

Pentecostalism, Migration and World Christianity

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The Next Issue

**Theme: Pentecostalism and Christian Higher
Education**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the maiden edition of the Pentecost Journal of Theology and Mission (PJTM). PJTM seeks to provide a space for critical reflection on contemporary issues of theology and mission through a Pentecostal lens. It is a place for both seasoned and emerging scholars, and mission practitioners from Africa and elsewhere to share their experiences, research and reflections making a contribution to Theological Education in Africa and beyond. Theology arises in local contexts as Christians engage in addressing local concerns and challenges, but the insights of contextual theology have something important to say to the world church. By creating a space for the voices of African theologians, pastors and teachers to be heard, the global church will be blessed by glimpses of God's wisdom and glory. As God's revelation shines upon and reflects from many contexts, the world "will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the seas" (Hab.2:14) just as a diamond glints ever brighter as light is reflected from its multiple sides.

In this first issue that addresses 'Pentecostalism, Migration and World Christianity', we are honoured and delighted that the Chairman of the Church of Pentecost (CoP), Apostle Dr Opoku Onyinah has contributed our Feature Article. Dr Onyinah helpfully sets out the history and character of the Church of Pentecost. His article brings out one aspect of the uniqueness of the CoP as -

a financially self-supporting church right from its beginning to date. On finance, it is the policy of The Church of Pentecost not to ask for any outside support. The main sources of supports are tithes and offerings contributed by the members. The Church believes that God will meet the Church's financial needs in season and out of season.

The Church of Pentecost has become not only a World Church having established sustainable churches in 90 countries but also, by God's grace, a church that is able to offer reflection to the Body of Christ in Africa and beyond. Why?, because the CoP has the kind of spirituality that recognises, celebrates and expresses faith through indigenous cultures. This strong sense of identity is not without its challenges, especially as the church expands to other cultures and nations.

In this issue two scholars of the Church of Pentecost, Dr Emmanuel Anim and Apostle Dr Dela Quampah reflect on the CoP in the diaspora, exploring the models of mission that exist and reflecting on how the CoP can be effective communicators of the gospel across the world.

Dr Emmanuel Anim is Principal of the Pentecost Theological Seminary (PTS), Ghana and a regular teacher in Theological and Mission Institutions in Ghana, UK, USA and other parts of the world. In his article, "Mission, Migration and World Christianity", Anim notes that,

migration and Christian mission have often gone together with church planting, and sometimes the latter becoming the unintended consequences of the former. This was very much the case in early Christian history as persecuted Jewish Christians in Jerusalem fled to neighbouring communities of Samaria and later to Asia Minor outside Palestine ...
... the spread of Christianity across the world owes as much to migration, either voluntarily or by persecution, as it does to direct missionary efforts.

It is in light of these historic experiences that we may better understand African Christian mission in the diaspora. Dr Anim looks at the ability of the CoP to incorporate into its worship and liturgy the use of Ghanaian musical instruments, singing, clapping and dancing to local choruses making it attractive to Ghanaians in the diaspora and a place to feel at home. Anim suggests that many CoP churches in the diaspora have adopted a "chaplaincy mission model" and notes the values of this approach. However, Dr Anim highlights the crucial need for adequate training in cross cultural mission for pastors in the CoP so that they are equipped to "embrace a vision that encompasses the indigenous communities as well."

Dr Dela Quampah, former Dean of Studies at PTS is now leading the CoP in South Africa. His article provides a case study and example of praxis as he reflects on action, and acts on reflections, within the context of South Africa. He concludes with an insightful observation that,

globalization has resulted in the emergence of diaspora churches, which is a significant feature of the shift in contemporary Christian mission paradigm. And we need to celebrate the approach of some Pentecostal churches, who build capacity by empowering their laity to take the bold initiative and plant their home churches in diaspora communities.

The fourth article by Prof. Asamoah-Gyadu, a lecturer at Trinity Theological Seminary, Ghana, is titled "Migration and Diaspora Mission: Africa and the Changing Christian Landscape of the West". Prof. Asamoah-Gyadu observes that,

African migrants always carry their faith with them to the Diasporas thus contributing significantly to the revival of Christianity in the West... Unlike the cries of Diaspora Jews who out of exilic despair could not fathom singing the Lord's song in a foreign land, modern migrants are doing just that with the formation of churches with many hoping that their efforts may help to deal with the declining presence of Christianity in the modern West.

The fifth article, "Nigerian Immigrant: Pentecostal Churches and their impact on Global Christianity", is jointly written by Samuel Fabunmi and Professor Deji Ahebfoyin. Fabunmi is an upcoming scholar in Church History focusing on the development of African Christianity. Ahebfoyin is currently Head of Department, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. They help us to see the huge contribution that Nigerian Christians have made on the spread of Christianity in the world today, particularly in Europe and America, noting that,

Apart from the home front, Nigerian Pentecostal denominations are now proliferating internationally. Today, many of the Nigerian Pentecostal churches are firmly planted in western countries, such as France, Britain, Germany, Russia and the United States of America.

Migration may be a defining issue of the 21st Century. However uncomfortable the issues, Christians cannot avoid engaging with what is happening in every continent of our world. Irregular migration and how immigrants might regularize their status is one uncomfortable yet unavoidable question for Christians, for the Church and for the nations. This is picked up in our sixth article by Rev. Frederick Gyamfi-Mensah who researched the topic of irregular migration in Germany when he was there as a regular migrant pastor and student. Gyamfi-Mensah, an emerging scholar, invites us to reflect on the story of Abraham's migration to Egypt which raises some important theological questions for sober reflection.

This is particularly thorny when we consider the long term consequences of Abraham's sojourn to Egypt. Gyamfi-Mensah notes that,

In Genesis chapter sixteen, Abraham and Sarah had taken Hagar as maidservant from Egypt. Unable to bear children at this time, Sarah suggested that Abraham took Hagar as mistress and build a family through her, which was culturally acceptable. Perhaps, she had thought God's promise would come true this way (Gen. 15:4). It is particularly insightful when one considers the message of the angel of God to Hagar, part of which reads: "I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count" (Gen 16:10) ... What are some of the relevant contemporary challenges that the birth of Ishmael and his ancestry have brought to the whole issue of global migration today?

How the church responds to the challenges and implications of migration is the focus of Patrick Johnstone's article. For 40 years Johnstone wrote the internationally acclaimed prayer/information manual *Operation World*. In his article, through his personal and missiological reflections, he calls the global church to action in a world on the move. He sees –

the migrant crisis as a great opportunity to start multi-cultural teams planting multi-cultural churches that are relevant and spiritually effective in the demanding environment of today's globalized world.

Johnstone challenges the church to find ways and means of using their rich and varied gifts to build an integrated Christian community. We are grateful to all the contributors for this first edition – all are busy people who made time to share with us. We acknowledge the Editorial Board whose role in reviewing articles helps to ensure that the Pentecost Journal of Theology and Mission will stay robust, practical and scholarly. And we welcome you our readers, whether you are scholars, mission practitioners, pastors, students or church members we hope you will enjoy this first edition, and subsequent ones.

Since the gospel of Jesus Christ came to us through migration, how do we respond with the gospel in our world on the move? Indeed one of the greatest challenges facing the church today is how it would be able to see migration as an opportunity of bringing together Christians from all nations to all nations to live out the truth of the gospel in all the nations as spelt out in Ephesians 2:11-21. Through the cross Christ Jesus has destroyed the barrier, hostility and the dividing wall of ethnocentrism and denominationalism. He has indeed created in Himself one new humanity, where we are no longer foreigners and aliens to each other, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household. For through Christ Jesus we all have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Robert K. Aboagye-Mensah
Chief Editor

PENTECOSTAL TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA: THE RISE AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST

Opoku Onyinah

Keywords: *The Church of Pentecost, African Pentecostals, church growth, indigenization, diaspora*

Introduction

The emergence, growth and development of The Church of Pentecost (CoP), Ghana is a demonstration of a new era of African Christianity. The Church of Pentecost was listed as the largest Protestant Christian denomination in Ghana by the last empirical church survey of the Ghana Evangelism Committee. In 1937, James and Sophia McKeown were sent by the Apostolic church in the UK to the then Gold Coast (now Ghana) as missionaries. Working in partnership with the indigenous converts and personnel, McKeown worked tirelessly in Ghana to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the country through his emphases on the word of God, the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, and holy living. In 1953 McKeown was compelled to come out of the Apostolic Church of the UK and get along with the indigenous people under the name 'Ghana Apostolic Church' which was renamed 'The Church of Pentecost' in 1962.

The Church of Pentecost has become an indigenous church, with a good blend of Christianity and African cultural features. The Church of Pentecost has moved beyond the shores of Ghana to become a worldwide Christian denomination. At the end of 2015, the chairman of the Church of Pentecost reported having 18,915 churches across the globe, with an overall membership of more than two and a half million (2,612,618) and ninety branches in Africa, Europe, North and South America, Australia and Asia. In 2006 alone the Church of Pentecost made inroads into Ethiopia, Angola, Portugal, Las Palmas, El Salvador, Belize, Chad, Dominican Republic and Romania.¹ Yet, within the academic not much has been said about the growth and impact of the CoP on Christianity in Africa and the rest of the world.

Researchers who have touched on the Church of Pentecost and its mission activities include Robert Willie, Kinsley Larbi, Johnson Asamoah Gyadu,² Gerrie Ter Haar³ and Rijk Van Dijk.⁴ Both Larbi and Asamoah Gyadu present the collective historical, religious and theological orientation of Ghanaian indigenous Pentecostal movements. Asamoah-Gyadu cites the emergence of the CoP as one of the factors which led to the decline of the older African Initiated Churches suggesting that the CoP was a “more respectable option in indigenous Pentecostalism”.⁵ Thus it is important to study the factors which led to the growth and respectability of the CoP. In her research about the relationship between African-led churches in Europe and churches in the home countries of Africa, Ter Haar remarks that the CoP is one of the most successful of the African-led churches in Europe.

However, her main focus is on the True Teaching of Christ’s Temple Church, a “prophet-healer type church,” which emerged among the Ghanaian diasporic community in the Netherlands.⁶ Van Dijk writes about the role “Ghanaian Pentecostalism appears to play in the forming of their [Ghanaians’] identity as strangers in Dutch society”.⁷ He mentions the Church of Pentecost in the process. However, Van Dijk plays down the contributions being made by not only the Church of Pentecost but all Pentecostals and Charismatics, by hypothesizing “the prayer camps”⁸ as the “sending discourse”.⁹

There is no direct link (if even an indirect one) between the camps and the Church’s mission as Van Dijk suggested.¹⁰ Thus, beside the false impression, which Van Dijk gives his readers, there is no report about the development, growth and missionary activities of the Church of Pentecost. All the same, it is still important to bring into the awareness of the Christian world, the rise and development of the indigenous African Pentecostals and their enterprising missionary activities, such as those of the Church of Pentecost to the Christian world, and by so doing invite dialogue with them.

Consequently, this article is an attempt to bring out the rise and growth of the Church of Pentecost, and find out the missiological principles underlying the successful growth of the Church.

The article assumes that the Church of Pentecost lays much emphasis on the necessity for individual persons to experience the Spirit-baptism and that it is this experience (of Spirit-baptism) coupled with its advocacy of the importance of the African indigenous worship, which has caused growth in the Church of Pentecost in Ghana, across Africa and other parts of the world.

In addition to my own research this article draws from the work that has been done on the Church of Pentecost. Furthermore, being in Church leadership for over thirty years, I write as a participant observer. The paper adopts the abbreviation 'CoP' for the Church of Pentecost. The term 'African diaspora' is adopted to describe the scattering of African across the globe. Similarly the term 'Ghanaian diaspora' is adopted here to describe the global scattering of Ghanaians outside their own country, Ghana.

The Church of Pentecost: A continuation of Christianity in Ghana
Before the establishment of the Pentecostal churches in Ghana, the initial attempt to evangelize Ghana by the Roman Catholics Mission had been a failure. However, Christianity had firmly been established in the mid 1800s, through the enterprising missionary activities of the Basel Mission (1845), the Bremen Mission (1847), Wesleyan Methodist (1840) and the Catholic Mission (second attempt in 1880).¹¹ From 1922 onwards, some Ghanaians established their own independent churches for various reasons including a desire for freedom to worship in culturally relevant ways, religious changes, socio-economic and spiritual hunger (prophetism).¹² These are commonly referred to in Ghana as sunsum söre (Spiritual churches).¹³ These churches seem to thrive and promote the spread of the gospel effectively. The attraction of these churches is that they seek to provide the form of worship that satisfies the holistic needs of Ghanaians.¹⁴ Yet Asamoah Gyadu analyses that the absence of structures, failure to test revelation, lack of accountability and exploitation of people for personal gain negatively affected their popularity. The Church of Pentecost becomes prominent against this background.¹⁵

The Church of Pentecost traces its beginning to the activities of James and Sophia McKeown, both of Northern Ireland, who arrived in the then Gold Coast in 1937, on the ticket of the Apostolic Church of the UK. McKeown was invited by Peter Anim and his movement, the then Faith Tabernacle Church.

McKeown and Anim parted company in 1939 due to some theological differences. McKeown continued to work as a missionary of the UK Apostolic Church till 1953 when church practices and constitution caused his dismissal from the UK Apostolic Church. McKeown was invited to lead the indigenous group, dubbed the Gold Coast Apostolic Church. In 1957 when Ghana attained independence, the name was changed to the Ghana Apostolic Church. The two apostolic churches were operating in Ghana: The Apostolic Church, Ghana (the original one from the UK) and the Ghana Apostolic Church. In 1962 the President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, intervened in a legal battle between the churches, when he ordered the Ghana Apostolic Church (McKeown's group) to change its name. It was then that the name 'The Church of Pentecost' was adopted. Therefore, the origin of the Church of Pentecost can be placed at the events of 1953, when James McKeown was dismissed from the Apostolic Church of the UK.¹⁶ In 1971 the Church of Pentecost affiliated with Elim Pentecostal Churches of UK; it is a mutual accord that still continues.

The Assemblies of God which started operations in the country in 1931 and the three churches which had come in contact with McKeown, the Christ Apostolic Church, the Apostolic Church of Ghana, (affiliated to the UK Apostolic Church) and the Church of Pentecost, remained the main Pentecostal churches until the 1970. Others such as the Reformed Apostolic Church, Foursquare Gospel Church and Open Bible Church joined the race after this period.

The Apostolic Church background and the role of Pastor James Mckeown

The Apostolic Church that sent McKeown to Ghana had its birth in the Welsh revival. It was a church that displayed all the spectrum of classical Pentecostalism. Swiss theologian and expert on Pentecostalism Walter Hollenweger, describes the Apostolic Church as a church that "gives greater play to the gifts of the Spirit".¹⁷ In the Church, men are called through prophecy to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Others were called to the offices of elders and deacons. Women are called as deaconesses. Women are not ordained into the full time pastoral ministry. Consequently, the Apostolic Church developed a ministry organised as a strict hierarchical structure.¹⁸

Also, a rigorous ethical stance was upheld with the prohibition of things such as drinking alcohol and smoking. Members who were found of making a practice of going to questionable places or falling to open sin were to be disciplined.¹⁹

Against this backdrop, the CoP owed much to the Apostolic Church. While such practices could have been hindrances to the pioneering missionary; they were not. Right from the beginning, McKeown wanted the Church to be indigenous with Ghanaian culture, ministry and finance. He realized that "it would be difficult to grow an 'English oak' in Ghana. A local 'species,' at home in its culture, should grow, reproduce and spread: a church with foreign roots was more likely to struggle".²⁰ His concern was to sow what he called the "local species" to produce an indigenous church.

To achieve this goal of indigenization, McKeown's philosophy was "just to evangelize"²¹ and make the people know God. McKeown said, "once we have a strong Church of people who really know Jesus and the Holy Spirit, then everything else will follow".²² The implication of this was that he was not going to provide social services. The people who knew God were going to provide finance, build schools, hospitals and serve their nation in diverse ways. On the face value, this was quite strange. A church is supposed not only to serve the spiritual needs of people, but also material.

Nevertheless, the philosophy behind McKeown's policy was that he could not offer the people what he did not have. He would give them what he had. Once he got the right people, they would serve their own people with other needs. History was to judge him.

Consequently, McKeown's ministry had an impact on Ghanaian society; he won many converts. Among his early converts who became prominent were Pastors J. A. C. Anaman, Joseph Egyir Paintsil and Mrs. Christiana Obo. Their 'contextualized messages' caused people to pray for the Spirit baptism, most importantly, as a protection against witchcraft, and give power to witness and confront evil powers.²³ McKeown was quick to recognize and acknowledge the involvement of Ghanaians in his work. He often said, 'I never founded anything. I never opened a single assembly [church].'²⁴ In his view the Ghanaian did the work.

McKeown's major contributions to the growth and development of the CoP were his ability in providing self-less leadership; maintaining personal integrity and putting the Bible into practice. Again, he stressed the fact that the Church must be self-reliance in finance, governing and the propagation of the gospel. These principle were similar to the "Indigenous Policy" (self-supporting, self-propagation and self-government), as first set forth by Rufus Anderson²⁵ and Henry Venn,²⁶ and later developed and re-defined by others including Roland Allen and Melvin Hodges.²⁷ Whether McKeown was aware of this policy is not clear. Some Pentecostal scholars, including Hollenweger and Spittler, point out that Pentecostals have been influenced by Allen's *Missionary Methods*.²⁸ McGee, for instance, has shown that Allen's books were already circulating in Pentecostal circles as early as 1921.²⁹ Leonard thinks that McKeown was not aware of the policy.³⁰ However, McKeown's stress on self-supporting and liability districts might imply that he had read about them somewhere else. Undoubtedly, for McKeown, like many Pentecostals,³¹ he was implementing "New Testament methods" through the "leading of the Holy Spirit".³²

For Larbi, "These principles helped to place the organisation on a sound footing morally, financially, and in terms of its strong and uncompromising evangelistic drive. These principles have since defined the ethos of the Church. McKeown played the role of a facilitator par excellence".³³ Allan Anderson is right in his assessment, "To all intents and purposes this was an autochthonous Ghanaian church".³⁴

In the late 1950s, McKeown would spend increasing time in Britain, spending only half year in Ghana. Thus in 1982, when he retired, and handed over Chairmanship to Ghanaian, Apostle Fred Stephen Safo (1982-87), he felt that the Church could run smoothly without him. The transition was very smooth. There have been two other African leaders after Safo; Prophet M. K Yeboah (1988-1998) and Apostle M. K. Ntummy (1998-2008) with Opoku Onyinah elected in 2008; each followed smoothly without a conflict. The CoP is indeed an example of an African Pentecostal church with respect; an African Church that is self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating, and self-theologising.

