

THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF PENTECOSTALISMS IN AFRICA AND ALONG ITS TRANSNATIONAL ROUTES: A REVIEW ESSAY

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If the turn of the twenty-first century featured the transfer of the Christian center of gravity from the Euro-American West to the global South, then a large part of the reason for the emergence of majority world Christianity can certainly be attributed to the explosiveness of churches across the African continent.¹ Not without reason, then, scholarship on African Pentecostalism has proliferated, and to the degree that globalization dynamics are intensifying African migration to and inter-relationship with the West, research on the African pentecostal diaspora and on transnational Pentecostalism as it concerns the African context are also beginning to appear.² This essay overviews six recent books published in this second decade of the third millennium, equally divided between the sub-Saharan and West African regions.

We cannot hope, nor do we claim, to be exhaustive in our coverage given the expansiveness of the literature during these few years, although our notes will also call to attention to other relevant volumes that have appeared during our focused period. It is also to be further granted that even if we stayed at the level of the anthropological research, which fairly characterizes the primary disciplinary approaches deployed in each of the books under review, we are not able to escape the arbitrariness of delimitation to precisely these volumes. My only excuse, beyond my own interests in global pentecostal studies in general and in African Pentecostalism more specifically,³ is that these were review copies I was able to obtain more or less recently and read somewhat together over the last few months (in the spring of 2017). It would not be too surprising to observe coming out of this exercise not only that African Pentecostalism

is surely diverse, justifying even our insistence that there is not one but many Pentecostals across the continent and its diasporic trajectories,⁴ but also that there are many ways to study and theorize about what is happening even when constrained by the parameters guiding the developments specifically in the emerging arena of anthropology of Christianity.⁵ Our goal, then, is two fold: to appreciate scholarly developments in this burgeoning pentecostal region – even if these leave large portions of the African space unexplored – and, in the brief concluding section, to reflect methodologically on the anthropological study of African Pentecostalism in these variegated manifestations and consider their implications for and contributions to the broader field of global pentecostal studies.⁶

Sub-Saharan Africa and South-South Pentecostal Transnationalism

If the earlier scholarship on sub-Saharan Pentecostalism has been focused on the southern African region more generally and even on Zimbabwe and South Africa almost predominantly,⁷ the three books under review shift northward.⁸ There are many ways to present these volumes, but rather than proceed by year of publication, I will move in geographical sequence from the Eastern side to the West and then North, from Mozambique to Zambia and to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This will not only facilitate transition from this part of the review essay to the next one in terms of the bridge being the anthropology of media central to the works on the DRC that concludes this portion of the essay and on Ghana that opens up the next section, but it will also allow us to close the loop on the theme of diaspora by beginning and ending with studies on transnational dimensions of the African pentecostal phenomenon. Hence we begin with the Mozambican case also because it illuminates South-South connections with Brazil.

Linda Van de Kamp: Mozambican Pentecostalism in the Shadow of Brazil

This book emerges from out of Van de Kamp's doctoral research conducted under the auspices of the African Studies Centre, Leiden and the department of social and cultural anthropology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. As it is the first scholarly book on

Mozambican Pentecostalism, interested readers might have hoped for a more comprehensive discussion devoted to women. Nevertheless, *Violent Conversion's* focus on women makes contributions along at least two lines of scholarly inquiry. It extends our understanding of the roles and experiences of women in African Pentecostalism more specifically, but also across global pentecostal movements as this has played out in modernizing contexts and in developing regions. If prior research has illuminated the challenges pentecostal women confront in the domestic sphere,¹⁰ Van de Kamp provides cross-generational perspective to help us see how the lives of older women compare and contrast with those in their middle years, those raising children, and those who are emerging from their teens or navigating young adulthood. Further, in the relational arena, pentecostal conversion provides venues for deliverance and escape from the oppressive impositions of so-called "spirit spouses" (manifest in felt experiences of sexual intercourse without male physical presence) and the loss of spouses or male partners to other women, and in relationship to the incapacity for conceiving children and others, otherwise prevalent in traditional cultural and religious realms.

At a second level, however, the gendered perspectives at work in this volume also shed light on Mozambican Pentecostalism, even on the pentecostal phenomenon in sub-Saharan Africa writ larger. For instance, the lens of gender highlights how access to education, avenues of entrepreneurship, and attainment of higher and higher levels of professional status result both in women's upward social and economic mobility in the neo-liberal (global) economic regime and in their prominence outside the home and in the public area. To the degree that men do not exceed such levels of accomplishment, women are less sought out as marriage partners; and to the degree that their singleness is less a liability in pentecostal churches than in indigenous social environments, there are also higher percentages of women in the former domain. The appeal of female empowerment in Mozambican Pentecostalism for such women is proportionate to the unattractiveness of kinship ties in traditional cultures that constrain women in the domestic environment.

