

Annotated Bibliography of Internet Resources on African Traditional Religion (ATR)

By Alan Howell - June 17, 2005

ATR Gateways:

- “African Philosophy Resources” -
<http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~janzb/afphil/afreligion.htm>
Very comprehensive with links to over 15 topical website gateways, and links to documents on ATR topics (from specific cultures to larger concepts).
- “African Traditional Religion” - <http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/>
The best gateway site to ATR available. Contents: Over 15 links for topical issues; an Introduction to aspects of ATR (a bibliography, admirable elements, statistical data, maps); a helpful list of targeted links; a decent section on the intersection of ATR with Christianity and Islam (2 articles connected to Islam, 15 related to Christianity); various links to ATR as practiced around the world; and a general list of good ATR-related links.
- Stanford’s “African Traditional Religion on the Internet” - <http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/religion/african-traditional-religion.html>
This is a helpful annotated bibliography of resources available on the internet (20 items listed). Websites range in emphasis from ATR to African culture, art and history as well as listing journals in related fields, universities with projects related to Africa and ATR as well as essays and organizations of ATR practitioners.
- Spirit and Sky’s “African Traditional Religion” -
<http://www.spiritandsky.com/religion/african/traditional/>
This search engine provides another helpful annotated bibliography on ATR with useful summaries of the sites listed. Contains 12 entries (2 on overviews of ATR and the other 10 on specific issues in their ethnic contexts).
- Religion Explorer “African Traditional” - <http://www.religionexplorer.com/cgi-bin/dir.pl?dir=%2FAfrican%2FTraditional&Rank=11>
This search engine provides an annotated bibliography with concise one-sentence summaries of the sites listed. Contains 17 entries (2 on overviews of ATR, 1 on the impact of ancestors and the other 14 on specific issues in their ethnic contexts).
- Wabash Center: Guide to Internet Resources for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion: “Religion in Africa” -
<http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/africa.htm>
Helpful listing of links for syllabi and teaching resources (4 for courses in ATR; 3 for courses in history of African Christianity); electronic texts (3); listing of relevant electronic journals (2); list of helpful websites on Africa and Religious issues with short summary (21); and bibliographies (1 on ATR and 1 on modern Africa art)
- Porchnus’s “African Religions and their Derivatives” -
<http://members.aol.com/porchfour/religion/african.htm>
The introduction for the gateway website has a short summary regarding ATR with references to specific people and places in Africa and ties connections from ATR to Native American Spiritualities and Shamanism. The website also

- contains links to websites with a short description of each site on the topics of: ATR (5); Overviews of Traditional Religions (3); Culture Specific ATR traditions (19); and ATR around the world (Overview – 13; Cuba – 5; Brazil – 4; Pan America – 4; Haiti - 10); as well as Biblical (Christian) Rastafarianism (5); and links to two yahoo search engines on ATR related themes.
- Sacred Texts’ “African Religion” - <http://www.sacred-texts.com/afri/>
This site contains a short introduction to religion in sub-Saharan Africa and provides links (with a summary of the work and author) to texts written in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s grouped geographically or by religious heritage. This is a helpful site for older sources.
 - Full text books and articles: Questia’s “African Religions” - http://www.questia.com/Index.jsp?CRID=african_religions&OFFID=se1&KEY=african_religion
This link is a helpful source to texts on ATR (from history to politics and more) available in full, on the web.

Bibliographies on ATR:

- “A Bibliography on Christian Encounter with African Traditional Religion” - <http://www.missiology.org/bibliographies/africantraditionalreligion.htm>
An extensive list of literary sources on the intersection of Christianity and ATR.
- “Bibliography on African Traditional Religion” by Chidi Denis Isizoh - http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/atr_bibliography.htm
The most extensive bibliography on ATR on the web. Extremely comprehensive list of printed materials: journal articles, essays and books.
- Holy Cross Library’s “African Traditional & Derived religion: A Research Guide” - <http://www.holycross.edu/departments/library/website/africanr.html>
References many relevant resources: Guides and Bibliographies; Dictionaries and Encyclopedias; Indexes and Abstracts (with some links); and a good list of Internet Research Resources.

Short(er) Summaries of the characteristics ATR:

- <http://www.jp dawson.com/modrelg/relafri.html>
Good summary that takes notice of the impact of geography on ATR (doesn’t assume it is monolithic)
- <http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/aern/afri dan.html>
Short summary, may be overly simplistic and from an artistic perspective
- http://www.souldevice.org/african_religion.html
Good, helpful summary, concludes with insights for missionaries
- <http://www.africamission-mafr.org/atrgb.htm>
Short summary of ATR from a Catholic perspective
- http://www.africawithin.com/religion/intr_to_atr.htm
Bird’s eye view of ATR that highlights points of difference helpful for Western Christians
- <http://www.drylongso.com/series/genealogy/0006-african-traditional-religions.html>
A description of ATR from a non-Christian perspective

- http://www.meta-religion.com/World_Religions/Ancient_religions/Africa/traditional_africa.htm
A lengthier summary that examines the cosmology of ATR and distinguishes itself by highlighting the impact of social organization and the influence of magic and witchcraft.