Spread of The Church of Pentecost to the world

The beginning of the spread of CoP to other West African countries was not an organized one. As CoP members migrated along West Africa, they shared their faith with others and, before long, small groups of new converts were formed. These migrants sent information home about the existence of new churches, which they had established. Being influenced by the fear of the imminent return of Christ, the leadership of the CoP is always challenged with the urgency in evangelization. Therefore, pastors are always sent as 'missionaries'³⁵ to foreign land without formal training. In a way the establishment of the branches of the church outside Ghana shows the effectiveness of oral culture. Hollenweger observes that "all the elements of oral theology function as a logic system for passing on theological and social value information in oral society".³⁶

Thus, although the CoP has not yet intellectually systematized its faith and practices in theological categories, these are echoed in its normal church activities such as worship-songs and preaching, conventions and movement meetings, and the members carry these along orally. In a similar way, when the Ghanaian immigrants went to the West, they began to worship and contribute to the growth of Western churches. Yet they could not find their identity. Gerloff, writing about the African-Americans rightly says that "the religion of the slaves [Africans] and the religion of the slave master [Whites] were never identical, even when both referred to the same Bible".³⁷ Thus in the attempt to find their identity, members of the CoP among the immigrants were able to establish churches in their places of abode. At the end of 1999, the Church had not only got branches in all the West African countries but also in East, Central, South and North Africa.³⁸ Churches have also been established in many countries in the other continents, including Israel, Holland, Belgium, U.S.A., Canada, Norway, France, Germany, India, Italy, Switzerland, Korea, Lebanon, Brazil, and Japan. The State of Church address by the Church in 2016 indicates 4,561 churches and a total membership of 431,855 in the Mission fields. 377 new churches were opened and 38,470 converts were baptized in 2015 alone.³⁹

Establishment of the International Missions Office

In order to co-ordinate the activities of the branches overseas the CoP established a department called the "International Missions Office," during the chairmanship of Prophet Yeboah. This department is under the International Missions Director, who is directly accountable to the Chairman of the Church, on the same level as the Church's General Secretary. Reporting directly to the Chairman of the Church gives the International Mission Director free access to administer the Missions office without any bureaucratic hindrances and indicates how important missions is to the CoP. Part of his function is to advise missionaries and where appropriate work with them to organise crusades, rallies and conventions for the effective evangelism of the nations.⁴⁰

Characteristics of the CoP

1. Government

The church has a centralised structure that is similar to the Apostolic Church in UK.⁴¹ At the top comes the General Council which consists of all confirmed ministers of the Church, Area Executive Committee members, Chairmen of Boards and Committees and Movements Directors. Following the General Council is the nine men Executive Council that sees to the administration of the Church. The areas (and nations) presbyteries, chaired by the apostles and prophets, come after the Executive council followed by district presbyteries, headed by pastors. Last on the administrative structure of the Church are the local presbyteries, headed by presiding elders. The structure may have its weaknesses, but as a whole, it seems to fit in with the Ghanaian culture, especially that of the Akan with its various military organs.⁴² Thus it makes the members feel secure in its formality, accountability and disciplinary measures.

2. Worship

Worship in the Church is similar to other classical Pentecostals,⁴³ with some cultural diversity such as the giving of testimonies, praises, special times of prayer called worship and preaching.⁴⁴ There is the opportunity to express oneself before God in diverse ways—prayer, dancing and testimonies. During one such meeting Afua Kumah, the mother-in-law of apostle A. T. Nartey, claiming to move by the Spirit,

came forward and applied the appellations to the chief to the praise of God. Often she was called during conventions to praise the Lord this way. Later her words were put into writing.⁴⁵ The name of Afua Kumah, the product of the CoP, has become a classical example of local theologizing within African Theology.⁴⁶

Eventually the CoP developed a form of worship, especially its songs that have had an impact on Ghanaian society.⁴⁷ Often as preaching and prayer go on a member would receive through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit a song that would be sung spontaneously, without having to write it. Professor Larbi observes that the CoP "has bequeathed to Ghanaian Christianity more locally brewed Christian songs than any other Church in the country".⁴⁸ It can be said that the CoP's form of worship has become paradigmatic to Ghanaian Pentecostal churches. Even the other churches, both Protestants and Catholics, adopt Pentecostal type of worship, singing and clapping, after they had gone through their formal liturgy. Beside the fact that many Ghanaians will confirm this, most of the leaders of the Charismatic churches were either members of or affiliated with the CoP. These includes Duncan Williams (leader of Action faith), Eric Kwabong (formerly, one of the key leaders of Otabil's International Central Church), Agyin Asare (Perez Chapel) and Addae Mensah (Gospel Light International Church.)

Preaching is the climax of Sunday worship. Usually passages or texts are read from the Bible and contextualized to suit their audience.⁴⁹ Ter Haar sees the place accorded to the Bible and preaching by the diasporic community, as "a significant point of distinction between African and Western Christianity in general, ⁵⁰an indication that the needs of the diasporic community could not be met by the Western churches.

The giving of testimony is very prominent in worship. Through insights from these testimonies, the leaders become aware of the basic needs of the individual members, including health, lack of accommodation and unemployment. While, at the end of such sessions, prayers are said for such people, others are also counseled. Thus, through worship in the indigenous way, the needs of the members may be met by the Church. Bible study meetings are held once during the weekdays.

"All night" prayer meeting is one of the features of the CoP.⁵¹ Ojo rightly observes about African Christians in general that, "[they believed that] the more they pray, the greater the power of God works through them to defeat the powers of darkness"⁵² and overcome social problems.

A number of interpretations from different perspectives have been offered to explain Pentecostal type of worship. For scholars such as Hollenweger and Ter Haar, they are psychological and therapeutic functions of relief.⁵³ Of course, this has its place in Pentecostal corporate worship. However, it must be pointed out that not all who attend Pentecostal meetings need such therapeutic relief; for some are really settled down in life, they may have other purposes such as "building [themselves] up in [their] most holy faith" (Jude 22).

Others have attempted to provide a sociological explanation for Pentecostal worship. For Gifford, "most young people have no money to go to night clubs, discos or concerts for their entertainment. The churches provide a new forum for a parallel music scene...".⁵⁴ But Gifford's "ridicule" is misconstrued, since such young people who join the churches, later testify of the power of God that has delivered them from worldly acts such as discos and clubs.⁵⁵ Thus it is the consideration of those acts as worldliness that puts the young people off from going to these social activities, rather than socio-economic circumstances as Gifford puts it.⁵⁶

Assessing the activities of the Africans in the diaspora, Van Dijk argues, "the global 'strength' of Pentecostalism is put centre stage; it is to this strength that a person can gain access through involvement in the leaders' immediate social environment in diaspora".⁵⁷ Although Van Dijk does not spelt out what he means by "the global 'strength' of Pentecostalism," he appears to be speaking about Pentecostal type of worship in general, which, for him, is geared toward the provision of social help for those in the diaspora.⁵⁸ However, although social services may give some reasonable explanations for the Pentecostal type of worship, it cannot be the focus of Pentecostal worship, since, for example, with regards to the Ghanaian diasporic communities, there are some clubs which render social activities for them,⁵⁹ but some Pentecostals would not attend.

Cox sounds convincing as he demonstrates in his book, *Fire from Heaven*, that Pentecostalism is the recovery of "primal spirituality".⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the difficulty that some Pentecostals may have with this viewpoint is that, for them, worship is always geared towards spirituality, which has its source in divine revelation.⁶¹ Thus most Pentecostals will embrace Land's explanation for the Pentecostal-type of worship, "the singing, preaching, testifying...prayer meeting, [speaking in tongues]...all the elements of corporate worship prepared people for...a life of missionary witness".⁶² From this perspective, Pentecostals see worship as enriching their spiritual lives in order for them to be able to face practical life situations with fortitude and hope, besides carrying on with their Pentecostal life of witness with zeal.

3. Emphasis on the Holy Spirit and its implications for missions

The strength of the CoP growth and mission may be attributed to the emphasis it places on the work of the Holy Spirit. Leonard reports of a conversation that went on between McKeown and another missionary, I have only three messages 'One: Jesus Christ and him crucified. Two: the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Three: the power of God to change lives and bring holiness in the Church'.⁶³ The Holy Spirit is thought of as the One who guides the Church. It is the Spirit who enables them to effectively perform the tasks assigned to each believer in Christian ministry. Performance of task is urgent, since it is believed that the second coming of Christ is imminent. The Holy Spirit gives supernatural ability to Christians to witness including power to preach, power to cast out evil spirits, power to heal the sick and protection from evil forces. It is believed that once people experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit as initially evidenced by speaking in tongues, they are expected to witness Christ to others. Thus people baptized in the Holy Spirit are missionaries wherever they are. Everybody gets involved in evangelism.

Here, it is clear that power goes beyond what Eastwood attempts to identify as the priesthood of all believers.⁶⁴ Power is associated with what Stronstad explains as the prophethood of all believers,⁶⁵ where all could become powerful and confront witchcraft and fetishism in their evangelistic activities. This sort of "prophethood" of all believers appeals to the peasants and the downtrodden who constitute a majority

of the population in society. They help to propagate the gospel. The rapid growth of the CoP is an evidence of this.

The CoP does not stand alone here. Clearly the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the motivating factor behind all Pentecostal mission activities. This is clearly reflected in the writings of Pentecostal scholars, such as Spittler, Menzies and McClung. Spittler, the North American Pentecostal theologian writes, "Pentecostal success in mission can be laid to their drive for personal religious experience ...the experiential particularism involved in every Pentecostal baptism in the Holy Spirit".⁶⁶ However, sociologist Paul Gifford adduces the reason for the growth of the CoP to a "lack of any education requirements, which enables anyone wanting to begin a church to do so on behalf of CoP".⁶⁷ Gifford's argument is weak, because if such a requirement were to be the main factor of the growth of a church, then many churches would have grown. Similarly Pomerville, the Pentecostal missiologist, observes that church growth specialists assign many causes, including the mobilization of the laity, praying for the sick and aggressive evangelism, to Pentecostal church growth and missions. Nevertheless, Pomerville suggests that "the Pentecostal experience of individual believers has always been and still is the primary cause of growth of Pentecostal churches".⁶⁸

By stressing the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the CoP emphasizes the coming of the Spirit on a person's life as an experience which brings the ability to perform signs and wonders in Jesus' name to authenticate the gospel message. Against this background, there are campaigns, rallies, and crusades geared at winning new converts for Christ. Other evangelistic activities, especially among the diasporic communities include in-door crusades, personal evangelism and door to door visitations with the view to minister to the non-Christians.⁶⁹ It has been a regular feature within the Church's fellowship meetings for people to hear reports of signs and wonders wrought in the power of the Holy Spirit, including cripples walking, blind seeing and demons being cast out during their evangelistic activities. Ter Haar observes that they "detect the hand of God" in their daily affairs.⁷⁰ For Land, Pentecostalism is the "unseen recovery of the universal call to witness in the power

and demonstration of the Spirit in order to carry out the universal mission of the church...".⁷¹ Thus the emphasis on signs and wonders by the Church, which is also part of the Pentecostal evangelistic strategy throughout the world, has contributed to the growth of the Church both in Ghana and beyond.

The emphasis placed on the need for each person to receive the Holy Spirit also results in spontaneous liturgy, void of rigid order. This is mainly oral and narrative with emphasis on a direct experience of God through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Accordingly, through the baptism in the Holy Spirit, everyone is involved in worship and knows how to conduct a service. The result of this is indigenous assimilation. It was this sort of indigenous assimilation, exhibiting itself in the lives of the CoP members in diaspora, which resulted in the establishment of the branches of the CoP overseas.

Pentecostal emphasis on the Holy Spirit-baptism especially regarding glossolalia has not gone unchallenged.⁷² McGee sums up critical remarks against speaking in tongues; "critics branded glossolalia as nonsense".⁷³ Nonetheless, the Charismatic renewal in Africa and world-wide is a confirmation of the impact that the Pentecostal stress on the Holy Spirit has had on Christianity. Undoubtedly the Pentecostal experience and success have forced the larger church across the world to reassess the work of the Holy Spirit in its activities. Thus it is an undisputed fact that Pentecostalism has contributed positively to African and world Christianity.

4. Finance

On finance, it is the policy of the CoP not to ask for any outside support. The main sources of supports are tithes and offerings contributed by the members. The CoP believes that God will meet the Church's financial needs in season and out of season. This biblical based belief has been reechoed to the Church in various General Council meetings through prophetic messages. The resultant effect is that the CoP accepts that if it does not borrow or seek financial aids, loans or grants from anywhere, God will be its eternal riches and treasury to sustain the Church in all its needs. From this view point, the Church uses whatever local resources are available for its projects. Church members have been supporting projects such

as Church building, putting up of schools, putting up of clinics and buying of vehicles. For example, in 2004, an individual member of the Church, Elder Kwasi Oppong, put up a church building which amounted to \$ 150, 000 for his local church. In 2006, an elder of the Church also purchased two cars for the use of two pastors in his vicinity. In 2014, five individuals and their families put up five church buildings for different local congregations, at various places. Five other individuals also purchased vehicles for the use of their pastors.⁷⁴

By insisting on being self-supporting, the CoP has stood on its feet right from its beginning to date.

5. Social services

The CoP set up a department in 1982 called Pentecost Social Services, during the chairmanship of Apostle Safo. Its vision is to serve the spiritual and physical needs of people through an wholistic approach to development on a sustainable basis. In his State-of-the Church Address Chairman, Apostle Dr Ntummy reports that the Church owns and operates one hundred and thirteen Primary, Junior/Senior Secondary and Vocational/Technical Schools in Ghana. In 2003, through the leadership of Chairman Ntummy, a university college was established which does not only offer Theological programmes, but also Business Administration and Information Technology. The CoP in Ghana contributes to the Health Sector by owning and running six clinics and one fully-fledged hospital in Ghana. The CoP continues to donate generously towards institutions such as Heart Foundations, Children's Homes, Leprosarium and Veterans Associations.

In 2006, through the CoP's GENDER outfit, it contributed to poverty alleviation by training and resourcing sixty orphans and young widows and an additional two hundred and fifty-seven in employable skills in the Upper Region of Ghana.

At the international level, the CoP responds to the social needs of people. Both Van Dijk and Ter Haar rightly observe that members automatically become part of "a supportive socio-religious network," which helps them to define their roles in their various respective societies.⁷⁵ The meeting places become places of providing information on some issues such as jobs and accommodation. Professionals among members, including council workers, educationists, teachers

and solicitors, become consultants in their areas of specialism and render services to their clients on a voluntary basis. For example, those without resident permits are advised to apply for some or go home rather than to live in a country without legal documents.⁷⁶ Thus here the CoP provides conditions for migrants of insecure states, often with no jobs, no houses, no money and no legal documents to find their right places in society.

The concern for the general welfare of the members is also apparent in the social services department of the CoP providing support, for example at marriages and funerals. Those whose spouses are not with them are counseled, either to go for them or go and settle down home.⁷⁷ For those who want to get married, the CoP helps them through its international network.

In line with the Ghanaian cultures, the CoP officers in Ghana as well as those abroad make investigations about the prospective spouse. The purpose is to find out that their potential affine is not a noted criminal, not given to quarrelling, and is hard working with good morals. After both parties are satisfied they communicate to each other, and then those at home eventually help to perform the respective customary rites. Thus here the CoP takes over the role of the traditional abusua (family). By these services the CoP creates conditions which help the immigrants to get well established in their family lives, and by so doing help to arrest unforeseeable problems of divorce and its repercussions. With regard to funerals, donations are collected for people who are bereaved. Thus here the church helps to alleviate the possibility of incurring debt, pressure, and "guilt and shame" from its members.⁷⁸

The CoP's emphasis of the concept of holiness,⁷⁹ which may be considered by some as fundamentalism,⁸⁰ helps to protect vulnerable immigrants from falling victim to social problems. Members are reminded that committed Christians do not smoke, drink, abuse drugs or visit the disco.⁸¹ Instead their bodies should be given to the Holy Spirit as the Temple of God. Accordingly, the CoP prevents its members from falling victim to crimes, such as drug abuse, drug trafficking, excessive use of alcohol and other petty crimes which are common among immigrant communities in the West and elsewhere.

The missionaries provide counseling for members especially in areas of marital problems, employment, need for legal papers, finance and dreams believed to have been influenced by demons. That some of these are successful is indicated in the ways and manners which many people seek the attention of pastors.⁸²

6. Training

Until 1971 there was no formal training for any of the Church's officers. Retreats for teaching and prayer are held from time to time by a pastor for his district officers and for ministers (including other officers) within an area by the area head. It was Pastor David Mills, an Elim missionary, who adjoined to the CoP,⁸³ who re-introduced Bible School to the CoP in 1972. Bible School had been introduced to the CoP in 1953 when the Later Rain visited Ghana in 1953, but it was abandoned in 1957.⁸⁴ Pastor's Mills College also had to be closed down in 1975 and re-opened in 1981.⁸⁵ It is clear from the closing down of the schools that, in time past, the CoP shared with other Pentecostals, as Hollenweger points out, that "modern academic theology is a tragedy, whose fruit is empty churches".⁸⁶ As with other Pentecostals, the situation has changed. Currently the CoP has established a University College which has three Faculties: Theology and Missions; Business Administration and Information Technology. The infrastructure of the Pentecost University College was provided by the CoP, without resort to any foreign support. Full-time ministers spend at least one academic year training at the University. Some continue to a degree level. While some ministers continue to study to masters and doctoral levels, others have already obtained these degrees.