The transnational aspect of the Mozambican pentecostal churches studied by Van de Kamp also deserves comment. If Brazilian pentecostal missionaries have become more palpable in the southern African countries,¹¹ Mozambique has been a leading missionary destination, given its shared history – along with culture and language – with Brazil, under Portuguese colonial rule. The *violence* indicated in the title of this book hence refers both to aggressive stances by which Brazilian pentecostal pastors reject and dispel traditional religious or spiritual conventions and to the boldness with which Mozambican pentecostal women especially, even if not only, hence also convert into lives liberated from traditional constraints. In pentecostal churches, then, pentecostal couples can break away from indigenous values that govern male-female relations in their various levels and embrace a more contemporary, transnational, and “modern” form of conjugal love with appropriate modes of public expression not seen in traditional cultures.

Naomi Haynes: Zambian Pentecostalism¹²

Whereas Van de Kamp’s research was based in the Mozambican capital of Maputo, Haynes’s doctoral fieldwork was carried out in a “burgeoning middle-class township” on the outskirts of Kitwe,¹³ a leading city in the mineral-rich Copperbelt province of Zambia bordering the DRC. Although the latter is not as absorbed with women as the former, Haynes is attentive to the gendered dynamics of Zambian Pentecostalism, in particular how male agency and leadership is charismatically defined and how female identity and status is measured according to material indexes such as dress styles (the personal level), the accumulation of furniture (vis-à-vis social status), or the flexibility of not working and hence having the time to exercise spiritual leadership over the women of the community (of course, while subordinated to the headship of a husband who provides home ownership, for instance), etc. If the Mozambican pentecostal women studied by Van de Kamp are those who find themselves more embedded in the public square, the subjects of Haynes’s ethnography remain more firmly ensconced in the home and in private spaces.

Yet, Pentecostals across the Zambian Copperbelt are just as certainly moving, as pronounced in the title of Haynes's book. What she means, however, is in some senses peculiar to her Zambian subjects, whose testimonies are invariably couched as *fintufilesela*: "things are moving." Zambian pentecostal life is characterized by movement, by "breakthroughs" from the stagnation and gridlock of struggle into greater and greater levels of success (ministerial and professional, especially, for males) and abundance and prosperity (for women, surely). Pentecostal churches forge and facilitate personal relationships, enlarge networks, and expand patron connections that enable such dynamism, according to Haynes's analysis. To be sure, pentecostal moving is fraught with retarding factors, particularly when the more affluent are given favoritism by pastors (based on the level of personal relationships), when economic stratifications within churches widen into class divisions (on the ecclesial level), or when regional economic bust eliminates the mobility afforded by periods of boom and boon (the wider social matrix). Yet, *Moving by the Spirit* spotlights how upward socio-economic mobility is religiously and spiritually understood and enacted by Copperbelt Pentecostals.¹⁴

There is one more, broader anthropological thesis argued by Haynes, however, and this pertains to predominant interpretations of pentecostal spirituality as being oriented individualistically. Against this stream, the argument is that pentecostal religious life and practice is just as deeply social in its performativity. Rather than only urging that there is a communal dimension to pentecostal ecclesiality, an obvious point not in need of argumentation, Haynes is taking on the more widespread claim that Pentecostalism is "a socially corrosive force, a handmaiden of neoliberalism" that undercuts social harmonization and development.¹⁵ Instead, *Moving by the Spirit* documents the socially productive dynamics of pentecostal spirituality, in particular how participation in pentecostal ritual practice enables axiological construction (regarding the good and the valuable), empowers communal flourishing (within the congregations and their community networks), and spawns social cohesiveness, despite and even amidst the ever-present threats (indicated previously). In short and in sum, without denying the fragility of pentecostal life on the Copperbelt – the tenuousness

of which menaces all of the region's inhabitants, not just those in pentecostal churches – there is a generative world-making capacity to pentecostal sociality that ought to be recognized even if readers are not sympathetic to its specific expressions of religiosity and piety.

