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**PRAYER AMONG THE DIGO MUSLIMS OF KENYA AND
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN WITNESS**

By

Stephen Mutuku Sesi

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ABSTRACT

Sesi, Stephen Mutuku

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This dissertation seeks to examine the issue of prayer as it is practiced by the Digo Muslims of Kenya. The focus is a description of the prayers of the Digo of Kenya as these are rooted in orthodox/orthoprax Islam and have been affected by primal and contemporary culture, which in turn may impact Christian witness. The study traces the development of the pre-Islamic worldview of the Digo from the time of the Bantu migrations to the settlement of the Digo and other *Mijikenda* tribes along the Swahili coast. The study further documents the arrival of Islam to the East coast of Africa and how the Digo adapts the universal religion into their local religious forms.

The research discusses the integration of primal, Islamic, and contemporary worldviews among the Digo, and how such integration impacts the practice of ritual prayers. Contemporary challenges of Digo Islam include urbanization, liberal Islam, secularization, and social change. Since the arrival of Islam and the secular state, the Digo now conduct their lives in a three-level calendar heritage. The Digo cultural four-day cycle calendar, the Islamic calendar, which is organized around a seven-day week and twelve lunar months, and the secular calendar, which is organized around a seven-day week and a solar year of three hundred sixty five days.

The study also suggests models of contextualizing the gospel to the Digo, through prayer forms. The theories of contextualization discussed include translation theory, hermeneutical theory, incarnation theory, and C5 contextualization. These theories may be viewed in a continuum with translation at one end, and C5 contextualization at the other end. However, the four theories may also be viewed as four levels of contextualization beginning with the basic act of translating the message from one language to another, and culminating at the C5 level where the believer lives within his or her culture, performing the same forms, and rituals externally, but internally living out a new faith and a new allegiance.

Mentor: J. Dudley Woodberry

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