

Everyday religion and tolerance in Ede (Nigeria) workshop report

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In collaboration with Osun State University and Adeleke University the "Knowing Each Other: Everyday Religious Encounters, Social Identities and Tolerance in Southwest Nigeria" project organised a day workshop followed by a town meeting on the 5th and 6th of December 2012. The workshop was hosted by Adeleke University, Ede.

The aims of the workshop and village meeting were:

To give scholars and the wider community an opportunity to explore the links between religious tolerance and the everyday lives and social identities of Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists in Ede

To present the early findings from the fieldwork conducted by the "Knowing Each other" project in Ede to both scholars and the community.

Workshop

The workshop was opened by a welcome address from Professor Diji Aina, Vice Chancellor and President, Adeleke University and a keynote address from Professor Siyan Oyeweso entitled "Religion in Ede". These were followed by papers from scholars based in Universities in Nigeria and the UK including Professor Ibikunle H. Tijani (Adeleke University), Dr Aderemi Ajala (University of Ibadan), Dr George Olusola Ajibade (Obafemi Awolowo University), Dr Amusa Saheed Balogun (Obafemi Awolowo University), Yemi Balogun (Osun State University), Mrs Foluso Phillips (Ladoke Akintola University of Technology), Mr Kayode Onipede (Ladoke Akintola University of Technology), Miss Oluwatosin Akinjobi, **Mrs Rebecca Jones** (staff/profiles/dasa/jones-rebecca.aspx) (University of Birmingham), Olugbenga Stephen Titus (University of Ibadan) and Mr Akin Iwilade (University of Oxford).

Themes that emerged in the workshop were;

- The role of different religions in the history and development of Ede town
- The importance of knowledge about the other in the relationships between the different religious groups in Ede
- The interaction between different religious groups in Ede's professional and associational life
- The practice of everyday life and the role of religious difference in marriage and family life

Papers presented at the conference explored Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists religious beliefs and practices in Ede. The papers approached the idea of everyday religion and tolerance from a variety of perspectives. This included papers which explored everyday life and family practice in Ede, religion and the public sphere in Nigeria, cultural production and those that historicised religious worship in Ede.

Village Meeting

On the second day a village meeting was held at which many university, community and religious leaders were present including Professor Diji Aina, Oba Munirudeen Adesola Lawal, Alhaji Mas'ud Akajewole the Chief Imam of Ede, Honourable Sikiru Ayedun, Chief Sesan Fadara, Chief J. A. Adeleke, The Jagun Sango of Ede, Chief Kola Fadairo, Chief Lamidi Ogunkanmi, Mrs Moriliatu Olanrewaju, Mr Rafiu Debo Yusuf, Mr Remi Adegunwa. The meeting was opened with remarks from Professor Diji Aina and a representative of the Timi of Ede, Oba Munirudeen Adesola Lawal (Laminisa I). The Honourable Sikiru Ayedun welcoming people to the meeting. The welcome addresses were followed by a short play written and performed by students at the Department of History and International Studies of Adeleke University, Ede. The play explored a multi faith community, with students representing Muslim, Christian and traditional religious practitioners in the Ede community.



Alhaji Nureni Lawal and Miss Tosin Akinjobi presented some of the research findings from the Ede community to the meeting which lead to a thoughtful and lively discussion. There were interventions from the floor where members of the Ede community spoke of the harmonious interaction between adherents of the three religions. Marriage, kinship ties, the traditional institutions especially the Timi chieftaincy stool, indigenous music of Ede as well as other aspects of Ede popular culture were identified as important means through which the continued harmonious interaction in the Ede community was supported. The meeting was closed with remarks and thanks from Dr Insa Nolte, Professor Koya Ogen and Olusegun Ojo (Registrar, Adeleke University, Ede) who thanked all the participants for their contribution.

Papers presented at the workshop:

- Professor Siyan Oyeweso (Osun State University): "Religion in Ede"
- Mr Akin Iwilade (University of Oxford): Power, Religion and the Public sphere in Nigerian Higher Educational Institutions
- Olugbenga Stephen Titus (University of Ibadan): The Place of Indigenous Music in the Promotion of Peaceful Co-existence among different religious people in Ede.
- Dr Aderemi Ajala (University of Ibadan): 'Sango in the Church': Religious accommodation and kingship power in Ede.
- Dr George Olusola Ajibade (Obafemi Awolowo University): Religious experience in Sango's Verbal Art among the Yoruba.
- Yemi Balogun (Osun State University): Religion and Prejudice: Perspectives on the Tabigh and Jamaat in Ede.
- Dr Amusa Saheed Balogun (Obafemi Awolowo University): A critical assessment of religion growth and tolerance in three Muslim dominated compounds in Ede.
- Mrs Rebecca Jones (University of Birmingham): Results of a survey on Inter-Religious attitudes and encounter in Ede
- Professor Ibikunle H. Tijani (Adeleke University): Family Life, Diversity and Convergence: Historicising the Adeleke family of Ede.
- Miss Oluwatosin Akinjobi
- Mrs Foluso Phillips (Ladoke Akintola University of Technology)
- Mr Kayode Onipede (Ladoke Akintola University of Technology)

The Workshop papers are due to be published as a book provisionally entitled "'Ede is one room': Religious coexistence and encounter in a Muslim Yoruba town" in 2014.