Katrien Pype: Congolese Pentecostalism¹⁶

Kinshasa, the site of our next study, is a capital city like Maputo, but its DRC lives with the colonial imprint neither of Mozambique's Portuguese nor Zambia's British but of the former Zaire's French. Pype's PhD research (fieldwork from 2003-2006), however, is uniquely focused: on Cinarc, a popular Congolese TV acting group with an explicitly Christian identity and a deeply pentecostal ethos and missional commitment to producing dramatic and fictional television serials – what Pype calls “melodrama” and what the Kinois, the local nomenclature for Kinshasan residents, call *télédramatiques* or *mabokee* – with proselytizing intent. The emergence of such pentecostal serials follows from the profound pentecostalization and charismatization of Kinshasan Christianity and its ever escalating pervasiveness and hegemony over the city's public space.¹⁷ Pentecostal melodramatic production is therefore an outgrowth of the movement's expansion in the DRC on the one hand, even as it also contributes to the formation of a peculiarly Congolese pentecostal social imaginary capable of influencing Christianity in Kinshasa and beyond on the other hand. Even if Pype does not seek to establish the point directly related to the social productivity thesis urged by Haynes, there is a sense in which *The Making of the Pentecostal Melodrama* anticipates Haynes's argument regarding Pentecostalism as a force for social change and transformation.

Pype's participation in and observation of Cinarc opens up windows not so much into how such societal impact is targeted but into the complex spaces where personal religiosity, ecclesial morality and ideals, and vocational praxis converge. Multiple dimensions of pentecostal life are hereby illuminated: the communicative axis of how the pentecostal message promulgated by pentecostal actors (evangelists and missionaries, effectively!) is designed to redeem the sinful and fallen urban realities of the world (Kinshasa, in this case); the theological territory of how the spiritual and moral scope of reality, obfuscated

by the occult forces of witchcraft and other presumed aspects of traditional religions, is exposed and made visible in and through Christian TV's special effects to both educate and admonish; and the existential domain of how pentecostal actors across the spectrum from troupe leaders/pastors to established actors to yet-to-be-initiated aspirants wrestle with their roles, both to protect personal holiness from being tainted by sinful, even if fictive activity, and to ensure preservation of moral character that is recognized by the wider public as belonging specifically to subjects who are believed to have made Christian confession (there are some who join the troupe and find Christian faith in the process as well). There are also two chapters on gender and sexuality dynamics that depict how pentecostal commitments motivate efforts to shape Congolese understandings of masculinity and femininity and to form (or reform) marriage and sexual practices in a Christian direction. Underneath each of these analytical levels is the persisting contrast between indigenous (African and elder/traditional) cultural values and urban (Christian/Pentecostal and younger generational) morality and religiosity, with Cinarc consistently advocating against the former and for the latter.

The interdisciplinarity of anthropology and media studies operative in Pype's book provides perspective on how pentecostal values and ideals are negotiated vocationally in public arena, both those wherein group members work and then in the Kinshasa spaces where these serials are watched and "consumed."¹⁸ The main part of the point is that pentecostal evangelism mediated electronically through the television screen is hereby seen as complementing, even more so, affectively and bringing effectively to life what is preached by pastors and taught by Bible study leaders. Yet, these pages not just tell us about the end dramatic product and its effects, but disclose the ambiguities of pentecostal living that labor to create these popular cultural media while nurturing Christian faithfulness in a complex world.

West and Diasporic Africa

We now move further West and North, landing primarily on the Ghanaian site.¹⁹ West African Pentecostalism certainly involves much more than Ghana,²⁰ although for our purposes, the books that have our attention here are therein concentrated. More precisely, however, whereas the terrain we covered above explored transcontinental Pentecostal along the southern hemisphere (Mozambique and Brazil), the Ghanaian Pentecostals we will follow next are traveling the much more covered South-North portal, albeit in multiple directions. We begin with Ghana itself but then trace the Ghanaian pentecostal diaspora to the United Kingdom (a natural terminus for members of this former British colony) and Italy respectively. As before, we will assuredly gain understanding of the varieties of Ghanaian Pentecostalism both within and outside that nation, even as we will consider the methodological options manifest in these anthropological inquiries, on their own terms in this section, but anticipating consideration of global pentecostal studies more broadly in our conclusion.

Birgit Meyer: Ghanaian Pentecostalism²¹

Pype's study of Congolese Christian and Pentecostal TV acting and producing groups is amply referred to in Meyer's book (there are five references to *The Making of the Pentecostal Melodrama* in the index), except that the latter is researching not TV but film- and video-making.²² Both are clearly attentive to the processes for production – TV serials on the one hand and other visual media on the other – although Pype also has her sights engaged with Kinshasa Pentecostalism in a different way than Meyer's are trained on the Ghanaian version. Instead, pentecostal-charismatic Christianity in this West African context is of secondary concern, providing the backdrop for comprehending the cyclic phenomenon of Ghanaian Christian film (initially) and video (more currently, at least since the turn of the century) production. Hence Pype's contextual portrait includes the socio-economic backdrop of Kinshasa alongside the emergence of born-again and apocalyptically tinged Pentecostalism in that matrix, while Meyer's zeroes in on Accra against the broader narrative of the volatility of the video-film industry in the country in

the last generation (approximately 1985-2010), without much concern for situating pentecostal Christianity within the mix.

