

# The Making of, and the Issues around Neo-Apologists of the Religions Found Among Africans.

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# Introduction

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## Conceptual clarifications:

i) apologist, ii) neo-apologists, iii) neo-religions, iv) religions

## Theoretical framework

*“Bí omodé bá subú á bojá wo wájú, bí àgbà bá subú á bojú wo èhìn* (if a child falls, he/she looks forward, if an old person falls, he/she looks behind).

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# Problem and Methodology

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Statement of Problem:

Method: interviews of mix respondents

# Characteristics of neo-apologists

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1. i) First, not trained in the language, and principles of the field of religious studies.
2. ii) Second, they presume that 'being Africans' positions them to authoritatively speak about the religions found among Africans.
3. iii) Third, they have distanced themselves from active participation in the practice of the neo-religions.
4. iv) Fourth, they have the same presumption as the missionaries, that their positionality should dominate discussion around religions found among Africans.
5. v) Fifth, their arguments are largely emotional.

# Interviews

1 | - What is the impact of neo-religions on ATR?

“more Africans have embraced Christianity and Islam, and as a result, the practice of the religions found among Africans have been diluted, made less prominent, and in some extreme cases, perceived as diabolical and antithetical to Christian and Islamic beliefs.” (1st respondent).

2 | How authentic are the neo-religions?

“the adherents and priests of these religions, particularly those who have commercialised them, making the authenticity of the religions doubtful.” (2nd respondent).

3 | Why are they not authentic?

“They’re not considered authentic to Africa because, one, they came from foreign lands—the Middle East and Arabia. Two, they were spread through colonial influence and missionary activities. And three, they displaced our traditional systems and ways of worship. So, in essence, they are true religions, but not authentically African.” (9th respondent).

# Concerns of & issues around NEO- APOLOGETICS

## Concerns

- i) Africans have their religions
- ii) That the religions found among Africans have been disparaged and subjugated to the background

## Issues

- i) Repeat of the past

# Way forward

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Recall the framework: “*Bí omodé bá subú á bojá wo wájú, bí àgbà bá subú á bojú wo èhìn* (if a child falls, he/she looks forward, if an old person falls, he/she looks behind).

Recognition of pluralism of religion.

# Conclusion

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Starting a conversation

Acknowledgements

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**Thank you for  
listening**