Conclusion

The emergence, development and growth of the CoP can be placed within the broader context of the 20th century Pentecostal renewal. The CoP's practices and principles have been based mainly upon those set up by James McKeown, the founder. McKeown's principles were similar to the 'Indigenous Policy' as first set out by Anderson and Venn, but like many Pentecostals, McKeown thought he was building an indigenous church with the New Testament methods. His fundamental principle of helping the native know God, and then trust

God to provide the rest has yielded results. The Church of Pentecost has progressively developed to become an example of an African indigenous Pentecostal church. Its form of Pentecostal worship has had impact on the modes of worship in other churches in Ghana. That this was untenable was revealed in the fact that Ghanaians in diaspora had to import from Ghana the sort of Christianity, African Pentecostalism, that was meaningful to them in the land of their 'strangerhood,' albeit Christianity had come to them from the West.

The CoP's emphasis on the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a mean of evangelism, protection and of power against evil forces has contributed to the growth. In such ministry, power is not vested into one person, but to all believers.

The shift of the CoP from McKeown's philosophy of "just to evangelize," which appeared to take care of only the 'spiritual' aspect of people, to the inclusion of social services which attempt to provide for the holistic needs of humanity has also helped to enhance the growth.⁸⁷ The diasporic churches, for example, respond to the social needs of the people and create conditions that prevent their members from falling victim to crime. As far as the members of the diasporic churches are concerned, the ministry the CoP is offering is theologically sound, intellectually stimulating, spiritually encouraging and emotionally satisfying. In both practical and psychological terms, the overseas churches help to create the necessary conditions for their members to acquire a sustainable position in Western society, supporting their attempts to integrate or participate successfully in the social mainstream and also satisfying their spiritual appetite. This has been what the power of Pentecost has done in the soil of Africa.

Notes

- 1 Opoku Onyinah, "The State of the Church Address" in *The Church of Pentecost: 42th General Council Meetings*, Accra: Pentecost Press Ltd, 2016), 10-15; M. K. Ntumy, "The State of—the-Church Address" in *The Church of Pentecost: 11th Extraordinary Council Meetings*, Accra: Pentecost Press Ltd, 2007), 15-35.
- 2 The three main works on the Church of Pentecost are Robert W. Wyllie, "Pioneers of Ghanaian Pentecostalism: Peter Anim and James McKeown," *Journal of Religion in Africa* VI, no. 2 (1974): 109-22; E. Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism. The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, Accra: CPCS, 2001); Christine Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana: 3000 Churches in 50 Years-The Story of James McKeown and the Church of Pentecost* (Chichester: New Wine Press, 1989). Though Leonard's work was not presented in an academic style, it is a very good piece of work on the Church.
- 3 Gerrie Ter Haar, "Strangers in the Promised Land: African Christians in Europe," *Exchange* 24, no. 1 (1995): 1-33; Gerrie Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise: African Christians in Europe* (Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press, 1998).
- 4 Rijk A. van Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment: Discourses of Transsubjectivity in the Ghanaian Pentecostal Diaspora," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 26, no. 4 (1992), 1-25.
- 5 J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 89.
- 6 Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 174.
- 7 Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment," 135.
- 8 A prayer camp is a place where people go and pray. Some people may reside there for sometime, until their needs are met or otherwise.
- 9 Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment," 135, 143.
- 10 Van Dijk bibliography shows that he had enough material to have helped him bring the facts to surface. One is inclined to think that he used his authorial skill to conjuncture such a hypothesis, highlighting "ritualistic religiosity," to arrest his Western audience's attention.

- ¹¹ Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967), 7-100; Peter Bernard Clarke, *West Africa and Christianity: A Study of Religious Development from the 15th to 20th Century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), 7-26, 41-62.
- ¹² Kofi Asare Opoku, "A Brief History of Independent Church Movement in Ghana Since 1862," in *The Rise of Independent Churches in Ghana*, ed. Asempa (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1990), 12-26; Kwesi A. Dickson, "The Methodist Society: A Sect," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 2, no. 6 (1964), 1-7.
- ¹³ Elsewhere there are called, Ethiopian and Zionist churches; Separatist churches, *Aladura churches*, African Initiated Churches, African Initiatives in Christianity, African Indigenous Churches, African Instituted churches, African Independent churches. See Bengt G. M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, 1948, Second (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 53-55. John S. Pobee and Gabriel Ositelu 11, *African Initiatives in Christianity: The Growth, Gifts and Diversities of Indigenous African Churches* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), 4; Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost: The Spirituality and Experience of Pentecostal and Zionist / Apostolic Churches in South Africa* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2000).
- ¹⁴ For works on these churches, see Christian Goncalves Kwami Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Study of 'Spiritual Churches'* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1962); Robert W. Wyllie, *Spiritism in Ghana: A Study of New Religious Movements* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1980); David M. Beckmann, *Eden Revival: Spiritual Churches in Ghana* (London: Concordia Publishing House, 1975).
- ¹⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatic*, 89.
- ¹⁶ For further discussion of this, see Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 210-242.
- ¹⁷ Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1972), 192.
- ¹⁸ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 138.
- ¹⁹ The Apostolic Church, *The Apostolic Church: Its Principles and Practices* (Bradford: Apostolic Publications, 1937), 35-44, 245-49;

Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 191,290-293; Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 138.

- ²⁰ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 69.
- ²¹ Cf. Debrunner, *Christianity in Ghana*, 325.
- ²² Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 76.
- ²³ In fact the Church puts so much emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit as evidence in speaking in tongues that even, at present, those who are not baptised in the Spirit are not allowed to hold any ministerial office.
- ²⁴ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 9, 116.
- ²⁵ Rufus Anderson, *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*, Third Edition (Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1874), 48, 60-61, 109-113.
- ²⁶ Wilbert R. Shenk, *Henry Venn-Missionary Statesman* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1983), Beaver in his foreword to this book rightly says that "the two men [Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson] are independently the authors of the "Three-Self Formula". See page xii. See also the following pages for the development of the formula, 25-41, 109.
- ²⁷ Roland Allen, *Missionary Method: St Paul or Ours? 1912*, American edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962).
- ²⁸ Hollenweger, Pentecostalism, 298 R. S. Spittler, "Implicit Values in Pentecostal Missions," in *Missiology: An International Review* xvi. 4 (October 1988), 416.
- ²⁹ McGee, "Pentecostals and Their Various Strategies for Global Mission," 212.
- ³⁰ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 170-71.
- ³¹ Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1953), 10, 133.
- ³² McKeown, Interview by Christie Norman.
- ³³ E. Kingsley Larbi, "Sustaining the Growth", in James McKeown Memorial Lectures: 50 Years of the Church of Pentecost, Opoku Onyinah, ed. (Accra: The Church of Pentecost, 2004), 143.

- ³⁴ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 117.
- ³⁵ CoP refers to all its pastors who minister overseas as 'missionaries.' In a way, those in African counties are really doing missions work, since most of the members of the churches are indigenes. So far as CoP work in the West is concerned, it is within the Ghanaian community. However, to go with CoP 'language' the term 'missionary' is used to described all pastors of the Church who go from either Ghana or else to minister in a country that is not their own.
- ³⁶ Walter J. Hollenweger, "After Twenty Years Research on Pentecostalism," *Inter Notional Review of Mission* LXXV, no. 297 (1985): 10-11; see also Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 293; Spittler, "Implicit Values", 413-14.
- ³⁷ Roswith I. H. Gerloff, "The Holy Spirit and the African Diaspora: Spiritual, Cultural and Social Roots of Black Pentecostal Churches," *EPTA Bulletin* xiv (1995): 91.
- ³⁸ These include Botswana, Zambia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique, Lesotho and Malawi.
- ³⁹ The Church of Pentecost, *International Missions Report for the Year 2063*, Accra (April 2007).
- ⁴⁰ The Church of Pentecost, *Final Reviewed Constitution*, 20.
- ⁴¹ The Apostolic Church, *The Apostolic Church*, 22-44; cf. The Church of Pentecost, *Final Review Constitution*, 1-27.
- ⁴² For reading on Akan military organs, see Robert Sutherland Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1929), 120-26; Kofi Abrefa Busia, *The Position of the Chief in Modern Asante* (London: Oxford university Press, 1951), 1-22; G. K. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1992), 67-74.
- ⁴³ Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 130, 149.
- ⁴⁴ For example, in preaching someone moved by the Spirit may cut across and sing.

- ⁴⁵ See Afua Kumah, *Jesus of the Deep Forest*, trans. J. Kirby (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1981).
- ⁴⁶ Cf. Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Ghana: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Orbis Book, 1995), 59-60.
- ⁴⁷ Cf. Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 68; Larbi, "The Development of Ghanaian Pentecostalism," 153; Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana," *Journal of Religion in Africa* XXVII, no. 3 (1998): 270.
- ⁴⁸ Larbi, "Sustaining the Growth," 143.
- ⁴⁹ Cf. with Anderson's observation about the hermeneutical principles of the Pentecostals in South Africa. Allan Anderson, "The Hermeneutical Processes of Pentecostal-Type African Initiated Churches in South Africa," *Missionalia* 24, no. 2 (1996): 174.
- ⁵⁰ Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, 48.
- ⁵¹ Praying through out the whole night.
- ⁵² Ojo, "Charismatic Missionary Enterprises," 557.
- ⁵³ Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 457; Ter Haar, "Strangers in the Promised Land," 457.
- ⁵⁴ Gifford, *African Christianity*, 90.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. Emmanuel Owusu Bediako, Personal Communication (Washington, December 12, 1998).
- ⁵⁶ Although Gifford was speaking about the neo-Pentecostals in Ghana, the fundamental principle is the same. For example, some Ghanaian Pentecostal in the diaspora do not go to discos and concerts because they see these activities as worldly.
- ⁵⁷ Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment," 148.
- ⁵⁸ Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment," 148-149.
- ⁵⁹ See Peil, *Ghanaians Abroad*, 363-364
- ⁶⁰ Cox, *Fire Heaven*, 81, 83, 228.
- ⁶¹ Cf. Steven Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 20, 23.

- 62 Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, 75.
- 63 Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 85
- 64 Cyril Eastwood, *The Priesthood of All Believers: An Examination of the Doctrine from the Reformation to the Present Day* (London: The Epworth Press, 1960), 238-39.
- 65 Roger Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 114-15.
- 66 Spittler, "Implicit Values", 413.
- 67 Gifford, *African Christianity*, 76.
- 68 P. A. Pomerville, *Introduction to Missions: An Independent-Study Textbook*, (Irving: ICI University Press, 1987), 96, 100.
- 69 Bediako, Personal Communication.
- 70 Ter Haar, *Halfway*, 45.
- 71 Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 96.
- 72 For example, see J. P. Kildahl, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 38-39, 54-55; M. J. Cartledge, "Interpreting Charismatic Experience: Hypnosis, Altered States of Consciousness and the Holy Spirit?" in *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13 (1998), 120; Cf. S. L. Davies, *Jesus the Healer: Possession, Trance the Origin of Christianity*, (London: SCM, 1995), 187. Davies work constitutes an attempt to contribute to the quest for the historical Jesus, reinterpreting the gospel accounts of healings and exorcisms in the light of modern psychology and anthropology. But he develops a chapter claiming that Paul delivered his messages orally in order to effect the induction of spirit-possession in susceptible listeners (Ibid., 189).
- 73 G. B. McGee, "Pentecostal Missiology: Moving Beyond Triumphalism to face the Issues," *PNEUMA* 16.2 (Fall 1994), 279.
- 74 Opoku Onyinah, "The State of the Church Address" in *The Church of Pentecost: 42th General Council Meetings*, Accra: Pentecost Press Ltd, 2015, 10-14.
- 75 Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment," 139; Ter Haar, "Strangers in the Promised Land," 17.

- ⁷⁶ Bediako Kwame, Personal Communication; Emmanuel Koney, "Personal Communication", (Brussels, January 2, 1999).
- ⁷⁷ The condition, which brought such immigrants, did not permit them to bring their dependants. Most marriages have broken down because of the long separations of spouses in search of greener pastures. Koney, Personal Communication; George Arthur, Oslo, Personal Communication, February 2000; Rattray, *Religion and Art*, 79-90; Nukunya, *Tradition and Change*, 39.
- ⁷⁸ For Ghanaians, funerals are very important. Bishop Sarpong, the Ghanaian Catholic anthropologist, writes, "one of the signs of a successful life and a good death is the way a deceased person's funeral is celebrated". Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, 26. Although the Church discourages expensive funerals, immigrants may fly home for the funerals of their parents, uncles, nephews or siblings and thus incur debt. Those who fail to go usually send money for this purpose. Whether a bereaved person is able to attend a funeral at home or not, the Church allows another funeral to be celebrated abroad. Donations are made to the individuals concerned towards their funeral expenses.
- ⁷⁹ Ter Haar, "*Strangers in the Promised Land*," 225.
- ⁸⁰ Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 50-52.
- ⁸¹ Bediako, Personal Communication; Owusu-Afriyie, Personal Communication, (London, June 10, 1998).
- ⁸² Bediako, Personal Communication.
- ⁸³ See section 4.6 below.
- ⁸⁴ James McKeown, "World Mission Training Centre, December, 1, 1954; James McKeown, Circular Letter", November, 29, 1957.
- ⁸⁵ The Church of Pentecost, Winneba, General Council Minutes, March, 12-18, 1975.
- ⁸⁶ Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 194.
- ⁸⁷ Presently it is the Church's policy that at least one social service should be done in any country it functions, until the indigenous people are grown to put up more for their community. The Church of Pentecost International Mission, *Missions Hand Book* (Accra: The Church of Pentecost, 1994), 8.

MISSION, MIGRATION AND WORLD CHRISTIANITY: AN EVALUATION OF THE MISSION STRATEGY OF THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST IN THE DIASPORA

Emmanuel Kwesi Anim

Key words: *Migration, mission, diaspora, chaplaincy-mission, reverse mission*

Introduction

In January this year (2016), I received a kind invitation from the Chairman of the Church of Pentecost to speak at a conference of the Pastors and Leaders of the Pentecost International Worship Centres (PIWC) from Ghana and other parts of the world where the church operates. My topic was, "The Clash of Cultures within the Church of Pentecost in the Western World." This conference was the first of its kind in the history of the church and brought together over one thousand delegates. I was particularly interested in this topic for a number of reasons: first, the subject falls within the field of my own academic research and teaching; and second, I have been personally concerned about how the African church is making a global contribution in cross-cultural mission.

Much has been said in recent times about the numerical growth of the Church in Africa and its sense of mission and contribution to global mission and Christian theology. Church historians and scholars such as Andrew Walls and Philip Jenkins have impressed upon us the anticipated transformative impact of the church from the southern continents, whilst others such as Paul Gifford have offered a rather pessimistic view of the impact, particularly in reference to church planting in the Western world.¹ African scholars such as Kwame Bediako, Ogbu Kalu and Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu have added their voices regarding the nature and significant growth of the African churches both at home and abroad. However, a lot remains to be studied about the self-understanding of these African churches and how they participate in global Christian mission. It is in this light that this article seeks to make a contribution. This paper is in part the result of about ten years of study, looking at the Church of Pentecost and the Lighthouse Chapel International, both of which have branches

around the world. The Church of Pentecost (CoP) will serve as the case study for this present article.

Philip Jenkins, in his book, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (2002) brought our attention to the fact that by the year 2050, the center of gravity of Christianity will have shifted firmly to the Southern continents of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. In Africa alone, the number of Christians increased from 10 million in 1910,² to 350 million in the year 2000.³ According to Jenkins, the most striking feature of the rapid-growing churches in the global South is that they are far more traditional, morally conservative, evangelical and apocalyptic than their northern counterparts.⁴

These religious values are firmly rooted in the primal imagination of the people, and Christianity serves as a ritual space and framework to deal with their moral, ethical and spiritual concerns. Among many pentecostals, the Bible is not just a repository of religious values or a moral code but is also an interpretive guide to the seen and unseen world. Their faith is characterized by puritanism, belief in prophesy, faith healing, deliverance, exorcism, and dream-visions.⁵ It is without doubt that Pentecostalism broadly epitomizes these characteristics, and its missionary drive has been noted by Harvey Cox.⁶ This present paper reflects within this backdrop of global Christian history and is informed by the predictions of Andrew Walls and Philip Jenkins as well as the reflections of Jehu Hanciles.

Migration and African Churches in the Diaspora

It can be noted that migration and Christian mission have often gone together with church planting, with sometimes the latter becoming the unintended consequence of the former. This was very much the case in early Christian history as persecuted Jewish Christians in Jerusalem fled to neighbouring communities of Samaria and later to Asia Minor outside of Palestine. These persecuted Christians moved not only with their families and limited possessions but also carried their faith and culture with them. Thus Walls reiterates,

It is easy enough to point to historical situations where migration forwarded the spread of the faith. It is clear that the earliest spread of the faith beyond Jewish Palestine owed much to prior Jewish migration across

the Mediterranean world, as well as into Mesopotamia and beyond. The Jewish communities in the diaspora provided the networks by which the message about Jesus spread.⁷

Philip and others evangelized in the region of Judea and Samaria, and many people came to faith in Christ (Acts 8). Many centuries later, the English Puritans and Pilgrim Fathers of the early 17th century, who fled to North America during the reigns of Kings James and Charles, established colonies in the New World where they could live and practice their faith in the peace and security of the new nation.

However, persecution and migration don't always signal a certain advance of the faith. Andrew Walls rightly observes that migration stands for both disaster and promise, and for this reason, it both favours and hinders Christian mission.⁸ Walls comes to this conclusion by looking at the history of migration and the spread of Christianity in the first-century Palestine and the movement of the faith across Europe from the fourth century onward. In some cases, migration crushed, overwhelmed, or expelled well-established Christian communities, such as the various Celtic expressions that were repeatedly devastated during successive invasions of Britain. The arrival of Muslim Arabs into Europe also carried significant challenges. Still, the spread of Christianity across the world owes as much to migration, either voluntarily or by persecution, as it does to direct missionary efforts.

