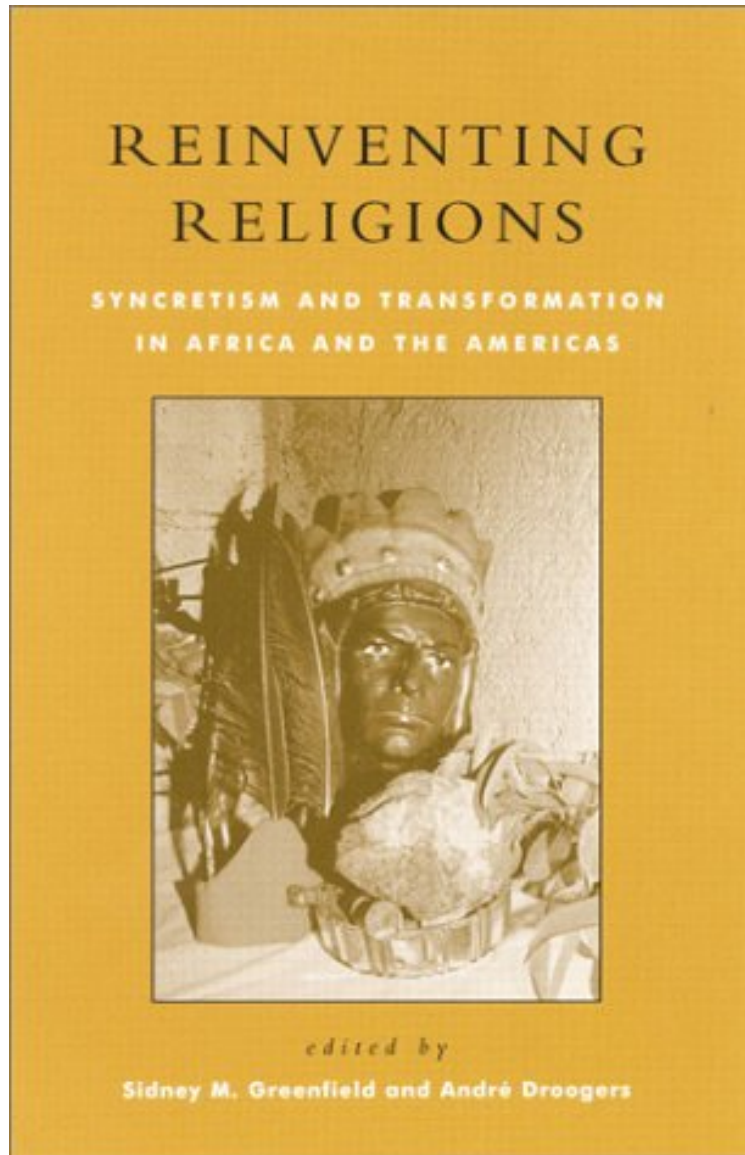


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Once a central concept in anthropology, syncretism has recently re-emerged as a valuable tool for understanding the complex dynamics of ethnicity, postcolonialism, and transnationalism. Building on a century-long tradition of scholarship, this important book formulates a broader view of the mixing and interpenetration of religious beliefs and practices, primarily from Africa and Europe, highlighting the ways in which religions and cultures on both sides of the Atlantic have been assimilated and innovatively changed. Divided into four sections, the book focuses on religious syncretism in Brazil, Jamaica, and other parts of the Caribbean and West Africa. Greenfield and Droogers have brought together an array of outstanding international scholars whose rich and varied essays on specific geographical locales and customs comprise an innovative and comprehensive view of the transference of religious traditions and their continuity and reformulation on two continents.

Reinventing Religions represents a significant effort to deal with cultural processes which have characterized not only the colonial and post-colonial periods in many parts of the world, but also have broader geographic and longer diachronic dimensions. Though the book deals primarily with Africa and the African Diaspora, it provides direction for a much broader examination of these religious phenomena. Further, this study of syncretism and religious transformation represents a productive turn or more precisely a "re-turn", to the use of a comparative analytical framework, historically and theoretically, which has proved so productive for anthropological research in the past. (Paula Rubel) This volume deals with the issue of religious syncretism and the tension between the incorporation of new outside elements and the pull towards tradition, between ethnicity and universality. This tension is also at the heart of the universal religions, Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Through the comparative method, central to anthropology, this collection sheds much light on the issue. (Rosman, Abraham) I know of no other volume that can rival Reinventing Religions either for relevance or quality of content in this field, which is of central importance to all students of religious and cultural change. (Peter B. Clarke) The editors are respected anthropologists who have published primarily on religion in Brazil; contributors are experienced anthropologists from Europe, the U.S., and Brazil. An excellent compilation of recent research. (Choice) This academic text is an excellent read and I would highly recommend it for those interested in the comparative study of religion. (Religious Studies) The descriptions of religious practices are captivating, the theoretical insights innovative and thought provoking. No other book can match it on the mutual influences Africans, Euro-Americans, and others have experienced in their religious lives, masterfully described and theorized by ten distinguished anthropologists. (Anderson, Robert T.) The book is of interest for both its theoretical and its ethnographic content. (Journal Of Anthropological Research) About the Author Sidney M. Greenfield is professor of anthropology at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. Andr Droogers is professor of the anthropology of religion at the Free University, Amsterdam.