Yet, Pentecostalism is certainly not absent from *Sensational Movies*. Instead, the potency of Ghanaian film/video-making is incomprehensible apart from understanding the aesthetics of born again (pentecostal) Christianity in West Africa. Recalling Pype's presentation of TV as revelatory of the hidden spiritual (read: witchcraft-saturated indigenous and traditional) world, Meyer goes to great lengths to explicate the efforts of West African cinematographers and videographers, along with their crews, to animate and thereby picture and unveil, as if through a "spiritual eye," the occultic realm. If the lives of the acting troupe take center stage in Pype's melodramatic inquiry, the entire phenomenon of production and consumption is covered by Meyer's work. It is not only that the experiences of audiences in engaging with Ghanaian movies and videos are assessed, but also that the intentional uses of film (and video) as popular media for disseminating religious messages, and their advertisement toward such ends, are disclosed.

Among our six books, Meyer's is one of two (the other being Butticci's – see below) not derivative from doctoral research. *Sensational Movies* is by a senior scholar and its contributions can thereby be charted along three lines. First, Meyer the Africanist extends in this volume the results of her earliest achievements,²³ then showing how Ghanaian Christianity defined itself against the perceived backwardness of traditional religion, and now picturing how West African film/video-making continues to resist, invite breaking away and departure from, the indigenous/pagan past. Second, Meyer the anthropologist expands on her methodological repertoire, especially her prior work in the aesthetics of material religiosity, here rendering evident the visuality, affectivity, and sensationality of pentecostal spirituality, including the expansiveness of its communicative power enabled by new electronic technologies. Last (for our purposes) but not least, Meyer the scholar of religion explores the public role of religion, including especially efforts to influence public morality – e.g., via the centrality of spiritual combat in the narrative plots of these movies and videos always concluding with a call for ethical and even spiritual decision and application to everyday life and practice

– and compares and contrasts such with the efforts of the state film industry in the West African region that is now defunct, which had been dedicated to motivating educational endeavors and materials and to minimizing or discouraging other genres.²⁴ These are interlaced and entwined chords rather than disparate threads, and the read is seamless precisely due to the seasoned ethnographic and theoretic hands that have woven this tapestry.

*Daswani: Ghanaian-British Connections*²⁵

Meyer's ethical considerations mediated (pun intended) through the Ghanaian movie and video industry are distinct from Daswani's ethical foci, obvious in his book's subtitle, but extrapolated arduously through qualitative ethnographic means. The latter's task is to make clear through presentation of the narratives of Ghanaian Pentecostal sojourners to and from Great Britain how their ethical lives are formed/transformed and have been shaped in and amidst the uncertainties and vagaries of migration. The subjects of his story are Church of Pentecost adherents and members. This is the largest (demographically speaking) of pentecostal churches and denominations in Ghana and abroad, although Daswani's interviewees are mainly those affiliated with the Pentecost International Worship Center network of churches, especially congregations in London, Accra, and Kumasi.

Looking Back, Moving Forward also hearkens to the mobility we have already seen featured in Haynes's monograph. Whereas the movement in the Zambian Copperbelt was that of (hopeful) upward socio-economic ascent, the case of those associated with the Church of Pentecost correlates such moving with international travel. Daswani's ethnography thus provides a rich account of how what westerners believe to be no more than mundane political/legal and economic transactions – e.g., getting a passport or visa, or being able to afford and purchase a plane ticket – are negotiated along spiritual and moral registers. Witches might no longer be present literally in London, yet the effects of West African occult forces continue to conspire against “movement” understood in the broad sense of both travel and promotion even abroad,²⁶ in this new context working through incomprehensible technologies or seductive activities of consumption.

The pentecostal faithful have to discern whether to maintain continuities with the past (Ghanaian cultural or Christian perspectives) or make a break with that, even as they have to continuously evaluate kinship ties across the distance. Amidst the multiple messages of Christian faithfulness they receive in these disparate worlds, they have to assess what often appears to be contrary meanings, even as they have to remain in a state of unknowing in anticipation of their eschatological citizenship and heavenly reward. Daswani documents the personal, devotional, relational, and ecclesially-mediated (in services for prayer rituals, for instance) practices of discernment that these pentecostal believers undertake to make sense of their instability and rapidly changing lives.