In modern times, we observe that the forces of globalization have hastened the spread of ideas and cultures, and have also facilitated the movement of people and material resources. In all of this movement African Christians have admired not only the economy and culture of their colonial masters but have also sought, with pride, to identify with them and their civilization. Africans who travel to Western countries such as England, Germany, Italy, Holland, Belgium and the United States of America return home to be seen as first-class citizens, irrespective of how they went or what they did in those countries.

Why have so many of our brothers and sisters travelled abroad? The forces of migration to the West are actually threefold: 1) The harsh economic conditions in Africa, caused in part by economic mismanagement and myriad military coups, have forced many

individuals and families to seek political asylum in the West. 2) Others went on their own accord, aided by their sacrificial families who pulled resources together to sponsor such trips in the hope of economic gains. 3) A significant number of African students, sponsored by themselves, their governments, or their families, studied abroad and decided to stay after earning their degrees.

These groups by and large constitute the communities of modern African migrants. (Many years earlier, of course, were those who were carried away as slaves over the course of several centuries to work the plantations across the Atlantic). As in the case of the early Christians in Jerusalem who were widely dispersed, these three groups of African migrants also carried their faith, culture, and church with them when they travelled across the continents. Thus Hanciles observes that whilst in the past,

unprecedented European migrations from Christianity's old heartland provided the impetus for the European missionary movement, phenomenal migrations from Christianity's new heartlands in Africa, Latin America and Asia have galvanized a massive non-Western missionary movement.⁹

It is in this experience that one may analyse the African contribution to global Christian mission.

A Brief History of Christianity in Ghana

The history of Christianity in Africa, south of the Sahara, might be dated to the latter part of the 15th century, but it was not until the middle of the 19th century that Protestant mission took off following David Livingstone's exploration of the continent, and his so-called "discovery" of the source of the River Nile. His exploration opened the way into Africa not only for merchants but also for missionaries who went to the hinterlands of East, Central, and West Africa to spread the gospel of the Kingdom.

Sub-Saharan African Christianity has a character of its own. The coming of the many and diverse Christian denominations from the West meant that we have not only inherited the nature and character of their mother churches and sending agencies but their divisions and

quarrels as well. In Ghana, the Roman Catholic Church was the first missionary group, followed by the Presbyterians (from both Basel and Bremen missions in Switzerland and Germany respectively) and then the Methodist and Anglican churches from England. These constitute the traditional mainline churches, sometimes also referred to as "historic churches."

These traditional mission churches have played a significant role in Ghana, not only in the planting of churches but also in the provision of schools, hospitals, and numerous social services. Other traditional mission churches include Baptists, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AME Zion), and the Lutheran church.

The early part of the 20th century saw the rise and development of a different expression of Christianity. This time the missionaries and early church planters were African prophets such as William Wade Harris of Liberia, Josiah Olunowo Ositelu of Nigeria, Simon Kimbangu of East Africa and Isaiah Shembe of South Africa. Their African-initiated churches (AICs) did not receive much academic attention until the 1960s, when scholars such as Brengt Sundkler, Christian Baeta, David Barrett, John Taylor and Harold Turner published their maiden research works.¹⁰ Although the nomenclature of the African-initiated churches had remained problematic, it was obvious that their mission had profound impact on the religious landscape in Africa. What is most significant of the AICs is that they were not only protest voices to the established mainline or historic churches but they were leaders in the engagement with the African worldview in the light of scripture and traditional culture.¹¹

Classical Pentecostalism in Ghana arose in the 1930s. Events in America, following the Azusa Street Revival, produced what came to be known as the "classical Pentecostal movement."¹² This was enhanced by a similar revival in Wales, which triggered revivals in several other countries and led to the formation of the Apostolic and Elim Pentecostal churches in Great Britain. It was the Apostolic and Elim churches which largely provided the foundation and self-understanding of the Church of Pentecost.

The Charismatic movement burst on the scene in the 1970s, and it produced a stream of new churches in Ghana. Significant among them, though not exhaustive, are the Christian Action Faith Ministry

(now Action Chapel International), The International Central Gospel Church, Victory Bible Church International, the Word Miracle Church (now Perez Chapel International), Lighthouse Chapel International, the House of Faith Church in Kumasi, and the Fountain Gate Chapel in Tamale. By the close of the 1990s, many of the Ghanaian-initiated churches, as well as congregations of some of the mainline churches, were beginning to plant their own mission churches in the diaspora.

The Church of Pentecost in Retrospect

The Church of Pentecost (CoP) was founded in 1962 in Ghana by an Irish Missionary, Pastor James McKeown but the history of the Church may be traced back to 1937, when McKeown first arrived in Ghana (then the Gold Coast), as a resident missionary of the Apostolic Church of Bradford, UK. McKeown's mission was at the invitation of the Faith Tabernacle Church, led by Peter Newman Anim. However, the McKeown-Anim partnership did not survive long as a result of theological differences on the subject of faith healing. A further misunderstanding, this time between McKeown and the Apostolic Church headquarters in Bradford, led to McKeown's dismissal from the Apostolic mission. In 1962, McKeown and a group faithful to his cause came together to form the Church of Pentecost.¹³

The uniqueness of the CoP is in the missionary approach that James McKeown adopted. This may be best explained in the model of the "three-selves" as coined by Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson.¹⁴ McKeown developed a strong concept of indigenisation, leadership development, and capacity building at the grassroots level with a strong emphasis on prayer, self-discipline, holiness, and evangelism. Members of the church were, from the very beginning, taught to be faithful in sacrificing their time and resources to advance the course of the ministry. The indigenisation principle also meant that the church took the local context seriously and developed forms of worship and liturgy that resonated with the cultural and religious orientations of the people. This included the use of the local language, local musical instruments, and singing, clapping and dancing to local choruses.

Whilst McKeown provided the spiritual impetus and leadership for the church, it was David Mills, the Elim missionary working in partnership with McKeown, who, to a large extent, established the theological

foundation for the church's mission and self-understanding as he introduced the first training school to equip the pastors for ministry.

By the time James McKeown retired from active service and returned home to Northern Ireland in 1984, the CoP had been established in a number of African countries, including Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Benin, Nigeria, and Liberia.

The CoP now operates in 90 nations around the world (including Ghana), and, as of December 2015, had more than two and a half million members (2,612, 618) in Ghana alone and nearly a quarter million members (243,534) in all the outside branches.

The Church of Pentecost Missions in the Diaspora:

Prospects and Challenges

Many of the branches of the CoP are in Western nations. Notable among them are the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA). The total membership of the church in the UK as of December 2011 was 11,195 and this increased to 14, 203 in 2014, and now stands at 15,555.¹⁵

Apart from the UK branches embarking on rigorous evangelism, the steady growth of the numbers of the church in the UK can also be attributed to the mass migration of Ghanaians from the Netherlands and Italy to Britain in the last seven or eight years after the European Union (EU) opened its borders. Many Ghanaian migrants in the Schengen states, who had received permanent residence, saw the move to the UK as an opportunity for their children to receive education in English, which would then ease their integration back to Ghana. However, this migration to the UK produced its own problems. For example, children born, raised, and enculturated in other European countries had to be integrated into new communities in Britain. This struggle brought a lot of tension between parents and children, and in some cases, a number of teenagers turned their backs on the church and their families, preferring to live their own independent lives.

The CoP in the USA recorded a total membership of 18,558, in the year 2011. About a third of this figure (4,660) represented children below the age of thirteen, whilst 437 out of the 799 converts were baptised in water and received into church membership.

The total membership of the church in USA increased to 23,540 in 2014 with 5,965 representing children below the age of thirteen. In the same year 727 out of the total of 1,121 converts were baptised and received into membership. These figures suggest that much of the increase of the church membership is biological in the sense that members' children tend to stay in the church, whilst many of the new converts do not become members.

Within Ghana, the internal mission strategy of the CoP focuses on specific communities within a town or city. Community churches are planted and run by a group of Elders and Deaconesses who constitute a Presbytery. The Presiding Elder assumes the role of the local pastor, and a District Pastor serves as a Superintendent Minister over a number of congregations or "local assemblies." A district pastor can have from five to twenty-five local assemblies or congregations across a particular town or city.

This system has largely been replicated in the church's mission abroad but has not always been successful. This is partly because the span of certain church districts, particularly in the USA and Canada, is so vast that district pastors have a difficult time providing meaningful pastoral care to congregations that are so scattered. For example, the distance covered by a district pastor in Ghana between congregations may be no more than 5 kilometres whereas that covered by a district pastor in the USA may be more than 100 kilometres, thus making pastoral responsibilities a very daunting task.

Unlike early Protestant missionaries from Europe and America who came on a cross-cultural mission to reach the indigenous population, the African story is quite different. The focus is not on the indigenous culture but the home culture of the Africans. This may be described as the "chaplaincy approach," where the primary focus of mission is the migrant African Christians who have settled abroad.

These African Christians, who migrated to the West mainly for economic and political reasons, soon became homesick and yearned for a fellowship that would become a source of encouragement and strength to survive in a foreign land. Western churches abound, but many Africans found them quite dull and uninteresting—and they preferred to worship in their mother tongue.

So they came together to form a house fellowship. Once this grew in number, the people requested for a pastor from the mother church. This is the typical way in which the Church of Pentecost has planted churches across the diaspora.

Within these congregations are the challenges cast among a migrant community. One is the fact that many members are separated from their families, and they cannot afford to visit their home countries to see spouses and children (some of whom they have not seen for many years) or to attend the funerals of close family members. Nancy, a middle-aged woman who lives in New Jersey, is an example. She left her husband and two daughters in Ghana when the youngest daughter was eight years old. Now this daughter is in her third year of university whilst the older daughter is in her final year at medical school. The girls have not seen their mother since she left Ghana some fifteen years ago. In such situations the only available means of communication is phone, skype, or imo. In these cases, for most migrants, it is the church that provides the needed emotional support, as members pray for each other and trust God as they face separation from families and look to Him for favour as they seek to regularise their immigration status and to bring their families to join them.

In cases of bereavement, members of the church sometimes sponsor a trip home or send funds to support the funeral. In a situation where a person is unable to travel home, wake-keeping and funeral services may be held in honour of the deceased, and this provides an opportunity for the migrants to mourn.

This chaplaincy approach to mission is significant for a number of reasons. First, the church becomes the community or home away from home, where members receive the much needed social, economic, and spiritual support. For example, in an interview with one of the ministers of the CoP in the Netherlands, he made it clear that the presence of the CoP in Holland was a major support for many Ghanaians and indeed many other Africans in the country. Many people, particularly women, had travelled to the Netherlands for economic reasons without any academic qualifications or knowledge of the Dutch language. Such people soon found themselves in serious hardship as they could not easily find jobs and had little prospect of further education. As a result, many such women, most of whom were illegal migrants, resorted to prostitution in order to survive.

(Some women were even brought in by cartels for that very purpose). The situation was the same for migrants in France, Italy, Germany and Spain. The African churches, therefore, become the “ummah” where people found supernatural succour and also social and economic support.

In such situations, the primary responsibility of the missionary pastor is providing support to the Christian families and communities who have invited them. Here, mission is inward and members become very protective of their fellowship and do not easily welcome other believers or converts from other nations and cultures into the fellowship. The situation becomes even more complex when a non-traditional member or a person from another nation is recommended for a leadership position in the church. Opposition is usually voiced that “he would not understand how we do things.” Because of this, most African churches in the diaspora are defined by the specific nationality of the majority of its members or its leader.

Hanciles contends that African migration from South to the North is determined along the lines of the historical links between ex-colonies and ex-colonial states.¹⁶ Because of corresponding languages, Hanciles has a valid point, but the large number of Ghanaian and Nigerian immigrants in the Netherlands, Italy, France and Spain reveals that African migrants will travel in many directions, so long as there is the prospect of economic advancement and security.

This chaplaincy approach to mission by the CoP and many African-initiated churches means that a lot remains to be accomplished by the vibrant and fast-growing African churches in reaching out to indigenous communities in the diaspora. Cross-cultural mission becomes an unfinished agenda, and in some cases, an undesirable goal, as many African diaspora churches try to protect their own traditions and cultures.

The Church of the first century was also not open to frontier mission and was slow to offer Gentiles a share in the Abrahamic faith. Here, Walls makes a profound statement when he observes that

Church history has always been a battleground for two opposing tendencies; and the reason is that each of the tendencies has its origin in the Gospel itself. On the one

hand it is of the essence of the Gospel that God accepts us as we are, on the ground of Christ's work alone, not on the ground of what we have become or are trying to become. But, if He accepts us "as we are" that implies He does not take us as isolated, self-governing units, because we are not. We are conditioned by a particular time and place, by our family and group and society, by "culture" in fact. In Christ God accepts us together with our group relations; with that cultural conditioning that makes us feel at home in one part of human society and less home in another. But if He takes us with our group relations, then surely it follows that He takes us with our "dis-relations" also; those predispositions, prejudices, suspicious, and hostilities, whether justified or not, which mark the group to which we belong. He does not wait to tidy up our ideas any more than He waits to tidy up our behaviour before He accepts us sinners into His family¹⁷.

This obviously reveals some of the missionary challenges facing African churches that wish to take their place in global mission. Dickson puts his figure right on the point when he posits that

exclusive thinking starts from the basis of one's own perspective – and ends there. The possibility of matters being viewed also from the bona fide perspective of the other person or group does not readily come to play.¹⁸

But the sad reality is that

since the completion of the canon of Scriptures, the church has been guided by a body of traditions, one aspect of which seems to regard exclusive attitudes as a realistic option¹⁹

Such exclusivist tendencies contradict the very concept of mission which is the church's reason for existence.²⁰ Dickson's reflections therefore provide us with a framework within which African migrants churches may evaluate their mission in the diaspora.

The Way Forward

We should not underestimate what God is doing through this chaplaincy approach to church planting. The strength and encouragement these churches give to our brothers and sisters in the diaspora is obvious, necessary, and noble. Beyond that, however, is the unintended, quiet ripple these churches are making in the wider world. The New York Times has taken notice and wrote that the vitality of the worship services is impacting other churches and that whites are being drawn in. The article quoted sociologist Tony Carnes who said that the African churches can serve as a "bridge between the races."²¹

The Redeemed Christian Church of God, based in Nigeria, is making a concerted effort at reaching Americans with the Gospel. Founder Enoch Adeboye says his initial target is Africans in the U.S but that,

Later on, the people who are natives of this land will sooner or later come to the realization that they need God, and we will be on the ground when that time comes to present God to them.²²

This type of internal, external—and multi-generational—vision needs to be woven into the core of every African church planted abroad. After all, reaching the community is part and parcel of what it means to be a church. Perhaps the trickle of whites and other native-born Westerners into these churches is God's way of saying that they do have something to offer.

This is where proper training comes in. If the Church of Pentecost, for example, sends a pastor abroad to oversee a church of fellow Africans, he needs to travel there with a broad horizon. Teaching him the principles of cross-cultural communication, ethnographic research, and God's heart for all people will hopefully fix his mind on larger goals than his own nationality. No doubt, such efforts to engage other ethnicities and adjust the worship service might provoke some hostility, but that is the process of mission, and the pastor needs to draw his people into the adventure.

Migrant youth cannot be overlooked in this effort. They are important points of contact to reach indigenous communities as they are sometimes better able to relate to the foreign culture because they were born and raised in it, and they can have considerable influence on their friends. Youth groups that challenge youngsters with their missiological responsibilities should be part of church life.

Conclusion

When we consider recent developments of African migrants now turned missionaries in the diaspora, one could conclude that mission has gone full circle. Although exciting, this “reverse mission” raises a number of missiological issues that need to be addressed. It is clear that although some churches and even individuals travel abroad for the sake of mission and church planting, it is also the case that for many, African Christians travel abroad for a better life, but unanticipated difficult conditions in the foreign land compel them to seek for fellowship to address their spiritual and social needs. Because they travel with their faith, they look for a model that replicates what they left back home. Thus, a church springs up, one that we have labeled a “chaplaincy church.”

These are now scattered across the Western world and have provided immeasurable support to African brothers and sisters in the diaspora. Their impact has also leaked into the indigenous communities, and they are now gaining the attention of scholars and major media outlets such as the New York Times.

However, the self-understanding of these churches is often too narrow, with a focus only on a particular ethnic group or nationality—and sometimes only the founding generation. If these churches are going to be a greater reflection of genuine missionary outreach, the pastors and the congregations must embrace a vision that encompasses the indigenous communities as well. A particularly important means of steering the churches in this direction is intentional mission training that challenges the pastors, the congregations, and the youth.

