Rarey rarely strays from his thesis. He empirically shows how innocuous objects can bring visibility to subaltern groups in ways that the colonial archives did not intend.

This book is a major contribution to not only African and African diaspora studies but also to the visual history of global subaltern and slave studies. While Rarey neatly integrates analysis of numerous reproduced images, paintings, and photographs and extant mandingas into the book's narrative, it would have been preferable to see some of these in color (or at least provided some external links to view them). Had Rarey provided such an external link, readers could experience these objects in much fuller detail as the enslaved Africans who valued these artifacts. Nonetheless, I really admire Rarey's brilliant reading and interpretation of subaltern sources in the Portuguese colonial archives. That said, it seems to me that mandingas and their contents were not necessarily always innocuous or invisible, despite the dismissive rhetoric of imperial authorities. If mandingas had always remained innocuous and invisible as Rarey claimed, then perhaps Portuguese imperial authorities would not have foregrounded these objects in their archives as legal evidence in their trials of enslaved Blacks who rejected Catholic Orthodoxy.

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Public Piety in Nigeria's Recent History

Performing Power in Nigeria: Identity, Politics, and Pentecostalism

Abimbola A. Adelakun. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. 290. $99.99, hardcover (ISBN: 9781108831079); ebook (ISBN: 9781108923194).

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In *Performing Power in Nigeria,* Abimbola A. Adelakun studies the phenomenon of Nigerian Pentecostalism through the lens of performance studies. Adelakun uses theories, concepts, and terminologies of theatre, performance, and playwriting to consider how Pentecostalist pastors and parishioners generate, deploy, and contest political authority and power. Based on the author's interactions and experiences with Pentecostal pastors in Nigeria, and writing as someone trained in dance and theatre, she argues that religious rituals and performance are intimately connected, and explores how embodied actions such as singing, dancing, clapping, praying, and preaching are rehearsed and staged to generate a distinct and historicized ritual performance.

Adelakun's introduction makes it clear that her characterization of Pentecostal religious rituals as performance is not intended to judge, criticize, depreciate, or undermine their spiritual authority; rather, she proposes that by attending to performance, academics might better understand how Pentecostalism acquired the authority that it now holds in Nigerian public life. Adelakun's argument stems from her interactions with a Pentecostal pastor who insisted that performance was how "they are making power work" in their churches (2). In other words, the performance is where both secular and religious authority are generated.

Via performance theory, Adelakun reveals how Pentecostal pastors jockey for position within political spaces, in social media, and especially within their congregations, where performances reach out to parishioners to engage desires for security and healing. Furthermore, Adelakun demonstrates how Pentecostal pastors use conspicuous performances to cast nearly every aspect of Nigerian society into a Manichean contest between demons and Christian spirituality, thus inserting themselves and their churches into quotidian political discourse and practice.

Adelakun's book is comprised of six chapters. The first sets the stage and provides a reference to which she frequently returns. In it, she considers a popular 1993 Nigerian Christian TV show presented by Mount Zion Faith Ministries International (29). Here the value of a performance lens is most apparent. In each episode, the Mount Zion show stages confrontations between the "Devil," the "Angel of God," a "Pastor," and an African indigenous-religion practitioner. Given the production house, it is not surprising that the series always depicts the pastor as the victor, who either defeats the Devil through prayer, or converts the indigenous-religion practitioner from heathenism to Pentecostalism (35–6). Adelakun suggests that this series best exemplifies how Pentecostalists both value the performance of their faith and envision themselves within recent and contemporary Nigerian public life.

The Mount Zion television show is an idealized vision, of course, and in Chapter Two, Adelakun pivots to consider how Pentecostal pastors have been conspicuous in Nigerian politics since the late 1970s (67). She considers the rise of Pentecostalist political authority during Nigeria's on-again, off-again periods of military rule, led by Generals associated with the majority Muslim North. Many Nigerian Christians chafed under what they perceived as Muslim domination; so much so that, in the wake of Nigeria's return to democratic rule after the death of Sani Abacha, Christians mobilized and supported the candidacy of General Olusegun Obasanjo (77), once a military dictator who had the distinction of also being Christian. Upon winning the presidency, Obasanjo rewarded pastors' loyalty by aligning himself with Pentecostalism by appointing numerous Pentecostalists members into his cabinet. With Obasanjo's ascendancy, the performance of political and religious authority became explicit, as Pentecostalists interpretated political events from their theological perspective. Pentecostal politics experienced an enormous backlash in 2015, when Nigeria's incumbent president, Goodluck Jonathan, was defeated at the polls by a northern Nigerian and Muslim candidate, Muhammadu Buhari. As president, Jonathan was beloved by Pentecostal churches, whose support he cultivated through frequent and public visits. It was during Jonathan's term that a Pentecostal pastor assumed the presidency of the Christian Association of Nigeria for the first time. Adelakun shows how pastors prayed and prophesied that Jonathan would win reelection and continue the Pentecostal ascendance, only to have their faith in politics shaken by his defeat. One of Adelakun's most original arguments is that this disappointment made many Pentecostalists look away from Nigeria to the United States, which many believers cast as a vital Christian stronghold. Adelakun shows how, by 2019, many Pentecostal adherents had become ardent supporters of Donald Trump, who they claimed would defend Christianity and Christians in countries like Nigeria.

