Ukutwasa - Initiation of Amagqirha: Identity Construction and the Training of Xhosa Women as Traditional Healers* (PhD Thesis). Bloemfontein: University of Free State.

Mdende, N. (2006). *African Spiritual Journey: Rites of Passage among the Xhosa speaking of South Africa*. Rondebosch: Icamagu Institute Publications.

Mndende, N. (2009). *Tears of Distress: Voices of a Denied Spirituality in a Democratic South Africa*. Dutywa: Icamagu Institute Publications.

Meggers, B. J. (1954). *Environmental Limitation on the Development of Culture*. *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 56 (October, 1954), 801-824.

Merrill, F. E. (1957). *Society and Culture*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Publications.

Njoku, F. O.C. (2004). *Development and African Philosophy*. London: Heinemann Publications.

Sasaki, J., & Kim, H. (2011). *At the Intersection of Culture and Religion: A Cultural Analysis of Religion's Implications for Secondary Control and Social Affiliation*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 101, No. 2, 401-414.

Tylor, E. B. (1871). *Primitive Culture*. London: John Murray Publications.