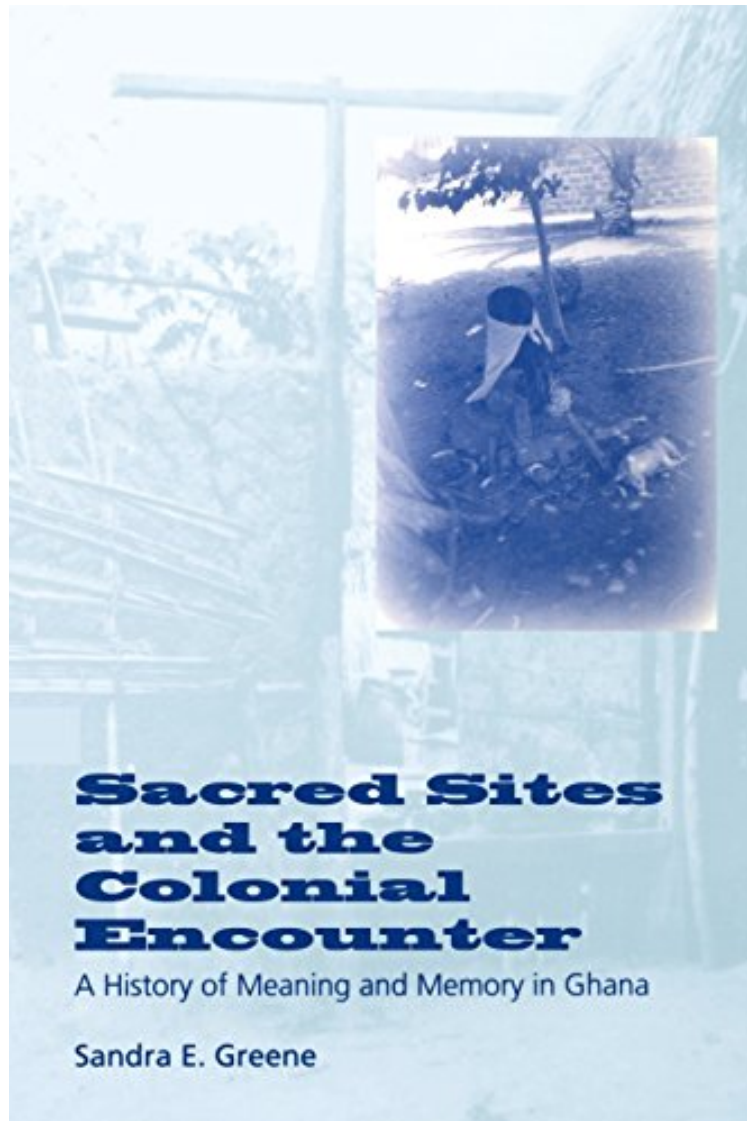


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Sacred Sites and the Colonial Encounter: A History of Meaning and Memory in Ghana

Sandra E. Greene

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Sandra E. Greene : Sacred Sites and the Colonial Encounter: A History of Meaning and Memory in Ghana before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sacred Sites and the Colonial Encounter: A History of Meaning and Memory in Ghana:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sacred Sites In Anlo - Meaning and Memory By Anthony K. Dotse A nice piece about Anlo Ewe sacred sites, their meaning and memory. Contains few inaccuracies though. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Highly Inaccurate Book By Anetta This book is very misleading and greatly distorts the Ewe people's history. To give an example, it speaks of Akwamu people originated from Notsie same as the Ewe people. This is patently false. The Akwamu are part of the Akan people and have no relationship whatsoever with Ewes. Also the book says there was no Ewe identity before the German Bremen mission arrived in 1847. This is so misleading. The Ewes are one continuum (separated by dialect) who spread from the Volta Region of Ghana, includes the people of Togo and Dahomey all the way to Western Nigeria. This has always been the case and it is astonishing the author failed to grasp such basic understanding of the Ewe people and proceeds to put out such distorted and misleading information about a people's history into the public domain.

Greene gives the reader a vivid sense of the Anlo encounter with western thought and Christian beliefs... and the resulting erasures, transferences, adaptations, and alterations in their perceptions of place, space, and the body." Emmanuel Akyeampong Sandra E. Greene reconstructs a vivid and convincing portrait of the human and physical environment of the 19th-century Anlo-Ewe people of Ghana and brings history and memory into contemporary context. Drawing on her extensive fieldwork, early European accounts, and missionary archives and publications, Greene shows how ideas from outside forced sacred and spiritual meanings associated with particular bodies of water, burial sites, sacred towns, and the human body itself to change in favor of more scientific and regulatory views. Anlo responses to these colonial ideas involved considerable resistance, and, over time, the Anlo began to attribute selective, varied, and often contradictory meanings to the body and the spaces they inhabited. Despite these multiple meanings, Greene shows that the Anlo were successful in forging a consensus on how to manage their identity, environment, and community.

This is a rich, ambitious, and rewarding work of social and intellectual history. (Journal of the American Academy of Religion JAAR) This scholarly study explores the wide-ranging political and religious ramifications of German and British colonial rule over the Ewe-speaking Anlo people in southern Togo and southeastern Ghana. German Pietists from the Bremen Mission dominated the region from the mid 19th century until ousted by the British during WW I. The Germans translated the Bible into Ewe and, by applying their own *volkisch* (volkisch) notions to the natives, disrupted the long-term spiritual affinity between the Ewe-speaking and Akan-speaking communities in the Anlo polity. Moreover, by appropriating the town of Notsie, they desecrated the home of Mawu, the chief Anlo deity. Ewe-Anlos were told to abandon primitive customs like burying their dead under their houses and retaining faith in magic and fetishes and to take up European culture and religion if they ever hoped to become civilized. Adoption of European practices, however, rarely guaranteed acceptance. Instead, colonial pressure resulted in frustration, passive resistance, and, sometimes, open rebellion. Through it all, Greene notes, old meanings and sacred sites were not forgotten. Retained in bits and pieces, they now constitute the very foundation upon which the new is made sensible. Includes maps and photographs; highly recommended for all levels and collections. W. W. Reinhardt, Randolph (Macon College 2003) Jan CHOICE About the Author Sandra E. Greene is Associate Professor of African History at Cornell University. She is author of *Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Change on the Upper Slave Coast: A History of the Anlo-Ewe* and is working on a book on religion in the Atlantic slave trade. She is past-president of the African Studies Association.