Notes

- ¹ This position was firmly articulated by Paul Gifford at his inaugural address in London. See also Gifford, Paul. *African Christianity Its Public Role* (London: Hurst and Company, 1998); Gifford, Paul. *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Bloomington & Indianapolis (Indiana University Press, 2004).
- ² This was the suggested figure at the time of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910.
- ³ Barrett, David. "AD 2000: 350 Million Christians in Africa", *International Review of Mission*, 59 (1970), pp39-54; Barrett, D. et al. *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001)
- ⁴ Jenkins, P. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 8.
- ⁵ See, Jenkins, P. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 8, also Onyinah O. *Pentecostal Exorcism: Witchcraft and Demonology in Ghana* (Dorset, Dorchester: Deo Publishing, 2012).
- ⁶ Cox, H. *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the 21st Century* (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1995).
- ⁷ Walls, A. "Mission and Migration: The Diaspora Factor in Christian History," *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol 5, No.2 (December, 2002), 4.
- ⁸ Walls, "Mission and Migration", 4.
- ⁹ Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 8.
- ¹⁰ See for example, Sundkler, B .G. *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); Christian Baeta. *Prophetism in Ghana: a Study of Some 'Spiritual' Churches* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1962); John Taylor, *The Primal Vision: Christian Presence Amid African Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1963); Harold Turner. *African Independent Church*, Vols. I & II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); David Barrett. *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand*

- Contemporary Religious Movements* (Oxford; Nairobi; Addis Ababa: Oxford University Press, 1968).
- 11 See Pobe, J and Ositellu, G. *African Initiatives in Christianity: The Growth, Gifts and Diversities of Indigenous African Churches: A Challenge to the Ecumenical Movement* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998).
 - 12 For a good study of classical Pentecostalism, see Hollenweger, W. *The Pentecostal*; Hollenweger W. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), Dayton, D. *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987), Faupel, D.W. *The Everlasting Gospel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), 1996.
 - 13 For a good study of the history of the Church of Pentecost, see Leonard C. *A Giant in Ghana* (Chichester, West Sussex: New Wine Ministry, 1989).
 - 14 Recent scholarships have challenged the assumption that the three-self as postulated by Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson – self-propagating; self-supporting and self-governing do not necessarily lead to indigenization. Similarly, a church may have these three qualities without being indigenous. It has however been noted that the three-self formula is most applicable where the church grows rapidly and has very little or no resistance from the population.
 - 15 The Church of Pentecost, 2011 Missions Report, Presented to the 13th Session of the Extra-Ordinary Council Meeting 16 – 18 May, 2012, Sowutuom, Accra; The Church of Pentecost International Mission Directorate, Missions Report, January – December, 2014. Presented to the 41st Session of The General Council Meetings, 6-9 May, 2015, Pentecost Convention Centre, Gomoa-Fetteh.
 - 16 *Beyond Christendom*, 6.
 - 17 Walls, A. *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 7.
 - 18 Dickson, K. *Uncompleted Mission: Christianity and Exclusivism* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 3.
 - 19 *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Daniel J. Wakin, "In New York, Gospel Resounds in African Tongues," *New York Times*, April 18, 2004. Accessed at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/18/nyregion/in-new-york-gospel-resounds-in-african-tongues.html?pagewanted=1>

²² Andrew Rice, "Mission from Africa," *New York Times*, April 8, 2009. Accessed at: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/12/magazine/12churches-t.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

THE CHANGING FACE OF MISSIONS: PENTECOSTAL DIASPORA PERSPECTIVES FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Dela Quampah

Key words: Pentecostalism, diaspora, reverse mission, contextualisation, inculturation, democratisation, globalisation.

Introduction

Traditionally Christian mission has been associated with the Western missionary traversing formidable geographical and cultural barriers in the 19th and early 20th centuries to evangelise, as it were “the heathen”. No matter how well intentioned this mission was, it was mixed up with a baggage of European imperialism, slave trade and commercial interest, which to some extent discredited an otherwise noble venture.¹ In an extreme response, some scholars are suggesting that the word ‘mission’ should be dropped from Christian vocabulary, because ‘mission’ carries a lot of negative connotations such as collaborating colonialism, and taking an aggressive stance against other faiths, which prevent constructive dialogue.² These criticisms notwithstanding, the legacy of the 19th century European missionaries needs to be appreciated, as the global expansion of the Christian faith today can only be ascribed to the foundational work of these missionaries, who transcribed our local languages, translated the Bible, brought the benefits of Western education, which today enables us to participate in the global community, and the blessing of orthodox medicine, among others.

However the world has changed, and so has the Christian mission enterprise. Currently although Christianity appears to be in decline in Europe and North America, the Faith is experiencing an upsurge in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, a development that has relocated the centre of gravity of Christian mission to the southern hemisphere. According to Operation World 2010, 63% of Christians in the world now live in these regions. Spearheading this expansion are Pentecostals, and it is suggested that the revival being experienced by some of the historic mission churches in Africa is due to the influence of Pentecostalism in the neighbourhood.³

The contemporary global situation which is characterised by an unprecedented mass movement of people across national frontiers, has made a telling impact on trends in Christian mission. Like Rachel, who migrated with Jacob, "on an accompanying spouse visa" and stole her father's household gods (Gen 31:19), today's migrants also do well to carry their brand of Christianity along. How they practise and attempt to propagate or relate to other Christian bodies in the host communities has received considerable attention from scholars.⁴

Although the popular destinations for economic migrants are Western Europe and North America, there are more displaced diaspora people in Africa than any other continent.⁵ And one nation with a significant gravitational pull on migration is South Africa, with its complex social structure of racial categorisation and grotesque income distribution pattern. Although intra-African missions, whether diaspora initiated in nature, or undertaken through intentional missionary effort, is making a significant impact on the continent, it has received very little attention among mission scholars. Killingray's work is however exceptional for recognising the significant contribution of indigenous Africans to the spread of Christianity on the continent.⁶ This article reflects on the paradigm shift in mission, and attempts to explain the current remarkable global impact of Pentecostal missions. Furthermore it investigates the symbiotic link between globalisation and diaspora Christian missions within the South African Pentecostals context.

Paradigm Shift in Missions

The paradigm shift in Christian mission is termed "post-Western Christianity" by Sanneh, who thinks the worldwide revitalisation of Christianity currently taking place is without the support of Western institutional structures.⁷ Bosch ascribes this shift to causal factors such as, the loss of Western dominance in Christian mission, the stiff challenge facing unjust and exploitative structures that besmear Christian mission, the redundancy of the Western concept of progress and development, and the awareness of our limited resources and greater interdependence.⁸

Among the diverse concepts emerging in response to the paradigm shift in mission, is the relevant doctrine of inculturation, which recognises that "a plurality of cultures presupposes a plurality of theologies and therefore, for the Third-World churches, a farewell to a Eurocentric approach."⁹ By implication, Christian thought should be reviewed and applied in a new way in each human culture.¹⁰ These developments may not necessarily render the Western missionary enterprise redundant, rather they challenge us to promote synergy and cross fertilisation of theological concepts and mission strategies between the West and the developing world, and across denominations, for a dynamic, globally relevant, and a multifaceted mission paradigm. Ecumenism, and collaboration in terms of sharing resources and ministry opportunities, and joint missionary training ventures could help realise a global balance in contemporary Christian mission endeavours. Obviously a multiple model which could adequately confront the current crisis in mission include voluntary and involuntary migration,¹¹ which constitute the focus of this paper.

Globalisation and Current Trends in Christian Mission

Globalisation can be described as the enhanced interaction between people groups due to the literal and figurative elimination of geographical distance through travelling, and the impact of information and technology respectively. Global migration is estimated at 859 million people, comprising 12.5% of the world's population who are in diaspora around the world.¹² Migration is ascribable to factors such as instability, famine, and economic deprivation, among others, which establish a trend of movement towards more stable and prosperous countries. Most global migration occurs outside the Western world, taking the form of South-South migration; and Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest number of migrants of any continent, with an estimated number of 35 million.¹³ South Africa, in spite of its Apartheid past, is one of the most steady and progressive economies in Africa¹⁴, and has therefore become a leading migrant destination on the continent. The 2011 census revealed that there were 2 199 871 people living in South Africa who were born outside the country. They constituted 4.2% of the population - which then stood at 51, 770 560; and 71% of those born outside of South Africa were African.¹⁵

Such mass migration of people directly alters the religious constituencies of their host nations, as the migrants may come with a totally new religion or introduce a new form of an existing one.¹⁶

It is estimated that out of the 859 million people in diaspora, Christians constitute 407 million, which comprises a significant 18% of Christians worldwide. The data further reveals that Christian diaspora constitute 47.4% of all religious people in diaspora.¹⁷

Asamoah-Gyadu, reflecting on the underprivileged situation of the African economic migrant, posits that vulnerability is an important factor in Christian mission, which could see "God empowering the weak to fulfil his purposes among the strong."¹⁸ Analysing the impact of migration on the American Christian community, Zscheile appreciates the challenge of a global community as one of "difference and otherness", as cultures, religions, tribes and nationalities exist in close proximity due to technology and migration.¹⁹ He identifies a singular opportunity in globalisation, which is to form reciprocal relationships, and establish mutually respected Christian communities with migrants and those that can be reached by technology, with all the vulnerability that entails.²⁰ Prill examines the relationship of the established churches in the West to migrant Christians, and supports the formation of multi-cultural rather than mono-cultural churches, as the authentic biblical model.²¹ Writing from the perspective of the missions director of the Church of Pentecost (CoP), a Ghanaian Pentecostal denomination that is deeply involved in diaspora mission, Opoku identifies some of the values migrants derive from diaspora churches, as the chance to worship in familiar ways, promoting their sense of identity, a ready response to their social needs, and insulation against some of the social vices bedevilling Western societies.²² The author however admits that the Church has not made the desired impact on evangelising the Western world through its diasporic community.²³ Nevertheless, The Church of Pentecost is active, not only in Western diaspora mission, but also in intra-Africa mission, which extends to South Africa, where the CoP has planted diaspora congregations.

Diaspora Mission in SA

To develop a creative and relevant response to the changing trends in Christian mission, any contemporary mission enterprise needs to engage with the Christian history of the target community to appreciate the outcome of the cross-fertilisation of Christian ideas and local norms over the years. The first Christian contact with SA dates as far back as 1652, with the arrival of the Dutch, and later the French Huguenots in 1668. With time the Dutch Reformed Church (known as NGK in Dutch) became the dominant church, but with little concern for the evangelisation of the indigenous Africans. The role of the church in racial discrimination is revealed in this statement "in the very early days at the Cape colony, discrimination practised between white and black, slave and free person, was ostensibly based more on religion than race."²⁴ It was not until 1857 that the NGK initiated efforts to evangelise the coloureds,²⁵ who constitute a class of mixed races, ranking next to Europeans on the South African colour scale. When in the 19th century, evangelism among the indigenous blacks was gaining grounds, racial tension developed in the NGK, and the synod decided that white and black congregations should worship separately.²⁶ And this segregation has characterised Christian communities in SA to date. Ps Damons's sad reflection on the situation, stated in February 2016 is poignantly true, "The church is the last bastion of apartheid in SA."²⁷

One of the most influential Pentecostal churches in SA is the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), which emerged out of the ministry of John G. Lakeland in 1908. Initially the Church was able to accommodate the Black South Africans, Afrikaner Whites and the Coloureds. By 1919 Afrikaner intolerance led to a split where many of the Blacks left the AFM to form the Zionist churches.²⁸ One of the leaders of the dissenting black groups, Engenas Lekganyane founded the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), which is the largest denomination in SA registering between 2 million to 6 million in more than over 4000 parishes.²⁹ Through its sustained evangelistic activities the AFM was able to attract large constituents of Black, Coloured, and Indian people with each cultural group worshipping apart; a situation best captured in Clark's words, "The AFM followed the nationalist emphasis on apartness and by the end of the 1950s consisted of four separate

churches: a White (mother) church, and the three daughter churches – a Black, a Coloured and an Indian.”³⁰ The Church has mission outposts in neighbouring countries in southern Africa, and the influx of migrants from some of these nations has created diaspora AFM congregations, which compound the already complex social relations within the denomination.

Similar to the AFM experience, the Assemblies of God in SA, since the 1970s, has also become segregated along racial lines. By implication, any mission engagement in SA today would have to reckon with the composite social structure, and respond sensitively to racial, nationalistic and economic stratification. However it is also necessary to mention that a significant number of multiracial congregations are emerging in some of the new churches in SA.³¹

Goodhew has undertaken extensive research work on the growth and decline in South African churches from 1960 to 1991, which revealed that the mainline Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic experienced significant decline in membership, whilst other Christians, comprising Pentecostals and African Initiated Churches (AICs) registered significant growth.³² From 1980 to 1991 white Roman Catholics decreased from 388,000 to 315,000 -6%, white Anglicans also dropped from 426,000 to 292,000, -6%. The “Other” Christians category however registered a rise of 608,000 to 727,000, increasing by 14%. Among the Coloured people all mainline denominations lost members in significant numbers, but “Others” rose to 714,000 from 461,000.³³ And a similar trend emerges in the Indian community. The black population also registered a decline in the mainline churches, for instance the proportion of African Wesleyan Methodists dropped by 3% between 1980 and 1991, but in contrast, “Other” Christian Churches grew by 6%.³⁴ Obviously Pentecostal type churches are in vogue in SA, which corroborate the global trends mentioned above.

Appreciating contextualisation as the approach used by a local church to integrate the Gospel into its own culture,³⁵ Pentecostal pneumatology appears to bond well with traditional South African worldview of spiritual consciousness, that acknowledges the presence of malevolent spirits who use muthi (Zulu, traditional medicine

or charms), dispensed by a sangoma (Zulu, traditional healer who can also cast spells), as a medium to hurt people. Consequently a Pentecostal spiritual warfare concept, which offers protection and victory against diabolic spiritual forces, holds a strong appeal. In addition, the prophetic and healing theologies of the Pentecostal Movement, which responds to the felt needs of a rather economically disadvantaged people, readily dovetails into the traditional context. Furthermore the large black population, who have been disinherited and traumatised by Apartheid can only find hope in the premillennial doctrine of Pentecostalism, which promises a radically new world order, void of racial and economic discrimination, where the oppressed and oppressor would stand as co-equals before God. Cox avers that this kind of hope which rises above any particular context would prevail even though other human hopes have failed to materialise.³⁶ This position notwithstanding, the complex racial composition of the South Africa Society will demand a multifaceted theological and mission approach to engage all the races, tribes, classes, and nationalities.

Through the efforts of some of their lay members, African Pentecostal diaspora communities in SA have registered their presence by establishing branches of their home churches, characterised by a strong national identity, be they Zimbabweans, Nigerians or Ghanaians etc. and I will examine the impact of the Church of Pentecost (CoP), Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), Shona Congregations, and Light House Chapel International (LCI), Mega Church.

The CoP, a church of Ghanaian origins, was planted in SA in 1990, through the initiative of a lay leader, Deacon Evans Akuffo, who migrated to SA as an accountant. The Church has since grown to register a total membership 5137 in 2015, with a nationality breakdown of 2550 Ghanaians, 2053 indigenous black coloured South Africans, and 334 comprising other African nationals. The CoP, SA has 53 congregations spread out in all the provinces, except Northern Cape. It has 15 ministers, comprising 11 Ghanaians, 3 black South Africans, and one Zambian. These figures reveal that the CoP, SA has attracted a significant number of indigenous South Africans, comprising almost 40% of its entire membership. One interesting dynamic of diaspora mission is how it compels indigenous ministers, who join the church, to become cross-cultural missionaries in their

own backyard. Such is the case of Rev Cameron Sikrweqe, who as a Xhosa has become a missionary to Ghanaians and other nationalities in the CoP, SA. He admits that being a missionary to a diaspora community stretches him to go beyond what is familiar, in order to engage well with his congregation. In his view the church can only reach the other races, namely Whites and Indians by developing an approach that is relevant to their cultural nuances. Rev David Zuze, also a minister of the CoP has a situation that further reveals the complexities of contemporary migration. He happens to be a Zambian working in a Ghanaian diaspora Church in SA. He joined the Church through the influence of his South African mother-in-law, and he finds the multicultural exposure offered by the Church very exciting. He however recognises the language barrier and tensions engendered by cultural peculiarities as the main challenges that confront a missional diaspora church.

The case of Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) Kempton Park Shona³⁷ Assembly, predominantly Zimbabwean, is a fascinating case of reverse mission. The AFM as indicated above is of South African origin, which reached out to Zimbabwe to establish indigenous AFM congregations. Some of these congregations' members have migrated to SA and have formed diaspora congregations that speak Shona, their mother tongue. Rev Tenda Munemo, the senior Pastor³⁸ has revealed that the Church began as a fellowship of two Shona families in October 2007. The headquarters church of this mission has 10,000 members, with 9,500 of them being Zimbabweans, 500 being indigenous black South Africans, and 100 being people of other nationalities. The AFM Shona Mission in SA currently has 10 pastors who are all Zimbabweans. Some of the congregations are Shona mono-cultural, with a few others being multicultural, and they preach mostly in Shona, and in English occasionally. The Church does not receive financial support from the home Church in Zimbabwe, rather it supports foreign missions in Zimbabwe and beyond. Rev Munemo is excited about the positive impact their ministry makes by rescuing migrants from reckless living, and also for the capacity of the Church to acquire property in SA. He however identifies xenophobic attacks, and the difficulty encountered by the many Zimbabweans to regularise their migration status as the main challenges facing the Church.

A third diaspora church that appears to be making inroads into the black South African community is the Lighthouse Chapel International (LIC) Mega Church, founded by Bishop Dag Heward Mills, headquartered in Ghana. The Senior Pastor and General Overseer of the Church in SA is Dr E. Kluffio a Ghanaian, and the headquarters address is 258 Kotze Street, Sunny Side Pretoria. Similar to the trend in many diaspora churches, LIC, SA was planted in February 1997 by a Ghanaian lay leader who came to SA on a student visa. By April 2016 the church could count over 4,000 members in 82 congregations located in all the 9 provinces of SA. The congregations are mainly multicultural comprising, in total, 10% Ghanaians and 90% South Africans, and they mostly use English, and the relevant local language in certain locations. The LIC has 16 full time ministers, 8 of whom are Ghanaians, with the rest being indigenous black South Africans. Furthermore LIC has 82 indigenous lay ministers, and 28 such of other nationalities. According to Dr Kluffio, the approach they use to maintain unity in a multicultural church is to focus on Christ, and avoid using examples from their home origin. The LIC is a member of the International Federation of Christian Churches, and it does not receive financial support from the home mission. To Dr Kluffio, the most fulfilling aspect of diaspora mission is the accomplishment of raising indigenous pastors who minister to their own people.

Conclusion

Obviously globalisation has resulted in the emergence of diaspora churches, which is a significant feature of the shift in contemporary Christian mission paradigm. We need to celebrate the approach of some Pentecostal churches, who build capacity by empowering their laity to take the bold initiative and plant their home churches in diaspora communities. South Africa, a popular migrant destination, has attracted many African nationalities and these have diversified and enriched the Christian narrative of the nation. The pneumatic emphasis and premillennial promise of Pentecostals appear to integrate well with the indigenous worldview, responding appreciatively to the harrowing socio-political and socio-economic experience of SA. As a result, whilst the mainline mission Churches seem to be declining, the Pentecostal and Zionist Churches are rather expanding.