Statistics/Distribution of ATR and other religions:

- <http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/religion.html>
Compares numbers of adherents of Christianity, Islam, ethnoreligionists, Hindus and Jews
- Worldviews: “Belief Systems Indigenous, Islamic, Christian” - <http://worldviews.igc.org/awpguide/relig.html>
Compares ATR, Christianity and Islam and provides a helpful bibliography on a variety of these topics and their history. One very interesting diagram was a “Distribution of Belief Systems in Africa” on a country by country basis – very interesting!

Educational Resources on ATR

- Syllabus: Univ. of London – “ATR in the 21st Century” - <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/ce/syllabi/rs/FFRS058UACB.doc>
Syllabus includes a course outline, required readings and a bibliography.
- Syllabus: Haverford Univ. – “Introduction to African Traditional Religion(s)” - <http://www.haverford.edu/relg/Rel112a.htm>
Syllabus includes a course outline and required readings.
- PowerPoint Presentation: “African Religions: An Introduction” - http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/rsmouse/Public_html/religion.ppt
A simple but useful PowerPoint presentation giving an introduction to ATR and its various expressions.
- Audio Program: BBC: “The Story of Africa: Traditional Religions” - http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section6.shtml
Good material on a popular level, very interesting. Audio content is available as well as much of the transcript.

ATR and Islam:

- “Islam as a constitutive factor in African ‘traditional’ religion: the evidence from geomantic divination”
http://www.shikanda.net/african_religion/islampaper_def_2003_RTF.pdf
An article on the impact of Islam on ATR from the perspective of a practitioner.
- “Islam and African Traditional Religions” - <http://www.mamiwata.com/islam.html>
An article on Islam in sub-Saharan Africa dealing with the way ATR has been incorporated into Islam.

Articles on ATR from an Evangelical Perspective:

- “African Traditional religion and the Gospel” - <http://africamissions.org/africa/atrgos.htm>

A resource inspired by and gleaned from Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization's Christian Witness to People of African Traditional Religion that summarizes commonalities, contrasts and connections between ATR and Christianity.

- “Dialogue with Traditional Religion Pushes Christianity in Africa forward” - <http://www.christiantoday.com/news/ministries/dialogue.with.traditional.religion.pus.hes.christianity.in.africa.forward/148.htm>
A short 2004 article from “Christianity Today” sharing how the Lutheran Church in Africa is trying to engage the ATR influenced culture especially in the realm of health and healing.
- Quarterly Review of Missions (October 2004) “Traditional values and Christianity” - <http://www.missionsocieties.org.uk/MOUT/03Oct/Mbuka.htm>
The author “advances some unusual ideas” in an attempt to show how the interaction and dialogue of ATR and Christianity is enriching and important for Christianity to truly root itself in the African context.
- “Communicating the Message about Jesus to African Traditional religionists” - <http://www.ctsfw.edu/library/files/pb/804>
An 11 page article that moves from an examination of the ATR worldview to the way Christianity can be presented meaningfully in that African context.

Additional Articles and Books on ATR:

- Article: North Carolina religious Association: “Understanding African Traditional Religion” by Kofi Johnson - http://organizations.uncfsu.edu/ncrsa/journal/v04/johnson_understanding.htm
A very helpful, concise article that examines ATR and its components.
- Online Book: “African Traditional Religion” by Geoffrey Parrinder - <http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=59595009>
This online book looks at the cosmology and rituals associated with ATR (includes bibliography).
- Xhosa Virtual Resource’s “African Traditional Religion” - <http://www.nalane.net/xhosa/english/atr.htm>
A lengthy resource adapted from Nokuzola Mndende’s “African Traditional Religion: An Introduction fro Beginners”
- Article: “African Traditional Religions and Modernity” - http://www.africansocieties.org/n3/eng_dic2002/religionitrad.htm
An interesting article on the impact of modernity and globalization on ATR and vice versa.
- Article: “The ethical challenge of traditional African religions” by Danielle Mezzana - http://www.africansocieties.org/eng_giugno2002/eng_animism.htm
This article focuses on the way that animism (particularly the ATR form) has been impacted by globalization and vice versa.
- World Council of Churches: Current Dialogue (Dec. 2003) “Seminar on Hermeneutics: Interpreting Scriptures in Pluralist Contexts "Who made the Drum knows what is inside it: Interpreting Sacred Messages in African Traditional Religion" Chidi Denis Isizoh; Summary by Rev. Wilfred Tyrrell, S.A. - <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/interreligious/cd42-03e.html>

A interesting look at interpretation in ATR and its impact on Christianity.

- World Council of Churches: Current Dialogue (Dec. 2004) “Africa’s contribution to the religions and spiritual heritage of the world” by Hans Ucko - <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/interreligious/cd44-02.html>

A look at what ATR brings to the table of interfaith dialogue.

- “African Religion: Studies in Anthropology and intercultural philosophy” - http://www.shikanda.net/african_religion/index.htm

A website that makes available the writings of William Van Binsbergen and his research on ATR. This site is interesting in that it comes from the perspective of a practitioner who makes his services as a diviner available through the web!

- Article: Crosscurrents: “The African Experience of God through the eyes of an Akan Woman” by Mercy Amba Oduyoye - <http://www.aril.org/african.htm>

This article looks at the African conception of God then moves to the feminine perception of God and finally to how this should shape the church in Africa.

- The Ifa Foundation - www.ifafoundation.org

A website promoting the practice of ATR around the world. “For over a quarter of a century the Ifa Foundation of North America, Inc. has taught the average Westerner to derive incredible Life Shifting benefits from this Ancient African Wisdom.”