

Winter 2-4-2015

RELIGIOUS STUDIES RESEARCH PRESENTATION ON AFRICAN RELIGIONS, FEBRUARY 9

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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Recommended Citation

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, "RELIGIOUS STUDIES RESEARCH PRESENTATION ON AFRICAN RELIGIONS, FEBRUARY 9" (2015). *News Posts from IUP Websites*. 50.
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RELIGIOUS STUDIES RESEARCH PRESENTATION ON AFRICAN RELIGIONS, FEBRUARY 9

Posted on 2/4/2015 7:24:00 PM

Dianna Bell, one of the candidates for the new position in African Traditional Religions, will present her research, “May God Repay Us: Merit-Making in Posthumous Sacrifices in Mali, West Africa,” on Monday, February 9, from 5:00–6:00 p.m. in McElhaney Hall, room 206.



Her talk will focus on Muslims in the West African state of Mali and how they use the concept of *baraji* –which translates from the vernacular as “divine reward” or “recompense”– as a framework for understanding proper religious practice and the role of Islamic practices and indigenous ritual in daily matters.

Bell’s presentation will explain both the local and Qur’anic basis of merit-making and *baraji* in addition to how Muslims in southern Mali use *baraji* to drive their lifelong aim to acquire the unspecified amount of *baraji* that God requires for a person to gain salvation and admission into paradise. She will focus on how kith and kin earn *baraji* on one another’s behalf, especially through posthumous sacrifices.

Her paper will highlight death as a process in which the acquisition of *baraji* continues vis-à-vis kin and posthumous sacrifices and everyday moral choices, revealing indigenous religion and Islam in West Africa as dynamically embedded in daily social life and relations with ancestors.

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Monday through Friday

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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