Mission engagement in such a context would therefore demand a dynamic theological and spiritual capacity that is adaptable and sensitive to the complexities of a multiracial society such as South Africa.

Notes

- ¹ For instance see Andrew F. Walls, "An anthropology of hope: Africa, slavery, and civilization in nineteenth-century mission thinking" *International bulletin of missionary research*, October 2015 vol. 39 no. 4, 225-230.
- ² See Hope S. Antone's paper presented at the Asia Mission Conference held in Tainan, Taiwan on "Beyond Edinburgh 1910 – Asian reactions on mission" on September 29 to October 3, 2008. http://cca.org.hk/home/ctc/ctc08-03/08_hope62.pdf (accessed on March 21, 2016)
- ³ Wonsuk Ma et al (ed.), "Introduction: Pentecostals and world mission" *Pentecostal mission and global Christianity, Regnum Edinburgh centenary series volume 20*. (Oxford: Regnum, 2014), 1.
- ⁴ Some literature on diaspora missions include Opoku Onyinah's "Pentecostalism and the African diaspora": An examination of the missions activities of the Church of Pentecost", *PNUEMA: The journal of the society for Pentecostal studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2, Fall 2004; J. K. Asamoah-Gyadu, "Migration, diaspora mission and religious others in world Christianity: An African perspective" *International bulletin of missionary research*, 39, No. 4 (2015); 189–192. Todd M. Tomllison, "Migration, religious diasporas, and religious diversity: A global survey", *Mission studies*, 29 (2012) 3-22; Thorsten Prill, "Migration, mission and the multi-ethnic Church", *Evangelical review of Theology*, (2009) 33:4, 332 – 346.
- ⁵ David Clayton (ed.), "Christianity in a global age", in *Laussane occasional paper no. 30*, 2014.
- ⁶ David Killingray, "Passing on the Gospel: Indigenous mission in Africa" *Transformation*, Vol. 28. No.2 (April 2011), 93-102.
- ⁷ Lamin Sanneh, *Whose religion is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991).
- ⁸ David J. Bosch, *Transforming mission: Paradigm shifts in theology*

- of mission*. (New York: Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 1991, 2011), 193.
- ⁹ Bosch, *Transforming mission*, 463.
- ¹⁰ Memorandum from a consultation on mission (Produced by a consultation held in Rome, May 1982, and organized by the secretariat for promoting Christian unity), *International review of mission* Vol. 71), 458-477.
- ¹¹ Marty Shaw, Jr. "The future of kingdom work in a globalizing world" in David Clayton (ed.) *Globalization and the Gospel: Rethinking mission in the contemporary world* (Pattaya, Thailand: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2004)
- ¹² Todd M. Johnson, "Migration, religious diasporas and religious diversity: A global survey". *Mission studies*, 29 (2012), 3-22.
- ¹³ David Clayton (ed.), "Christianity in a global age", in Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 30, 2014.
- ¹⁴ The gross domestic product per capita in South Africa was equivalent to 48% of the world's average in 2014. GDP per capita in South Africa averaged 5080.22 USD from 1960 until 2014, reaching an all-time high of 6090.27 USD in 2013 and a record low of 3543.52 USD in 1960.
- ¹⁵ <http://mg.co.za/article/2015-05-06-do-5-million-immigrants-live-in-sa>
- ¹⁶ T. M. Johnson & G. A. Bellofatto, "Migration, religious diaspora, and religious diversity: a global survey", *Missions studies* 29 (2012), 3-22.
- ¹⁷ Johnson and Bellofatto, 8.
- ¹⁸ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Migration, diaspora, mission, and religious others in world Christianity: An African Perspective," *International bulletin of missionary research* 39, no.4 (2015), 189-92. <http://www.internationalbulletin.org/2015-04/2015-04-189asamoah-gyadu.html>
- ¹⁹ Dwight Zscheile, "Forming and restoring community in a nomadic world: A next generation perspective on the future of the discipline of missiology", *Missiology: An international review* 42(1) (2013), 26-38.
- ²⁰ Zscheile, 30.

- 21 Thorsten Prill, "Migration, mission and the multi-ethnic Church", *Evangelical review of Theology* (2009) 33:4, 334-346.
- 22 "Pentecostalism and the African Diaspora: An examination of the missions activities of the Church of Pentecost", *Pneuma: The journal of the society for Pentecostal studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2, (Fall 2004), 216-241. The author is currently Chairman of The Church of Pentecost, a Ghanaian Church that has mission outposts in over 90 nations. Some of these mission outposts comprise Ghanaians in the diaspora, whilst others have significant numbers of indigenous people in their fold.
- 23 Onyinah, 239.
- 24 John W. De Gruchy. *The Church struggle in South Africa*, twenty-fifth anniversary edition (Kindle Locations 330-331). Kindle Edition
- 25 John W. De Gruchy. *The Church struggle in South Africa*.
- 26 John W. De Gruchy. *The Church struggle in South Africa*.
- 27 Rev Hermy Damons, formerly a senior minister in Rhema Bible Church was interacting with a group of The Church of Pentecost ministerial students at Kempton Park on March 6, 2016.
- 28 Matthew Clark, "Mission effort in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa", *Transformation* vol. 26, No. 3 (July 2009), 174-185.
- 29 Clark, 176; "Lekganyane, founder of the Zion Christian Church", prominentpeople.co.za/lekanyane.aspx.
- 30 Clark, 177.
- 31 Goodhew, "Growth and decline in South Africa's Churches" *Journal of religion in Africa*, Vol. 30, Fasc. 3(August 200),361.
- 32 David Goodhew, 244-369.
- 33 Goodhew, 357.
- 34 Goodhew, 356.
- 35 Louis J. Luzbetak. *The Churches and cultures: New perspectives in missiological anthropology*. (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 69.
- 36 Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, (London: Cassel, 1996), 82.
- 37 President Robert Mugabe is a Shona
- 38 April 1, 2016 at Kempton Park, Johannesburg.

MIGRATION AND AFRICAN DIASPORA MISSION AND THE CHANGING CHRISTIAN LANDSCAPE OF THE WEST

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Keywords: *Diaspora, migration, immigrant churches*

Introduction

This Essay reflects on the significance of African and African-led Pentecostal/charismatic churches in the modern West. The basic thesis is that through the establishment of African churches (that is churches made of Africans) and by African Christians forming churches in Europe (that is churches formed by Africans but that have a predominantly white or mixed race membership), a case has been made for the reference to Christianity as a non-Western religion with Africa as one of its major hubs. Kwame Bediako argued that Christianity has now become a non-Western religion with its centers of dominance in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Bediako 1995).

Until the late 20th century, Christianity in Africa for example was associated mainly with evangelization by Western missionaries and the consequent establishment of the historic mission denominations. African responses to what was then tagged as "Western Christianity" have been varied. At the beginning of the 20th century, some African elites formed nationalist churches in a bid to break Western hegemonic tendencies in church administration. The 'Nationalist' churches as they were known in West Africa or 'Ethiopianist' churches as they were called in southern Africa constituted the first indigenous response to Western Christian influence on the continent. The second response was to occur at the beginning of the 20th century with the rise of independent churches and prophet-healing movements that became known collectively as African Independent Churches (AICs). The third response led to the emergence of independent contemporary Pentecostal/charismatic varieties of churches, a development that has led to further seismic changes in the African Christian landscape from the dominant era of historic mission Christianity.

African Instituted/International Churches

The developments described above means that the acronym AICs could well stand for African International Churches because with increasing global trends in migration, Christianity in Africa has now gone international. Today, some of the largest congregations in Europe—Western and Eastern—are either founded by Africans or are led by people of African descent. There are also international churches made up of migrants from different countries that are led by Africans. These developments are important because discussions on African immigrant Christianity usually focus on churches whose memberships tend to be constituted by Africans or people of that descent. A good example of the new development is the Calvary Worship Center (CWC) in British Columbia, Canada led by Rev. Dr. Samuel Owusu from Ghana. On its website the CWC states its vision as follows:

Calvary Worship Center exists to proclaim the gospel to all nations and to equip them for their ministry in the church and in the world.

In keeping with this statement the CWC, which is every sense a multicultural African-led Christian community, attracts citizens from seventy-five nations including Canadians. Another example of an African international church is the more popular Kingsway International Christian Center (KICC) in London led by the charismatic Nigerian pastor, Matthew Ashimolowo. In the early 1990s an African-led Pentecostal church emerged in Eastern Europe. KICC, which was founded in 1992 now has a total membership of about twelve thousand worshipper from forty-eight nations, a majority of them West Africans. This means the designation of these churches in the Diaspora as 'African churches' is no longer tenable. The other useful example is Sunday Adelaja's 'Church of the Blessed Embassy of the Kingdom of God for all Nations' is based in Kiev, Ukraine. Pastor Adelaja is also Nigerian and he founded Embassy of God some twenty-two years ago. Until about five or so years ago it was the single largest church in all of Europe and had a total membership of approximately twenty-five thousand adults.

Embassy of God as I refer to it in this essay has fallen on hard times due to charges bordering on the operations of a financial scheme and moral failure on the part of its leader. These alleged failures notwithstanding we cannot take away from the fact that at the height of its popularity, Pastor Adelaja an African pastor once led the largest church in the whole of Europe, the land from where missionaries evangelized his home continent.

Mission, Migration and Diaspora

Africans in Diaspora churches are now at the forefront of the new Christian initiatives that may yet restore some semblance of life into the religious life of Europe as far as Christianity is concerned. The term 'Diaspora' is associated with migration in the Jewish tradition but it now enjoys growing importance in the study of religion precisely because of some of the developments relating to the dispersal of African Christians in the modern West (Walls 2002). The reasons for migration are many but for whatever reason that took them abroad, many African migrants do not consider the word 'return' in their vocabulary. Statistical data are difficult to come by, but it is widely known that a majority of Africans in Europe and North America are economic migrants who traveled in search of better life.

There are numbers of people who also left the shores of Africa, especially in the 1980s when economies collapsed largely due to mismanagement under military dictatorships, political persecution, and the perennial search for better educational facilities for one's self and offspring. Whatever the reason for migration, as Gerrie ter Haar has noted, human migration is something of all times and ages and that 'religion has always been a significant aspect' of it (Ter Haar 2001:2). Here in this essay we look at the Christian factor and church formation in African Diasporas as an enterprise in mission.

Into whichever category they fall, African migrants have always carried their faith with them to the Diasporas contributing significantly to the revival of Christianity in the West (Hanciles 2003:146). Unlike the cries of Diaspora Jews who out of exilic despair could not fathom singing the Lord's song in a foreign land, modern migrants are doing just that with the formation of churches with many hoping that their efforts may help dealing with the declining presence of Christianity in the modern West.

'Witness of Presence'

Popular discourses in the African Diasporas speak of many Christians feeling traumatized at the sight of beautiful cathedrals in Europe in particular that have now been converted for secular and non-Christian uses. Although African churches in Western Europe do not attract too many Europeans, there is such a thing as the 'witness of presence' in mission studies. The very presence of African dominated and African-led churches in Europe and North America is testimony to the dynamic quality and significance of the African evangelical witness. This is because quite a significant number of the African churches in the Diaspora tend to belong to the Pentecostal/charismatic streams of the faith. Indeed the impressive dominance of Pentecostalism in African Christianity has led to some sort of "pentecostalization" of Christianity including the historic mission denominations. Thus it is not surprising that African Methodists, Presbyterians and Catholics have now formed their own churches in the lands of their former missionaries and rather than follow inherited liturgical forms of worship, have rather opted for the more informal, expressive and dynamic forms associated with Holy Spirit movements.

Christianity has become Africa's religion too with even Catholic Parishes in several Western locations relying on African priests on sabbatical to provide them pastoral services. This, to use Pauline language, testifies to how God chooses 'the foolish things of this world' to serve his purposes:

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence (I Corinthians 1:27-29).

It is therefore not insignificant that Africa, a continent despised, deprived, trampled upon, marginalized and shamed in many ways has emerged as the beacon of Christian mission and evangelization in the global spread of the faith. This does not render European Christianity irrelevant but rather it shows that at a time when the faith is under siege

in its former heartlands, God may have placed its destiny in the hands of the people of the South. For what we say of African Christianity in the Diasporas of Europe and North America is also true of Latin American and Asian migrants in those contexts. Thus for many of these non-Westerners in the Diaspora, the recession of Christianity among Westerners is a call to evangelism and the re-establishment of kingdom values in the lands of nineteenth century missionaries.

Mission is in reverse

African-led churches in the West, as I have sought to illustrate, come in different varieties and categories. The earliest ones began as fellowships among migrants who felt unwelcome in the established churches of Europe on racial grounds. These interdenominational fellowships served a second purpose of making up for the spiritual and liturgical poverty of worship life in the European church. As the churches of the missionaries continued to lose their spiritual fervor and sense of supernatural, the Africans took their spiritual destinies into their own hands and reconstituted fellowships into churches where faith could be expressed in ways that resonated with African and biblical pieties. To quote Hanciles:

In Western Europe the rise of African immigrant churches and other non-Western Christian congregations has been dramatically visible because of the stark contrast between the dynamism of new immigrant Christian groups and the often moribund tone of the traditional churches (Hanciles 2003:150).

The first immigrant churches to form in Europe were the African independent churches known in Ghana as Spiritual churches and in Nigeria and South Africa as Aladura ('praying people') and Zionist churches respectively. A number of them first started in London where one of the earliest Ghanaian independent churches, the Musama Disco Christo Church still maintains a vibrant presence. African members of mainline denominations in their home countries initially joined similar denominations in Europe, particularly in the UK and Germany. With time, many have pulled out of those communions and throughout Europe today, one encounters Ghana Methodist, Nigeria Anglican or Ghana Roman Catholic churches operating under the pastoral leadership of their own kind often posted from the home countries.

The meaning of this development is that Methodism, Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism, and Presbyterianism have all in African hands, acquired new ecclesial identities, liturgical structures and styles of worship that differ markedly from those inherited from nineteenth century missionary endeavors.

From the last quarter of the twentieth century, the numbers of churches established by African migrants increased significantly. Africa-based classical Pentecostal churches such as Ghana's Church of Pentecost and Nigerian William F. Kumuyi's Deeper Christian Life Bible Church have brought together their own and established congregations throughout Europe. Another Ghanaian Church, the Lighthouse Chapel International led by Bishop Dag Heward-Mills and the Redeemed Christian Church of God led by a Nigerian Pastor Enoch A. Adeboye now have churches in many parts of Europe and North America. This means that African Pentecostal/charismatic churches have virtually taken Europe by storm. Matthew Ashimolowo's KICC and Adelaja's Embassy of God belong to this category but as stated earlier, the former attracts mostly Africans and the latter is filled with Europeans. The primary intention of these churches is not to establish congregations for only Africans so those belonging to the independent category usually cast themselves as 'international churches', although as stated earlier it has been difficult to attract Westerners. The reasons for this are usually not too hard to find, as a number of African churches often like to use the vernacular in worship.

Social versus Religious Roles of Immigrant Churches

The questions of ethnic and cultural identities are important for people in the Diaspora but African immigrant Christians still consciously label themselves not in exclusive but in inclusive terms although such inclusivity may only be apparent (Ter Haar 2001:6). Quoting Ter Haar:

African Christians in the Netherlands generally identify themselves first and foremost as Christians and only secondly as Africans or African Christians. In their own view, their public adherence to Christianity constitutes the most important element of their identity (Ter Haar 2001:47).

In addition to whatever religious services they provide for African immigrants seeking to quench their thirst for dynamic Christian services that meet their need, there is no gainsaying the fact that the immigrant churches in the West also provide for members a social safety net from the harsh immigration conditions that are worsening by the day due to the reconstitution of the European Union. For many of them however, 'their religion helps them to achieve a degree of security and inner strength' within a hostile European environment (Ter Haar 2001:49). Some even see parallels between the pains of being 'aliens' in a foreign land and the experiences of Jesus Christ. Christ's own life and ministry, as Hanciles shows, included the travails of a refugee, the pain of uprootedness, and the alienation that comes with being a stranger. Even the emptying of status in the incarnation to take on the form of a servant has its parallels in the migrant experience (Hanciles 2003:150).

Mission and Evangelism in the Diaspora

The painful experiences notwithstanding therefore, African Christians and African-led churches in Europe interpret their presence in terms of a call to mission and evangelism. In his book, *The Go Between God: The Holy Spirit and Christian Mission*, John V. Taylor defines mission as 'recognizing what the Creator-Redeemer is doing in his world and doing it with him' (Taylor 1972:37). I have often revised this definition to read, 'knowing what the Creator-Redeemer is doing in the world and allowing him to engage you in the enterprise'. For the purposes of this work, I use mission and evangelism as synonymous expressions encapsulating the active prosecution of an agenda to restore and reconcile a broken world to God in Christ. That has been God's business and the African-led immigrant churches in the West seems to be serving a deep seated religious need that lies neglected in the evangelism efforts of the churches belonging to the former heartlands of Christian mission. The Spirit of God seems to have chosen the church in Africa for a new and spectacular advance. I believe that the ministries of immigrant churches are serving the purposes of the Spirit in his work of renewal and mission.

There are reasons for this. First, Christianity in African hands serves to challenge the moral relativisms in European culture by getting people to offer their lives to Christ in ways reminiscent of occurrences in the Acts of Apostles. The people that have been reached by Sunday Adelaja's God's Embassy, for example, are predominantly former drug addicts, prostitutes and leaders and members of mafia gangs who have now, under the powerful influence of the Spirit, turned to Christ. The state of Ukraine has been forced to take notice and the authorities are now too happy to turn over drug addicts to the Church because clinical psychology and expensive rehabilitation programs have proven inadequate in dealing with them. Under the powerful influence of the Spirit however, lives that were being destroyed by evil have now been turned around for Christ.

