Embodying Black Religions in Africa and Its Diasporas

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AARON MONTOYA is an anthropologist whose work has taken him from southern Mozambique to southern Colorado. He currently directs a National Science Foundation Hispanic-Serving Institution grant to improve undergraduate STEM education by implementing culturally responsive and place-based education initiatives at Adams State University that more accurately reflect the people of the San Luis Valley. Building from his research on bicultural sensibilities (mestiçagem) in Mozambique, his current work asks how education in Southwest North America can better cultivate bicultural development that supports both students’ scientific identifications and their cultural formations rooted in their heritages and social experiences.

JACOB K. OLUPONA is professor of African religious traditions at the Harvard University Divinity School, with a joint appointment as professor of African and African American studies in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. His research ranges across African spirituality and ritual practices, spirit possession, Pentecostalism, Yoruba festivals, animal symbolism, icons, phenomenology, African immigrant religions, and religious pluralism in Africa and the Americas. He is the author of Òrìsà Devotion as World Religion: The Globalization of Yorùbá Religious Culture (2008), City of 201 Gods: Ilé-Ifé in Time, Space, and the Imagination (2011), and African Immigrant Religions in America (2007), among others. Professor Olupona has received grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Philosophical Society, the Ford Foundation, the Davis Humanities Institute, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and the Getty Foundation. He has also served as president of the African Association for the Study of Religion.

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