

FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

VISUAL THEOLOGY: SOME AKAN CULTURAL SYMBOLS, METAPHORS,
PROVERBS, AND MYTHS ABOUT GOD AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR
DOING CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

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BY

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation seeks to explore the relevance of the Akan religio-cultural heritage-- its proverbs, myths, metaphors and symbols-- for Christian theology. In the Chapters that follow, the author has discussed each of these materials pointing out both their cultural and theological relevance.

In order to adequately deal with the subject before us, the writer divides this work into six major chapters. Chapter one deals with The African religio-cultural heritage showing its impact on African Christian thought especially in the area of developing African Christian theology. Chapter two examines the cultural and religious contexts of the Akan people where we argue that Akan ontology, cosmology, and proverbs, form the basis of Akan philosophical thought and epistemology and that Akan proverbs about God are the result of the Akans' reflection on their religious experience of the Transcendent. Chapters three and four examine the general role and function of symbols, myths, and metaphor in human society and their specific role and function in Akan society. The relevance of these sources for theology is emphasized. Chapter five discusses the theological meaning of Akan proverbs, myths, symbols and metaphors in relation to God. Chapter six looks at the theological themes that emerged from the materials we have examined pointing out their implications for the doctrine of God.

This study has made the writer come to the conclusion that the Ancestor-King Model in the Akan religio-cultural context provides a new idiom and rich insights for

Akan Christians to understand the nature and character of God. The Implications of this “new approach” for the doctrine of God and for Christian theology is pointed out. The study points out areas where the Akan religio-cultural heritage can aid the Christian Church to recover some important aspects of Christian doctrine: namely the place of spirit beings in theology, the concept of community and the place of experience in theological discourse.

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