Second, through these churches, the Bible has returned to the life of the church as the authoritative word of Word. It is the main book from which preaching is done and is considered sufficient as for teaching, rebuking and for training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

Third, African immigrant churches do take the worldviews of Africans seriously as far as pastoral care is concerned. Thus as Gerrie ter Haar would have it in another publication, *Halfway to Paradise*, African Christians find ample evidence for their beliefs in the Bible, which represents forces of good and evil as having power over life and death. African churches in the Diaspora, irrespective of their particular persuasion, address the issue of spiritual forces explicitly' (Ter Haar 1998:51). Right from missionary times in Africa, worldviews of spiritual causality had been dismissed by white missionaries as psychological delusions and figments of people's imagination. Not so with African churches in Europe, who irrespective of whatever abuses that may be associated with those worldviews, do take them seriously and articulate Christian responses to them in ways that may look alien to Western rational and cerebral Christianity.

The sense of fear, uncertainty and insecurity associated with being an immigrant makes the ministry of spiritual warfare an important aspect of the mission of Diaspora churches.

The fourth missionary implication of the Diaspora churches lies in the area of liturgical renewal. African churches generally prefer worship life that is experiential, expressive, exuberant and dynamic in nature.

Whether they belong to the Pentecostal/charismatic stream of Christianity or not, renewal seems to be an important element in the lives of these churches, the point being that, the active presence of the Spirit is what gives the church of Jesus Christ its identity.

Fifth, the churches in the Diaspora provide much needed moral and physical support for their fellow 'aliens in the foreign lands of Europe'. The African immigrant, at the present time lives within a very precarious and difficult European world and spiritual and material support from the churches cannot but be considered high priority on the agenda of the church. In that respect these churches have chosen a path of evangelization that is not discontinuous with what we encounter in the Acts of the Apostles where the believers bonded together to provide for each other's needs in the spirit of Christ.

Conclusion

There are many rough edges as far as churches in the Diaspora are concerned. Several of its leaders have been accused of using the enterprise for personal and material gain. Others blatantly abuse their position by playing on and exploiting the fears and insecurities of people whose lives are full of uncertainties. But perhaps one of the greatest lessons we learn from the 'ministry of presence', associated with the African Diaspora initiatives is that through these immigrants God may be preserving the life of his church. It recalls the days of his birth when the life of the baby Jesus came under threat from Herod and his henchmen. Under the direction of the divine messenger, the child and his parents took refuge in Egypt until the time when it was considered conducive for mission to resume.

In African hands, Christianity has virtually returned 'home' to the continent that granted refugee status to the Lord of mission when his life was in danger. With the recession of Christianity in the modern West and the siege under which the faith has sometimes come, immigrant churches may well be the institutions through whose efforts God would like to keep his Presence active in the West.

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NIGERIAN IMMIGRANT PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES AND THEIR IMPACT ON GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

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Introduction

One of the most discernible developments in World Christianity and mission study in recent years is the reverse flow of mission from the Global South to the North. A significant number of African preachers and missionaries from Latin America and Asia are taking the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to Europe and America. The majority of the ministers from Africa represent Pentecostal and Charismatic movements and it is perceptible that Nigerians and Ghanaians are major players in the planting and growth of these churches in the north Atlantic.

Accordingly, scholars consistently maintain that now more than ever before, Christianity which was previously referred to as the religion of the Global North: Europe and North America, is now primarily the religion of the Global South: Africa, Asia and Latin America. As the phenomenon of African diaspora becomes progressively a noteworthy part of the general global trend caused by economic, spiritual, social and political factors, Africans are migrating from their country of birth ostensibly to "seek for greener pastures". Several issues arise from the claims above. Firstly, the phenomena of globalization and migration have forced boundaries to become fluid and made cultural diversity a contemporary reality. As Africans migrate to other continents, especially Europe and America, with their African form of Christianity and theologies, a kind of multiculturalism has emerged within Western Christianity which begs for esteemed consideration. Secondly, as Daugherty observes, Christianity is increasingly becoming Pentecostal and the movement is profoundly impacting World Christianity, world cultures and even global politics¹. Thirdly, Andrew Walls' projection is increasingly becoming clearer that authentic Christianity -

is not only the one brought by missionaries... the field of African Christianity will not only be widely recognised as abundantly fertile for Christian theology, but it will also have implications for fresh possibilities in theology and mission.²

Fourthly, many scholars of African Christianity now agree with Ruth Marshall's view that,

Nigeria has been the site of Pentecostalism's greatest explosion on the African continent, and the movement's extraordinary growth shows no signs of slowing³

It is also evident that apart from the home front, Nigerian Pentecostal denominations are now proliferating internationally. Today, many of the Nigerian Pentecostal churches are firmly planted in western countries, such as France, Britain, Germany, Russia and the United States of America. It is for the above reasons that it is possible to articulate meaningfully the phenomenon of the Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal Churches and their Impact on Global Christianity

The place of the Immigrant Pentecostal Churches in the Taxonomy of Nigerian Christian Tradition

Sporadic attempts to plant Christianity in Nigeria began in the second half of the fifteenth century by the Portuguese Catholic Mission, but their commercial interest in gold, ivory and slaves as well as the daunting problems of health, prevented any but shallowest of roots to be struck.⁴ In Nigeria the institution of enduring Christianity, in the nineteenth century, is therefore credited to the mainline churches. From the 1840s, several foreign missionary organisations came to Nigeria for the purpose of mission. The foremost successful attempt was initiated from the Gold Coast through the resourcefulness of Thomas Birch Freeman who led a team of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission to Badagry, in South-West Nigeria, on September 23rd 1842. Hot on the heels of the Methodists came the Anglican Mission in December 1842⁵. The Church of Scotland Mission followed in the tracks when it sent out the Rev. Hope Masterdon Waddell, to inaugurate the United Presbyterian Mission in Old Calabar in 1846⁶. Rev. T.J Bowen, the

pioneer missionary of the Southern Baptist Mission who arrived in Badagry in 1850, represented the fourth missionary society. The beginning of what is today known as the Catholic Church in Nigeria came with the second wave of Catholic Mission expedition through the activities of the Societe de Mission Africaines (SMA) under the leadership of Fr. Francesco Xavier Borghero who arrived in Lagos via Porto Novo in September 1863⁷ In 1887 the Qua Iboe⁸ Missio, a Congregationalist assemblage, was founded by a Scottish missionary, Samuel Bill in the neighbourhood of the Qua Iboe River and Etinam⁹.

In 1893 a team led by Walter Gowans was dispatched by the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) to the northern region of Nigeria. Today, the SIM-related churches are designated Evangelical Churches Winning All (ECWA)¹⁰ All the above named missions came to Nigeria between 1792-1910, a period which Kenneth Latourette called the 'Great Century of Protestant Mission'¹¹. These churches are called historic, "mainstream" or "established" churches because they have already had long historical traditions of their own prior to their establishment in Nigeria. It is precisely in this sense that they are also sometimes called "mission churches".

The Ethiopian or African form of the mission churches began to emerge from the end of the 19th Century and the early part of the 20th Century. These include Native Baptist Church (1888), The United Native African Church (1891), The African Church (1901), The Christ Army Church and the United African Methodist Church (Eleja-1917). They disengaged from the Mission Churches predominantly because of their disinterestedness in Mission leadership and nationalistic feelings.¹² The mission and Ethiopian churches contributed to the nascent development of Christianity in Nigeria.

A remarkable phase in the historical development of Christianity in Nigeria was the emergence of the African Indigenous Churches in the early 20th century. They are popularly known as Ijo Aladura meaning the praying Church, (lit. "The church of those who pray") because, according to them, they devote quite a substantial time to saying prayers; and their constant theme is the power of prayer. Apart from this, the movement has helped to promote Christianity in a way that has appealed to the Africans.

It is on this basis that J.D.Y Peel acknowledged that through the AICs, Christianity was incarnated in African culture.¹³ Some of these churches include Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), The Cherubim and Seraphim Movement (C & S), The Church of the Lord Aladura , Worldwide (CLAW) and the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) Among some African Church historians, the argument over the years has been whether these Aladura can be described as Pentecostal Movements. While some assert that there is a world of difference between the two groups, others affirm that there is a close relationship between the two movements. Indeed, Oshun described these four churches as the core Aladura Pentecostals in Nigeria. He insists that they are Pentecostals because they grew as Movements of the Holy Spirit (perhaps, simultaneously with, or derivatively from, the Pentecostal outpouring of the last decade of the 19th century. He maintains that they are Aladura to the extent that they are prayer or prophet movements.

On the other hand, they are Pentecostal, to the extent that they are spiritual or spirit-movements, that is, they are committed to missions under the encouragement and stimulus of the Holy Spirit. Contributing to the debate, Asamoah-Gyadu contends that not only do AICs share religious and theological tendencies and emphases with indigenous classical and contemporary Pentecostal movements, but also, many of their practices previously condemned as belonging to the occult have been reinvented in contemporary Pentecostal spirituality.¹⁴ For these reasons, some scholars agree with J.D.Y Peel that Pentecostalism first came to Nigeria through the Aladura, when Apostolic Church missionaries came out to join the Prophet Babalola group in 1931.¹⁵

Whether *Aladura* movement is regarded as Pentecostal or not their contributions to the development of Christianity in Nigeria cannot be overemphasised. It must be noted that the missionary outlook of Christianity was vigorously implemented by some of these indigenous churches. The exportation of African forms of Christianity to the West African sub-region and later beyond the continent of African was fired up by them. A good example is The Church of the Lord Aladura Worldwide (CLAW) that sent its missionaries to other African countries for the purpose of establishing more branches.

During the 1950s, Apostle Adejobi established CLAW churches in Sierra Leone and the northern part of the Gold Coast while Apostle Oduwole also founded some CLAW churches in Liberia and the southern part of the Gold Coast. By 1964, the first branch of the CLAW outside Africa was inaugurated by Primate Adeleke Adejobi in South London, thus fulfilling Primate Oshitelu's prophecy that the church would go beyond the African continent.¹⁶ The activation of missionary tendency of Christianity from Nigeria is seen as one of the outstanding contributions of AICs to the growth and expansion of Christianity. Other AICs of Nigerian extraction like Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) Church¹⁷, the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) and Christ's Apostolic Church established mission outreaches in Africa and even beyond.

The third stage of development of Christianity in Nigeria was the emergence of bona fide Pentecostalism. This movement has greatly impacted Christianity in Nigeria and other parts of the world. It has been noted by several scholars that Pentecostalism is the fastest growing strand of Christianity. David Barrett projects that if the growth continues, the population of Pentecostals would rise to 1,140 million or 44% of the total number of Christians by AD 2025.¹⁸ According to Matthews Ojo, membership of Pentecostal churches is substantial, with about 10 per cent of the 48 million Christians in Nigeria.¹⁹ Ayegboyin and Ukah classified them into Classical Pentecostals- these are foreign as far as their origin is concerned, and they include : The Faith Tabernacle Churches, The Apostolic Church, The Assemblies of God, The Apostolic Faith, African –American Gospel Church, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and Pentecostal Holiness Movement. The second group is the Indigenous Pentecostals, third is, The Charismatic/ Pentecostal group founded by Nigerians, while the last is the Neo Pentecostal Movement which is a conglomeration of a wide variety of assemblies with different kinds of doctrines and practices.

Exportation of Selected Nigerian Pentecostal Churches

The Pentecostal churches are selected for discussion in this paper because they are the most accomplished Christian organisations in Nigeria that have in recent times contributed more to the spread of

African Pentecostalism and the global development of Christianity. As mentioned earlier, the very first missionary initiative from Nigeria came from the AICs. However, the innovations and mission strategy of Pentecostals have built on the foundation laid by the AICs thus consolidating the dissemination of the Nigerian brand of Christianity to other nations of the world through migration and religious networking. Since 1970's, Nigerian Christianity has experienced dramatic developments with the explosion of Pentecostal revivals. The involvement of upward and mobile youth at this period was no doubt a tremendous blessing to the movement. Ruth Marshall observed that students' involvement in Pentecostalism in the early years helped to ensure that this was a movement of young people; many pastors, themselves not long out of university, were leading congregations where the average age was about twenty-five.²⁰

The Pentecostal movement significantly impacted Nigerian Christianity, with its emphasis on glossolalia and other elements of Pentecostalism. The rapid spread of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements in Africa since the 1970s constitutes a major development within contemporary African Christianity. Matthews Ojo points out that by the late 1970s, through contacts in international conferences hosted by evangelical groups and through evangelistic campaigns the Nigerian movements had planted branches in other African countries and stimulated the growth of the charismatic renewal in other African countries.²¹ It is important to acknowledge and appreciate Benson Idahosa who contributed immensely to the expansion of charismatic Christianity in Nigeria and other African countries. His religious networking was critical to the development of Christianity with implications on exportation of Christianity from Africa to the northern hemisphere.

Benson Idahosa's Television programme, which was known as 'The Redemption Hour' was aired in Nigeria and other African nations such as Togo, Ghana, Cameroon and Benin Republic. As the audience of Redemption Hour began to grow, Idahosa continued his evangelistic open air meetings which gained wide reception and diffusion to other African countries.²² Idahosa visited many African countries for missionary purposes and eventually planted over 6,000 churches in Africa and other parts of the world. His influence was impactful on

young Pentecostals for mission outreaches from Nigeria to other parts of the world. The appropriation of media technologies such as video, satellite broadcasting and internet are contemporary developments on religious transnational networking traceable to the foundation laid by Idahosa. In the light of this, Matthews Ojo corroborated that, undeniably, it was Benson Idahosa who was the leading figure in creating educational and material opportunities for other West African nationals, and who eventually had a lasting impact as he facilitated significant networks in the West African sub-region.²³

The presence of Nigerians and other Africans in Europe and the United State of America has been a major boost for the exportation of African Christianity to these continents through Pentecostalism. It is well known that Africans have been living in Europe and North and South America since the period of slave trade. It is estimated that about half of the total trade in slavery was in British hands, with a fleet of 192 slave ships with a capacity for 50,000 slaves.²⁴ It is estimated that about 24 million Africans were forcefully taken as slaves from the West Coast of African alone.²⁵ The development of plantations in European colonies and in West Indies, such as Jamaica, Tobago and the North America, made the demand for slaves grow rapidly.

The Lord Mansfield judgement of 1772 was significant for the settlement of black slaves as immigrants outside the continent of Africa. The missionary enterprise of Methodist Church led by a mulatto Thomas Birch Freeman, to Nigeria and Gold Coast attests to this fact that Nigerians and other Africans had settled in the diaspora before the new trend of mission outreach of the Pentecostals to Europe and America. The continual migration of Nigerians and African to these continents because of economic crisis, political upheavals, and other social challenges will continue to be the justification for their migration. Hence, the need for spiritual nourishment from their fellow brothers from Africa. Faith groups meet certain needs of migrants including the spiritual, social, cultural and sometimes material needs.²⁶

Typology of Nigerian Immigrant Churches: A view point
Nigerian immigrant churches may be classified into five groups which are: Nigerian Immigrant Mission Churches (NIMCs), Nigerian Immigrant Indigenous Churches (NIICs), Nigerian Immigrant

Classical Pentecostal Churches (NICPCs), Nigerian Initiated Immigrant Pentecostal Churches (NIIPCs) and the Independent Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal Churches (INIPCs)

- The Nigerian Immigrant Mission Churches (NIMCs) refer to the mainline, historic or mission Churches that have established their National Convention Churches abroad. For example, the Nigerian Baptist Convention has, in recent years, dispatched a number of missionaries as workers of the convention to establish churches in Great Britain and a few other countries in Africa. A good counterpart of the NIMC in Ghana is the Diaspora Mission established by the Presbyterian Church, Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana in affiliation with the United Reform Church of the United Kingdom in the 1960s. Kpobi reports of other missions' effort initiated by the Roman Catholic Church through the work of the Society for Missions (SMA) in Netherlands in 1990. A Ghanaian priest was posted to Netherlands to hold services in Twi and 'help shape the services for the Ghanaians in other ways'²⁷
- The Nigerian Immigrant Indigenous Churches (NIICs) are basically the Nigerian indigenous or Aladura Churches whose migrant leaders see themselves as African missionaries abroad. Even though, as Allan Anderson pointed out, a new form of "international" AICs which are independent of their African origins are being formed all over Europe and America²⁸, there are still a number of Aladura prophets, healers, evangelists, bishops and apostles who are loyal to their Aladura movements from "home". The mission of the indigenous immigrant churches are seen mainly in their efforts to indigenise Christianity among their own people, and they do this through the encouragement of local dialects in services, reading the Bible, preaching and singing hymns and choruses in local languages.
- Nigerian Immigrant Classical Pentecostal Churches (NICPCs) are the Mission based Pentecostal Churches (they were established in Nigeria by missionaries from foreign Pentecostal organisations.) In this group is The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel which started missionary exploits way

back in 1969, when it sent their first missionary, Rev Simon Odeleye to the Republic of Benin, followed by Ghana (1974), Liberia (1980), Cote D'Ivoire (1967) and 16 other countries in Africa. The Foursquare missionary adventure to Europe is more recent. It has established churches in Italy (2008) and London. (2014) It also has branches in France, Ireland, United Arab Republic, Hong Kong and the United States. The Apostolic Church (LAWNA) has also established churches in Liverpool and Manchester since 2014.

- The fourth type, Nigerian Initiated Immigrant Pentecostal Churches (NIIPCs) represent the home-grown Pentecostal churches, that are meticulously controlled, from Nigeria. The Redeemed Christian Church of God, The Winners' Chapel (Living Faith Church) and the Deeper Life Bible Church are in this group. INIPCs are the new-generation Pentecostal Churches established by Charismatic individuals as independent Christian groups. Quite a number of them have their base in the host countries, but they sometimes establish branches in their countries of origin. In this group are: Matthew Ashimolowo's Kingsway International Christian Centre, Tayo Adeyemi's New Wine Church in Woolwich, London and Sunday Adelaja's Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for all Nations in Ukraine.

This paper focuses on the exploits of the Nigerian Initiated Immigrant Pentecostal Churches (NIIPCs) and the Independent Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal Churches (INIPCs).

