Text and Authority in the South African Nazaretha Church
Joel Cabrita

"This terrific book ought to help us rethink the whole enterprise of Christian theology. For the members of the Nazaretha church, the Christian canon was not closed. They documented their prophet’s spectacular deeds, chronicled their own exemplary triumphs, and created an archive. These records in turn became material for sermons, fodder for rituals, and templates for liturgy. By taking us into the procedures by which miraculous events were recorded, edited, rehearsed, and relived, Joel Cabrita’s book shows theology to be a popular endeavor, an imaginative work in which commoners, not only prophets and academics, participate."

– Derek R. Peterson, University of Michigan

"This important intervention in the study of religion in Africa charts a new path beyond existing historiographies and extends approaches of textual anthropology to a new domain. The focus on textual anthropology forms an important supplement to existing work on the histories of orality and literacy in southern Africa. Lucidly written and richly researched, it is an important text that will be of interest to scholars of religion, anthropology, history, literature, and media studies."

– Isabel Hofmeyr, University of the Witwatersrand

"The book provides an example of the ingenuity with which people make sense of their lives and an account of a movement able to draw on a wide network of symbols and practices to produce a vibrant, innovative Christianity in one part of Africa. It combines an excellent historical investigation with a sensitive approach to both politics and religion."

– Patrick Harries, University of Basel

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