Comparatively considered, our author in this case is uniquely situated in relationship to the object, and subjects, of his study. He is both the only male and the only ethnic insider,²⁷ at least partially – his father being a native Ghanaian – to his region of research.²⁸ Yet, he is also inimitably suited to explore the transnational and transcultural aspects of Ghanaian Pentecostalism, given his own “global citizenship” (my term): with family in Singapore and Australia, with doctoral studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science (that also served as “home base” for his fieldwork in that city), and with appointment in North America (he finished his book while on the faculty of anthropology at the University of Toronto). Supervised by, among others, anthropologist of African religions Matthew Engelke, Daswani’s is the most traditionally anthropological of the six under review,²⁹ even if it appears in a book series that is multi-disciplinarily constituted. Yet this multi- or at least dual-sited research endeavor, encompassing very distant and different continental realities, requires the kind of patient anthropological articulation that we find in this volume.

Butticci: West African-Italian Routes³⁰

Butticci’s interests are less in transcultural comparisons (Daswani’s objective) than in trans-religious contrasts in the African pentecostal diaspora, particularly as that is unfolding in Italy. If in other contexts the story told about the African pentecostal diaspora to Europe is one driven by the missionary desire to re-evangelize a now secularized and post-Christian continent,³¹ Butticci’s account is more subdued,

more attentive to the struggles migrant Ghanaians (and Nigerians) face in the heartland of the Roman Catholic Church. Parish halls, meeting rooms, and kitchen spaces are being rented by these diasporic Pentecostals for the prayer, worship, and fellowship that sustain life amidst the forces that work against African migrants to the “old world.” It is in these “contact zones” (Butticci’s term) that the vitality of Afro-pentecostal spirituality is revealed across the Italian geoscape, mixing the lingering scents of older liturgical incense and echoing sounds of ancient buildings with the fresh sweat of active worshipping bodies and the ringing voices of singing, preaching, and interceding migrants.

As such, then, Butticci’s “politics of presence” is analyzed not only through the lenses of the emerging arena of the materiality of religion, but also – and here influenced by the collegial supervision of Birgit Meyer over the postdoctoral fellowship that gave rise to the book – with tools drawn from religious aesthetics. The multi-sensorial character of pentecostal worship is depicted in part through the remediation of Raphael’s early seventeenth century classic painting of the “transfiguration of Jesus” and deployment of such as a backdrop for pentecostal worship in these new spaces. Butticci’s thus compares and contrasts the pentecostal embodied spirituality that presumes fleshed human subjectivity, even under the remediated gaze of a transfigured Jesus, as the mediatorial site of the Holy Spirit’s presence and activity in the world, with the Roman Catholic sacramental imagination that embraces the iconicity of such visual and material objects, such as the relics prominent in Italian Catholic churches, as transformative portals into beholding of and union with the divine.³² Ironically but no less potently, then, pentecostal rejection of images as idolatrous across the majority world, more specifically in the West and sub-Saharan African context, is reconfigured in ways that are receptive to the capacity of visuality to mediate the Spirit’s activity but yet still resistant to, if not disgusted by, the logic of sacramentality as that pertains to historic Catholic liturgical/Eucharistic, pilgrimage, and devotional practices.³³

Ghanaian and Nigerian pentecostal believers are not palpably present in Italian political spaces yet, but they are publicly present increasingly in historic and religious sites across the country. Hence the *Politics of Presence* Butticci documents, while not so far elevating African Christians into the political life of European nations like Italy, is surely making a societal impact. Now Assistant Professor of Sociocultural Anthropology at the Department of Anthropology of the University of Utrecht, Butticci is poised to make further contributions to the understanding of pentecostal-charismatic Christianity, both in its expressions across the majority world and in their "reverse" interfaces with the Euro-American West.

Methodology in Pentecostal Studies: African Cases and Their Implications

I want to make three sets of methodological comments – along anthropological, pentecostal studies, and theological lines, generally – in the little space left to me here at the end. I hazard these suggestions especially along the first trajectory not because of my expertise in the field but as a theologian who is also an avid consumer of anthropological research, especially as that relates to pentecostal movements. My sense is that the pluralism of methodological approaches to pentecostal movements matches the diversity of its manifestations, and that a variety of analytical tools are needed to comprehend and deduce viably from their multiform character.

Anthropologically, the emergence of Christianity in the field will continue to draw researchers to Pentecostalism, not just in Africa and across the majority world, but also in the West. More precisely, as this review essay unveils, the anthropology of religion will continue to fund Western anthropologists to understand non-Western religionists, including Christians in general and Pentecostals more particularly. What is needed, however, is also more insider accounts. In the African pentecostal cases, such might involve Africans who are not Pentecostal, nor even generally Christian; non-African Pentecostal researchers; or Africans who are also Pentecostals. It is not that only insider accounts are reliable (their biases could be problematic), nor that outsider portraits, like those presented in the preceding pages,

are less valid (sometimes a degree of so-called objectivity may be available); instead, the dialectic of insider-outsider analyses holds promise for the anthropology of Christianity at large, more so, in my surely partial perspective, for the anthropology of Pentecostalism.³⁴

