



SAVE THE DATE

“African Diaspora Religion in Human Knowledge: Traditions, Horizons, Transcendence”

*A symposium celebrating the 25th Anniversary of
Michigan State University's African Atlantic Research Team*

October 15 - 17, 2021 - Virtual

Sacred ideas and practices of members of the African Diaspora's Western expansion have shaped fundamental knowledge about religion in the Americas' varied, ever-evolving religious landscape since the earliest days of European conquest and empire. Yet academic research and scholarship affords only peripheral recognition and episodic theoretical significances related to “black lives matter.” The African Atlantic Research Team (AART) of Michigan State University has worked to elevate this religion discourse while mentoring generations of scholars of color and marks its 25th Anniversary by convening a multi-disciplinary symposium on “African Diaspora Religion in Human Knowledge: Traditions, Horizons, Transcendence.”

AART's virtual Symposium, slated for October 2021, invites senior, junior, and emerging scholar-researchers to a cross-discipline dialogue on new horizons of research and scholarship about religious traditions forged to transcend material, spiritual, and knowledge impositions of western hemispheric modernity.

We honor the trailblazing scholarship of Roger Bastide, Irene Diggs, W.E.B. Du Bois, Melville Herskovits, Benjamin Mays, Don Fernando Ortiz, William H. Pipes, Hortense Powdermaker, Newbell N. Puckett and Carter G. Woodson among others who pioneered a foundation of expanded academic discourse for such fields as anthropology, folklore, history, religion and sociology. In so honoring, we seek to chart new directions of research scholarship that engage African Diaspora sacred activities as related to theoretical and conceptual significance for human knowledge.

The AART Symposium gives focused attention to religious practices operating within distinctive modalities of time and space that render the traditions opaque within and transcendent of normative boundaries of familiarity. Our objective is to engage religion in the Americas by revealing the African Diaspora as an enduring global social phenomenon with important contributions to humankind's sacred and religious expressions.

Our Symposium will also honor the profound legacy of the late, pre-eminent Historian of Religions, Professor Charles Houston Long, who inspired AART's intellectual passion for deciphering African descendants' meaning and knowledge production in global conditions of prolonged duress, as well as for addressing innovative strategies for teaching and mentoring in the field. Please share this SAVE THE DATE announcement with researchers, scholars, educators, and serious others who may wish to attend this historic event. To receive further updates, complete the online [Response Form](#).

Contact Us at: aart.symposium@gmail.com