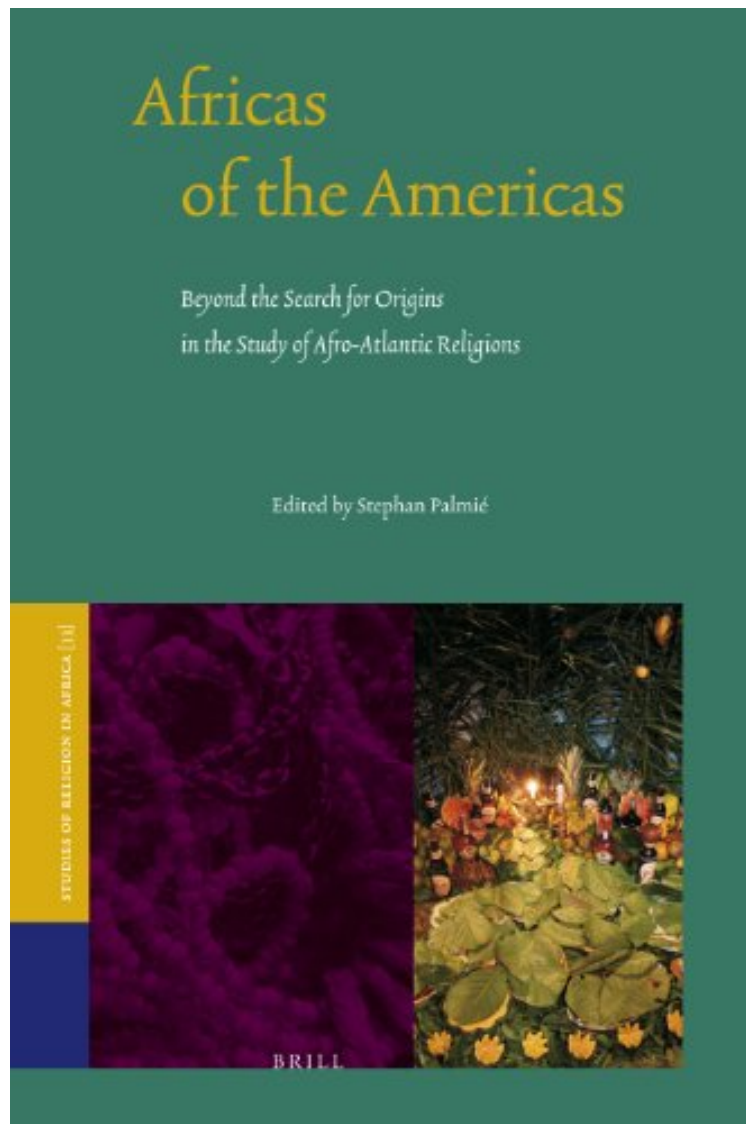


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Africas of the Americas: Beyond the Search for Origins in the Study of Afro-atlantic Religions (Studies of Religion in Africa)

Stephan Palmie

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(Studies of Religion in Africa):

The anthropology and history of African American religious formations has long been dominated by approaches aiming to recover and authenticate the historical transatlantic continuities linking such traditions to identifiable African source cultures. While not denying such continuities, the contributors to this volume seek to transcend this research agenda by bracketing "Africa" and "African pasts" as objective givens, and asking instead what role notions of "Africanity" and "pastfulness" play in the social and ritual lives of historical and contemporary practitioners of Afro-Atlantic religious formations. The volume's goal is to open up contextually salient claims to "African origins" to empirical scrutiny, and so contribute to a broadening of the terms of debate in Afro-Atlantic studies.

"... the value of this book is at least two-fold.: It is at once a counterparadigm to traditional Afro-Americanist religious studies and a subtle but sharp critique of what Vassos Argyrou has called the "ethnological predicament" (2002: 2), that in having traditionally placed themselves as the arbiters of 'difference', anthropologists have implicitly claimed for themselves an ahistorical observer's perspective they clearly do not occupy, in either ideological or practical terms." Diana Espirito Santo, Institute de Ciencias Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa. (Religion and Society: Advances in Research, 2010)From the Back CoverThe anthropology and history of African American religious formations has long been dominated by approaches aiming to recover and authenticate the historical transatlantic continuities linking such traditions to identifiable African source cultures. While not denying such continuities, the contributors to this volume seek to transcend this research agenda by bracketing a oeAfricaa and a oeAfrican pastsa as objective givens, and asking instead what role notions of a oeAfricanitya and a oepastfulnessa play in the social and ritual lives of historical and contemporary practitioners of Afro-Atlantic religious formations. The volumea (TM)s goal is to open up contextually salient claims to a oeAfrican originsa to empirical scrutiny, and so contribute to a broadening of the terms of debate in Afro-Atlantic studies.About the AuthorStephan Palmie, Ph.D. (University of Munich, 1989) is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Chicago. He is the author of *Das Exil der Gotter* (1991) and *Wizards and Scientists: Explorations in Afro-Cuban Modernity and Tradition* (2002).