With regard to pentecostal studies in general, our overview of these recent studies invite Africanists, or those studying African Christianity and African Pentecostalism as well, to work with those focused on other regions of the world not only because of the diasporic character of African migration (discussed by Daswani and Butticci) but also as such relates to South-South interfaces (as Van de Kamp's book details). Globalization dynamics will continue to shape African Pentecostalism even as pentecostal movements outside of Africa will be catalyzed or transformed by African pentecostal migration.³⁵ People are moving from Africa in multiple directions while Latin and South Americans as well as those across the massive Asian landscape, even from as far away as East Asia (driven by economic developments in China and motivated by missionary zeal in South Korea, for instance), are arriving in and settling across Africa in ever increasingly numbers. The point then is that pentecostal studies cannot remain static but ought to be developed as an interdisciplinary enterprise, not least deploying anthropological and related social scientific methods for the purpose of comprehending as best as we can what is rapidly unfolding on the historical ground. If, as it is being predicted at least in the short term, Africa will continue to grow as the face of world Christianity, then pentecostal studies will need to be more adequately trained on that region in order to assess, and project, both the future of its own movements and of the possible fortunes for the wider Christian churches as well.

Last but not least, I am in the end secondarily a pentecostal scholar and a student of Pentecostalism in its various manifestations and primarily a theologian. With the latter cap always operative in my own efforts to understand pentecostal Christianity in the African context and elsewhere, I keep returning to the implications of such pentecostal theology more specifically and for global Christian theological reflection and formulation more broadly. The emergence of media studies as an angle on pentecostal movements, including the deliverances briefly commented on above (*vis-à-vis* Pype's and

Meyer's efforts), is suggestive for important theological paths not yet taken, particularly as they relate to the oral culturality and embodied spirituality that are foregrounded through these lenses.³⁶ The other dimension concerns how pentecostal spirituality, even missiological commitments, on the African soil are nevertheless having public impact, whether via its media productions or in its capacity to *move* people in, through, and along a variety of social, economic, and political spheres (e.g., Van de Kamp and Haynes). Therefore, Pentecostal theology now also has to encompass public theology and political theology, even as it is increasingly apparent that pentecostal theological efforts herein cannot be divorced from more ecumenical Christian considerations in these rapidly expanding conversations.³⁷

There is much more to be said, but this review essay has already been much too long. My approach to our interlocutors has been mainly descriptive, guided by a charitable hermeneutic that seeks to explore implications of their efforts for the purposes of developing pentecostal studies, especially pentecostal theology by extension. Anthropologists reviewing these works will no doubt be much more critical about the methodological frames and perhaps the choices made in interpreting the qualitative data in relationship to previous studies of these regions and countries of Africa and of the anthropology of African religion more widely. Yet, as important as those debates might be for those discussions, pentecostal studies considered in itself and with regard to Africa especially, require more input as developments are occurring faster than research and scholarship can keep up with. The preceding is to be considered no more than a *status quaestion* is on one "slice of the pie," so to speak, in an ever-expanding field of inquiry.³⁸

Endnotes

- ¹ Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001), began documentation of the trends, while Ogbu U. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), remains a definitive standard, even if it is increasingly being complemented by the work of J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations From an African Context* (Oxford: Regnum, 2013).
- ² In what follows, I capitalize *Pentecostalism* when used as a noun but not when used as an adjective – e.g., *pentecostal* studies.
- ³ See Vinson Synan, Amos Yong, and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, eds., *Global Renewal Christianity: Spirit-Empowered Movements Past, Present, and Future*, vol. III: *Africa* (Lake Mary, Fla.: Charisma House Publishers, 2016), for a sampling of my own prior scholarly foray into Pentecostalism in the African continent.
- ⁴ For more on such diversified Pentecostalism, see Yong, “Global Pentecostalism Navigating the Public Square: Revitalizing Political Theology?” in Shaun Casey and Michael Kessler, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), forthcoming; see also my earlier article, “Justice Deprived, Justice Demanded: Afropentecostalism and the Task of World Pentecostal Theology Today,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 15:1 (2006): 127-47, which was more theological in orientation.
- ⁵ The anthropology of Christianity is a by now not-so-recent development in the broader anthropology of religion; for an overview of the emergence of Pentecostalism in this more specified discursive site, see Simon Coleman and Rosalind I. J. Hackett, eds., *The Anthropology of Global Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2015).
- ⁶ My own interests in the anthropological study of Pentecostalism have been developed in dialogue with the work of André Droogers, a leading cultural anthropologist of the movement in South America and Africa; see Yong, “Observation-Participation-

Subjunctivation: Methodological Play and Meaning-Making in the Study of Religion and Theological Studies," *Religious Studies and Theology* 31:1 (2012): 17-40. We return to this issue in the concluding part of this essay.