Chapter Three reveals a darker side of Pentecostalism's overt public performance by focusing on how parishioners and others have contested what they perceive to be some pastors' abuses of power, based on misinterpretations of scripture. Here the stages include public protests and highly publicized court cases. Adelakun describes a situation where some pastors use their authority to sexually abuse women, who are largely powerless within many congregations. In Nigeria and some parts of Africa in the past, women were either ashamed or afraid of reporting their cases of sexual assault and rape, especially with public figures like prominent pastors. Furthering the argument that Nigerian Christianity is subject to both national and international discourses, Adelakun explores how Nigerian women generated a local "#MeToo" campaign that named and exposed exploitative Pentecostal leaders. Women shared experiences of sexual abuse at the hands of some Pentecostal pastors, sparking protests and a backlash.

A significant portion of the debate about pastors and abuse played out online. In Chapter Four, Adelakun discusses how Pentecostal pastors and believers use social media. Knowing the significance and relevance of social media to society, Pentecostal pastors take advantage of it to reach out to a broader audience, including both members of congregations, other Christians, and even non-believers. Pentecostal pastors eagerly adopted social media platforms for both ministry purposes and to broadcast their success (thus to generate more influence and authority). Pastors are exceptionally aware of their self-presentation on social media, cultivating both visual emblems of authority via posed photographs in nice clothes, bedecked in jewelry, and in luxury automobiles and ornate cathedrals, while also taking advantage of the internet to promote podcasts and mobile oratory. Adelakun argues that most Nigerian Pentecostal pastors are aware that such hypervisibility increases the risks of being critiqued or attacked online. Adelakun gives an example of a well-known attack Pentecostal churches went through in 2017–18, when an online radio presenter in Lagos named Ifedayo Olarinde (popularly known as Daddy Freeze) publicly exposed the financial excesses of Nigerian Pentecostal pastors linked to coercing poor members to regularly pay tithes (145). Daddy Freeze's so-called *Free the Sheeple* campaign became a social and religious controversy across Nigeria and even spilled over to neighboring countries. Social media exposure is risky, Adelakun concludes, yet many pastors continue to see the benefits of a robust social media presence as worth the risk.

Chapter Five brings us back inside the churches themselves, and focuses on yet another genre of Pentescostal performance: the inclusion of comedians performing live comedy at major Pentecostal church events, especially night vigil and all-night prayers. Adelakun notes that unlike years back when Nigerian churches used to have drama teams who performed live at their special events, Pentecostal churches now utilize popular comedians, especially those with ties to Christianity. These comedians claim to have developed a new genre of comedic performance that they call "gospel comedy" (177, 184). Comedians are cheaper and easier to coordinate that drama teams, Adelakun notes, and have the additional benefit of ingratiating pastors with people who might otherwise be expected to take shots at pastors, as they do other prominent figures. Adelakun reveals how many pastors cultivate friendly relationships with comedians, both to defang their criticisms, and to bring them under the umbrella of pastors' own authority.

The book's final chapter is the subtlest, and also where Adelakun develops arguments that gesture to the longue durée of religious practice in Nigeria. In it, Adelakun focuses on how names and naming feature in the Pentecostal movement. Notably, she connects Pentecostal practices to how naming operates among practitioners especially of Yoruba indigenous religion. This last chapter gestures back to the first, focused on confrontations between practitioners of indigenous religion and Pentecostalist believers; here, Adelakun shows that the situation is much more complicated than it first appeared, arguing that indigenous religion and Pentecostal practice overlap when it comes to naming practices. These supposed antagonists share the belief that names are of exceptional spiritual importance, suggesting a continuity in performative spiritual practice that most pastors are loath to admit.

One of the text's great strengths is that Adelakun brings her narrative right up to the present by considering how COVID-19 surprised many Pentecostal ministers, despite their claims to be interpreters of signs and performers of wonders. Adelakun suggests that, like Goodluck Jonathan's electoral defeat, Christians' evident failure to predict and account for COVID disruptions shows that to be involved in the public performance of power is always risky, because pastors can only script so much. Yet as the furor of sexual abuse also revealed, having opted to live their faith in public, Pentecostal pastors must continue to play their roles.

Adelakun's book is worth reading to understand how pastors' generate authority through performance on multiple stages, including on television, in social media, and in families. Her focus on the 2010s, as well as the challenges of the COVID pandemic, will set the agenda for future studies of Nigerian religious politics in this same period; her performance studies lens opens up new vistas

for comparison and analysis. That said, I do wish she had attended more to the history of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria before 1970, as Richard Burgess did.[1] Burgess periodizes the evolution of the Nigerian Pentecostal movement into three periods: the first is in the early 1900s, through the African Independent Churches, Aladura, and Christ Apostolic Church, which emphasize Spiritism. The second wave was from the 1950s–70s, with the birth of churches like the Redeemed Christian Church of God and Church of God Mission International, emphasizing that their members spoke in tongues and preached the total separation from the world and politics. Adelakun's focus is on what Burgess considers the "third wave," when Pentecostals moved boldly to embrace the political. And her analysis of pastors' multiple performances demonstrates how they did so.

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[1]Richard Burgess, *Nigerian Pentecostalism and Development: Spirit, Power, and Transformation* (New York: Routledge, 2020).