- ⁷ E.g., David Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism & the Rise of Zimbabwean Transnational Religious Movement* (Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 2007); Kristina Helgesson, "Walking in the Spirit" : *The Complexity of Belonging in Two Pentecostal Churches in Durban, South Africa*, Dissertations and Documents in Cultural Anthropology Series (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2006); Maria Frahm-Arp, *Professional Women in South African Pentecostal Charismatic Churches*, *Studies of Religion in Africa* 38 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), among those that have appeared since the turn of the new millennium.
- ⁸ North and West, more specifically, although the East African region is also spawning research and scholarship on pentecostal Christianity, esp. Kenya: e.g., Jaako Lounela, *Mission and Development: Finnish Pentecostal, Lutheran and Orthodox Mission Agencies in Development Work in Kenya 1948-1989* (Abo: Abo Akademi University Press, 2007); Paul Gifford, *Christianity, Politics and Public Life in Kenya* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); and Jean Ngoya Kidula, *Music in Kenyan Christianity: Logooli Religious Song* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2013). But see also on neighboring Ethiopia: Jörg Haustein, *Writing Religious History: The Historiography of Ethiopian Pentecostalism*, *Studien Zur Aussereuropaischen Christentums geschichte (Asien)* 17 (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011).
- ⁹ Linda Van de Kamp, *Violent Conversion: Brazilian Pentecostalism and Urban Women in Mozambique*, Religion in Transforming America series (Suffolk, UK: James Currey, 2016).
- ¹⁰ E.g., Elizabeth E. Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Columbia* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1995), and Nicole Rodriguez Toulis, *Believing Identity: Pentecostalism and the Mediation of Jamaican Ethnicity and Gender in England* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 1997).

- ¹¹ E.g., Ilana Van Wyk, *The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in South Africa: A Church of Strangers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- ¹² Naomi Haynes, *Moving by the Spirit: Pentecostal Social Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*, *The Anthropology of Christianity* 22 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017).
- ¹³ Haynes, *Moving by the Spirit*, xix.
- ¹⁴ Haynes's thesis on the socio-economic register is complemented by the assessment of political and civic engagement by Zambian Pentecostals in Naar M'fundisi, "Pentecostal and Charismatic Spiritualities and Civic Engagement in Zambia (1964-2012)" (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2014), available at <http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/5515/1/M%27fundisi14PhD.pdf> (last accessed 19 May 2017).
- ¹⁵ Haynes, *Moving by the Spirit*, 1.
- ¹⁶ Katrien Pype, *The Making of the Pentecostal Melodrama: Religion, Media, and Gender in Kinshasa*, *The Anthropology of Media* 6 (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2012).
- ¹⁷ For more on the spreading pentecostal and charismatic influence in Africa, see J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, *Studies of Religion in Africa* 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), and Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Beckencentrum Publishing, 2006); cf. also elsewhere: Jakob Egeris Thorsen, *Charismatic Practice and Catholic Parish Life: The Incipient Pentecostalization of the Church in Guatemala and Latin America*, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies* 17 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).
- ¹⁸ Previous studies of Pentecostalism and media have focused on majority world contexts but outside Africa: e.g., Pradip Ninan Thomas, *Strong Religion, Zealous Media: Christian Fundamentalism and Communication in India* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2008), and Martijn Oosterbaan, *Transmitting the Spirit: Religious Conversion, Media, and Urban Violence in Brazil* (University Park, Penn.: Penn State University Press, 2017).

- ¹⁹ Prior studies include E. Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal & Charismatic Studies, 2001); Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspectives on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa* (Oxford: Regnum, 2015); and Wilfred Asampambila Agama, *Succeed Here and in Eternity: The Prosperity Gospel in Ghana* (New York: Peter Lang, 2016).
- ²⁰ Most prominently Nigeria – e.g., Matthews A. Ojo, *The End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2006), Richard Burgess, *Nigeria's Christian Revolution: The Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny (1967-2006)* (Milton Keynes, UK: Regnum, 2008), Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago: The University Press of Chicago, 2009), and Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*. University of Rochester Press, 2014) – but there is also Cameroon: Robert Mbe Akoko, "Ask and You Shall Be Given": *Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon*, African Studies Collection 2 (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2007), and Tomas Sundnes Drønen, *Pentecostalism, Globalisation, and Islam in Northern Cameroon: Megachurches in the Making?* Studies of Religion in Africa 41 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).
- ²¹ Birgit Meyer, *Sensational Movies: Video, Vision, and Christianity in Ghana*, The Anthropology of Christianity 17 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).
- ²² See Birgit Meyer and Annelies Moors, eds., *Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), and Birgit Meyer, ed., *Aesthetic Formations: Media, Religion, and the Senses* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), for some of our author's prior work at the intersection of religion and media.
- ²³ Beginning with Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity Among the Ewe in Ghana* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1999).

- ²⁴ A more insider pentecostal perspective is developing public theological stances, such as Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, *Christology and Evil in Ghana: Towards a Pentecostal Public Theology*, Currents of Encounter 49 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013).
- ²⁵ Girish Daswani, *Looking Back, Moving Forward: Transformation and Ethical Practice in the Ghanaian Church of Pentecost*, Anthropological Horizons series (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).
- ²⁶ The message of deliverance is prominent precisely because of the hold that indigenous traditions, including beliefs about witchcraft, retain on the Ghanaian pentecostal imagination; see, e.g., Opoku Onyinah, *Pentecostal Exorcism: Witchcraft and Demonology in Ghana* (Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2012).
- ²⁷ Gender is not a prominent theme in Daswani's discussion of Pentecostalism in Ghana and the Ghanaian diaspora; for more on this matter, see Jane E. Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*. Leiden: Brill, 2007), and Anita Aba Ansah, *Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfilment in Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Scholars Press, 2016).
- ²⁸ Daswani is not a religious insider to either the Church of Pentecost more specifically or Christianity in general, this he makes clear; yet this is not a significant matter of self-identification (or not) in the other texts we are reviewing (some reveal themselves as Christian, others say nothing one way or the other), hence I have denoted the point here rather than above in the main text.
- ²⁹ And this is not an indictment of Engelke, who himself has extensive research experience also in both Africa and Britain; see Matthew Engelke, *A Problem of Conscience: Beyond Scripture in an African Church*, Anthropology of Christianity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), and *God's Agents: Biblical Publicity in Contemporary England*, The Anthropology of Christianity 15 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).
- ³⁰ Annalisa Buttici, *African Pentecostals in Catholic Europe: The Politics of Presence in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 2016).

- ³¹ Claudia Währisch-Oblau, *The Missionary Self-Perception of Pentecostal/Charismatic Church Leaders from the Global South in Europe: Bringing back the Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).
- ³² See also the visually rich text, Annalisa Butticci, ed., *Na God: The Aesthetics of African Charismatic Power* (Grafiche Turato Edizioni, 2013).
- ³³ Long ago pentecostal theologian Frank Macchia has argued – e.g., “Tongues as a Sign: Towards a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience,” *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 15:1 (1993): 61-76 – that the embodied spirituality of classical Pentecostalism, replete with active worship and with emphases on bodily healing, at least functions similarly to, if not in place of, the sacramental theology of historic Roman Catholicism with its assumptions regarding how the materiality of the created order nevertheless is the medium through which grace encounters and then saves and sanctifies, creatures; cf. my discussion of Macchia’s pentecostal theology of sacramentality in my *Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2012), ch. 5.
- ³⁴ Yong, “Observation-Participation-Subjunctivation”.
- ³⁵ For instance, a South Asian and South African pentecostal connection is documented by Gerald J. Pillay, *Religion at the Limits? Pentecostalism among Indian South Africans* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 1994). For works on the African pentecostal diaspora, see, e.g., Frieder Ludwig and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, eds. *African Christian Presence in the West* (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2011), and Afe Adogame, ed., *Who is Afraid of the Holy Ghost?: Pentecostalism and Globalization in Africa and Beyond* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011).
- ³⁶ Herein the relevance of my parallel efforts to develop pentecostal theology from out of the oral cultural matrix of African Pentecostalism more particularly, but also related to indigenous and other majority world Pentecostalism more generally; see, e.g., my plenary presentation, “Understanding and Living the Apostolic Way: Orality and Scriptural Faithfulness in Conversation with African Pentecostalism,” delivered at

“The Catholic Church and Pentecostalism: Challenges in the Nigerian context” international conference, in Abuja, Nigeria, 14-17 November 2016, and published as the second chapter in my *The Hermeneutical Spirit: Theological Interpretation and the Scriptural Imagination for the Third Christian Millennium* (Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books, 2017).

- ³⁷ See Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology – The Cadbury Lectures 2009*, Sacra Doctrina: Christian Theology for a Postmodern Age series (Grand Rapids and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010).
- ³⁸ Thanks to my graduate assistant Hoon Jung for proofreading a previous version of this essay, although I remain responsible for its final form; I am grateful also to Emmanuel Anim, associate editor of the *Pentecostal Journal of Theology and Mission* for welcoming this submission by an outsider to *African Pentecostalism*.