Some Nigerian Initiated Immigrant Pentecostal Churches (NIIPCs)

Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) Deeper Life Bible Church founded by William Folorunso Kumuyi, started as a Bible Study group in 1973 at the University of Lagos. During its formative years, the group experienced stunning growth through its Home Caring Fellowships. Today, it is one of the oldest and largest Pentecostal Churches in Africa. The metamorphosis of the fellowship into an established congregation dates back to November 1982 when its first Sunday worship was held at Gbagada, an outlying district of the mainland of

Lagos, the then capital of Nigeria.²⁹ The Church has since spread all over Nigeria and beyond. Branches of Deeper Life Church outside Nigeria are located in countries like Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, Lesotho, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, Togo, Cameroon and Zimbabwe. Outside Africa, there are branches of the DLBC in Britain, USA, Spain, India and the Philippines.³⁰ The branches mentioned above are from the current development of Deeper Life's growth outside Nigeria. Congregations have been established in most of the European countries and in recent years the church has made a remarkable visible presence in the United States of America.

Living Faith Church (Winners' Chapel)

Living Faith Church is a leading prosperity Pentecostal denomination in Nigeria. The Church was established in 1986 by Bishop David Oyedepo, the founder and presiding bishop of the Church Worldwide.³¹ The Living Faith Church has established at least one branch in the capital cities of about 30 African countries.³² The success of Living Faith Church in the diaspora is a testimony to the fact that the strength of Christian missionary enterprise in the contemporary age is in the mission initiated by Africans for Africans in the first hand and for the rest of the world in the second. To some extent this development prompted the Foreign Mission Mandate of the church which gave birth to two organisations: The African Invasion Programme (AIP) and the World Mission Agency (WMA).³³ By the year 2000 it was reported that the Commission, motivated by its programme called 'Mission to the World' (MTW) had expanded impressively beyond the shores of Africa. This mission policy of Living Faith accounts for its presence in over 300 cities and towns in Nigeria, and in over 35 nations in Africa, Europe and America.³⁴

The Redeemed Christian Church of God

The Redeemed Christian Church of God was founded by Pa Josiah Akindayomi in 1952. The Church is now one of the fastest growing Pentecostal denominations across the globe. The emergence of Pastor Enoch Adeboye as the General Overseer of the Church after Akindayomi brought the church to the limelight. His vision for

expansion was a catalyst for the numeric strength in membership and branches as far as demographic religious space is concerned in Nigeria. From 1981, when Adeboye took the mantle of leadership, the church has experienced dramatic changes that have placed her in an important position on the religious world map. At a geometric rate of almost 300 percent annually, the Redeemed Christian Church of God, under the leadership of Pastor Adeboye, continues to expand to all the nooks and crannies of the world.³⁵ It is observed that at least four factors are responsible for the rapid growth of RCCG.

First, the inauguration of Holy Ghost Festival which was started in 1998 and today attracts millions of worshippers. The second is the mission policy to have a member of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in every family in the world. Third, the policy to plant a parish nations and within every two minutes' driving distance of developed nations and finally, the dynamism of the RCCG leader.³⁶ This mission strategy of RCCG as observed has contributed immensely to the home mission as well as the foreign mission of the Church.

The RCCG is represented in more than 120 nations of the world and claims to have over 500,000 converts in all these nations.³⁷ In America it has opened more than 200 parishes in just over a decade, from Chicago and Atlanta to Washington and New York, and is training Americans of all races to help them reach beyond the African immigrant community. Even in Europe, the Church has gained tremendous growth. There are branches of RCCG in Belgium, Bulgaria, Romania, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.³⁸ In the United Kingdom alone, there are more than 352 parishes. The globalisation of Holy Ghost Service has helped to put the Church in the frontline as far as mission is concerned.

Through this vehicle of mission, branches have been planted in Australia, Russia, China, Bahamas, Fiji Islands, Japan, Hong Kong, Haiti and United Arab Emirates.

Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM)

Mountain of Fire and Miracles, also known as MFM, is one of the Pentecostal Churches that emerged in Nigeria in the late 1980s. The Founder of the Church is Dr Daniel Kolawole Olukoya. He was brought up in Christ's Apostolic Church, and this could have influenced his understanding of deliverance. The Church holds tenaciously to deliverance mission and the premium placed on it by the MFM has no doubt resulted in growth of the Church in and outside Nigeria. Ayegboyin clearly states that MFM demonstrates that deliverance is part of the church's help from real and imagined distresses.³⁹ This spiritualisation which has somewhat formed the basis for mission among the MFM leaders and membership is not limited to the territorial boundaries of Africa where evil is perceived not as mere illusion.

The Church has opened up mission outreaches in non-African countries to meet the spiritual needs of the African immigrants on the one hand, and to minister to non-African on the other hand. In line with this submission, Ayegboyin postulates that MFM presents the gospel with the assumption that the primal African and the Christian worldviews are spiritualized worldviews.⁴⁰ As part of the vision of MFM, they are to propagate the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ all over the world, to promote the revival of apostolic signs, wonders and miracles, and to bring together children of God who are lost.⁴¹ This vision has no doubt engendered mission by MFM out of Africa, especially in the northern hemisphere that is fast becoming "dead" as far as Christian doctrines and practices are concerned.

Afe Adogame explicates that prevalence and continuity of local epistemologies, spiritual constitution and agency in MFM's Christian ritual cosmology accounts for its popularity and swelling clientele, particularly within Nigeria religious milieu, but also beyond into the diaspora, such as United Kingdom.⁴² International church branches first started in London before spreading to United States, Canada, the rest of Europe and the Caribbean. The Church is now represented on every continent and is proudly visible and impactful as far as the spreading of the gospel is concerned.

Independent Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal Churches (INIPCs)
Apart from the Nigerian Initiated Pentecostal immigrant churches identified above, there is other Nigerian independent mission outreach reaching out to people in their host countries.

Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC)

A good example of Independent Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal Churches is the Kingsway International Christian Centre in London led by Charismatic Nigerian Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo. By 1998 KICC had become the largest Church in Britain, with over 5,000 members.⁴³ It has flourishing branches in Nigeria and a few other countries in Africa.

New Wine Church

This church was founded by the charismatic Pastor, Dr. Tayo Adeyem in Woolwich, London. Pastor Michael Olawore assumed leadership of the sprawling church after the demise of its founder. A rare innovation of this church is its organization of a Christmas Hamper campaign, which according to Olofinjana has ministered to the needs of over 120,000.⁴⁴

World Harvest Christian Centre

This church was founded by Pastor Wale Babatunde in 1995. The Church has branches in Nigeria and some African countries as well as in Canada. Apart from its mission apparatus which encourages and trains Christians to engage in mission, the organisation also has Christian Heritage and Reformation Trust 'which seeks to foster social reformation and revival in Britain'⁴⁵

Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations

In this category is also Sunday Adelaja's Word of Faith Bible Church, which started as a Bible Study Fellowship in 1993 in Kiev. With outstanding growth and prospects for further developments, the church adopted the name: Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations in 2002. With almost 30,000 members the Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God has become the fastest growing church in Ukraine.

According to J.D.Y Peel, since there are very few Africans in Ukraine, Adelaja had no option but to spread his message to Ukrainians and the church has spread through the network of the Ukrainian diaspora, to Germany and the United States.⁴⁶ Some have argued that the designation of African Churches in the Diaspora cannot be sustained because of the development recorded in Adelaja's church. It has the membership strength of more than twenty five thousand worshippers most of whom are non-African Christians. We agree with Kpobi whose assessment harmonises with Hanciles that;

Recent migration movements, as a critical dimension of contemporary global transformations, have the potential to significantly affect the geographic and demographic contours of the world's major religions and provide a vital outlet for proselytism and missionary expansion⁴⁷

The Impact of Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal Churches on Global Christianity

African-led churches are becoming increasingly important in Europe and America where they are growing at a time when mainstream churches are in decline. Thus African Christianity has now formed an integral part of the landscape of World Christianity which manifest in the proliferation, growth and contributions to culture and society by African Churches.

The paradigm shift in mission is evident in the activities of Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal churches reaching out to people and setting the doctrinal standard to be followed. This was the reason why Andrew Walls argues that the world theological standards will no longer be set by Germany or Britain or the USA, but by Africa, Asia and Latin America.⁴⁸ The growth of Christianity in Nigeria, especially with the innovations from the Pentecostals, is having far reaching effects in mission outside Africa. The mandate of modern Pentecostalism that was launched in Azusa concerning mission is what is being kept alive by the Nigerian Pentecostal immigrants.

The huge presence of Nigerian immigrant churches in Europe, America, Asia and other parts of the world attests to this fact. The disfavoured position of Christianity in some of these places accounts for the flourishing of African missions, especially the Nigerian missionaries.

Apart from the fact that Nigerian immigrant Pentecostal churches serve as agents of expansion of Christianity and mission, they have helped to preserve sound theological teaching and have remained symbols of Christian orthodoxy in the face of postmodern theories that has drawn the Christians far into secularism. One example is the issue of homosexuality which is far gaining currency among the Christians in the Global North. The failure of Christian leaders from Europe and America to preserve Christian orthodoxy has laid the responsibility on African Pentecostals to do this. For instance, the pressure on African Anglicans to consider gay marriage by the mother church is far from what is obtainable among the Pentecostals.

As a result of the failure of mission oriented churches in Europe and America to assert Biblical authority in an era of secularism and homosexuality, languages encroaching on to the church lexicon, this gives opportunity to Africa Christian immigrants to voice out their opinion. The Nigerian immigrant Christians believe that they have a divine task in their migration, which is to execute a God-given mandate to evangelize and re-invigorate the churches of their host communities.

Some of the Nigerian immigrant Pentecostal Churches are meeting the social needs of people as part of their Christian mission. African Pentecostal Churches such as Kingsway International Christian Centre, New Wine Church and others responded to the crises in Haiti by donating huge sums of money to relief agencies such as Tearfund and Christian Aid. Sunday Adelaja is actively involved in the rehabilitation of drug addicts, reintegration of "sex workers" and caring for the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized in Ukraine.

Another impact of Nigerian Pentecostalism on the global development of Christianity is in the area of contextualisation. The contextualized experiences and practices of Nigerian Christian immigrants in the diaspora have become a part of the process of domesticating Christianity which is making it practicable in places which are far from their continent. By implication, the contextualization of Christian faith as well as the decolonization of Christianity is being exported to foreign lands to demonstrate the flexibility and dynamics of Christianity.

The contextualization of the liturgy is no doubt helping the growth of Christianity in this diaspora. This development has attracted the interest of African Americans who regarded it as one of the practices of authentic Christianity. This is also attracting the Asian and Southern America immigrants in the diaspora which is a further tendency for the growth of Christianity from the global south. This is therefore having a far reaching effect on decolonization of Christianity.

The growing stride of Christianity in Nigeria especially through the Pentecostal movement is having great effect on the global development of Christianity. The contribution of Nigerian Christian immigrants to the development of Christianity cannot be disconnected with the home support and the influence. Pentecostalism is the fastest growing industry in Nigeria and the second most popular export (after crude oil). As a result of this, there is continuous competition in the religious market in Nigeria with almost ceaseless circle of activities of vigils, crusades, conventions, prayer sessions and deliverance programmes. This has been somewhat replicated in the overseas missions of these Pentecostal denominations which is one the strategies of mission expansion among the immigrants in the diaspora and it is undoubtedly making an impact on the development of global development of Christianity.

The emerging contributions of Nigerian Christianity and the Pentecostal churches in particular have come to the fore as far as mission is concerned. Therefore, any current and future writing of the history of church or ecumenism in the North Atlantic and at the global stage must reckon with the presence of Nigerian immigrant Christians and Nigerian Christianity where immigrant Christians in the diaspora emanated from.

The contributions to world Christianity by Nigerians in the diaspora have been remarkable. These contributions benefit all Christians in the diaspora. As a result, the unending varieties of Nigerian Pentecostal expressions have influenced African Christians through the presence and services of missionaries from outside Nigeria.

The presence of Nigerian Pentecostal denominations like Deeper Life Bible Church with more than 40 branches in the UK, New Covenant Church with more than 41 branches in the UK alone, The Redeemed

Christian Church of God with more than 700 churches in the UK, making it one of the largest and fastest-growing church denominations in the diaspora, Christian Victory Group, founded by Ade Omooba with relief initiatives for homeless people in London, Kingsway International Christian Centre which became the largest church in the UK around 1998, New Wine Church founded by the late Dr Tayo Adeyemi in 1993 is one of the largest churches now in the UK with a membership of around 3,000 people, Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries now have more than 80 branches in the UK and Sunday Adelaja of the Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations which is the largest single congregation church in Ukraine attest to the fact that the exportation of Nigerian Christianity is making immense contribution to the development of Christianity in the diaspora.

By implication, the activities of Nigerian immigrant Christians and their involvement in mission have displaced the Europe and American missionaries from where they had earlier been active in mission activities. This feat is evidently a plus for outstanding missionary efforts of the Nigerian Christian in Europe and America, in particular, and other diaspora communities in general.

Conclusion

The discussions above show the contributions of Nigerian Immigrant Pentecostal Churches to the global development of Christianity. The preservation of Christian theology within the ambits of African culture and identity is no doubt a visible development in the history of Christian mission. The utilization of African religious networks is greatly impacting mission in this contemporary age. To this end, globalisation of Christian mission is greatly assisting the Nigerian Christian Immigrants in their quest for continued spread of the gospel. The appropriation of various media technology is making it possible for them to do the bidding of The Great Commission commanded by Jesus Christ. The growth of Pentecostalism in Africa and Nigeria in particular is evident of the success of mission outside the continent. As a result, we conclude that it is not out of place to say that the migration of Africans generally and Nigerians in particular, which is the most populous black nation of the world, is a blessing to the modern Christianity in every sense of their contributions to mission.

Notes

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- 4 See Deji Ayegboyin & F.K.U Asonzeh. 2002. Taxonomy of Churches in Nigeria: A Historical Perspective. ORITA: Ibadan *Journal of Religious Studies*. XXXIV/1-2 June & December, 69
- 5 See Akin Omoyajowo "Revd. Henry Townsend" in J.A. Omoyajowo (ed) *Makers of the Church in Nigeria 1842-1947*, 15-28.
- 6 See E. A. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1642-1914*, 7: In September 1875, Mary Mitchell Slessor arrived in Calabar as a Presbyterian missionary from the Church of Scotland Mission to strengthen the efforts of Waddell. She fought hard and bravely to abolish many of the cruel customs and traditions.
- 7 Fr. Borghero was delighted on arrival in Lagos to meet a small Catholic community made up of Africans who had been repatriated from Brazil.
- 8 Qua Iboe is a combination of two words Akwa which means "river" and Ibuno, which means "big".
- 9 See Peter Falk, *The growth of the Church in Africa*, Nigeria ACTS (CAPRO) 1997, 341.
- 10 The SIM changed her name in the 1950's to the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) See A. Ijagbemi, *Christian Missionary Activity in Nigeria: The Work of the SIM among the Yoruba 1908-1967*, Lagos, 1988.
- 11 It is so called because of four reasons: First, the emergence of great missionaries (William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Robert

Morris, David Livingstone etc) Second, the establishment of great movements (Faith Missions, Indigenous Missions, Student's Missions and Women Missions); Third, great progress was made in the establishment of missions institutions (educational, medical, social-orphanages etc). Finally, there was great enthusiasm championed by mission conferences. The period closes with the Edinburgh Conference held in 1910.

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- 15 J.D. Y. Peel. 2008. "Yoruba Religion: Seeing it in History, Seeing it Whole."
- 16 Ayegboyin & Ishola. 2013. *African Indigenous Churches.*
- 17 The Cherubim and Seraphim established its first church in Britain in 1965, The Celestial Church in 1967 and the Christ Apostolic Church, Mount Bethel founded by Apostle Ayo Omideyi in 1974. See I. Olofinjana, Partnership in Mission, Watford : Instant Apostle, 2015 26-7
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THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES OF IRREGULAR AFRICAN MIGRANTS IN EUROPE: QUESTIONS FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Frederick Gyamfi-Mensah

Key words: *migration, irregular migrants,*

Introduction

Irregular¹ african migrants in Europe have increased tremendously in the last few years. With the on-going Mediterranean crisis, migratory flows from Africa make up the largest share of migration into Europe². They come in rickety ships and boats, and arrive almost every day at the Southern European shores, most of them fleeing genuine human crisis. The Migration Policy Institute believes there are between seven and eight million irregular African migrants living in the European Union (EU), an increasing number coming from Western Africa, mainly Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal³

Increased migration from Africa to Europe is the result of the inability of many families to provide for themselves. A good number of poor African countries are also states where the democratic process is so fragile, and the rule of law so weak that corruption is rife. From these countries citizens prefer to migrate to protect themselves and their families against the effect of weak economy and its attendant risks⁴. And so, crying out for liberation from such oppressive conditions of poverty, some African migrants leave without proper travel documents, cross bodies of waters, traverse large stretches of desert, face the relentless pursuit of authorities, and journey in hope toward a 'promised land'⁵. Mary Delorey in describing the factors that influence people's decision to migrate noted that nearly a third of all migrants move from developing countries to developed countries with advanced economy and stronger democratic institutions⁶. Here they hoped to find a secure environment, safe life and a better future for themselves and their families. No wonder many head toward rich countries in Europe which supposedly present such better opportunities.

In this article I examine the social and economic challenges of irregular African migrants in Europe against the background of poverty as a driving force. The paper attempts to relate the situations that confront these African migrants to that of Abraham as a migrant in Egypt. It will then offer questions for theological reflection on Abraham's struggle in Egypt, and how the God of Abraham, himself the migrant, followed Abraham as defender of and provider for him. I seek to show that, similarly, God appears to the migrants in many ways and leads them to find favor before their host. I approach the essay from my personal experience among African migrants in Germany as a minister of the gospel and a pastor. I was in Germany as a regular migrant and had contacts with some irregular migrants from Ghana.

The Driving Force behind Irregular Migration

To flee from poverty and to seek a better life for oneself and family has been the main driving force behind irregular African migration to Europe as the following statistics (facts and figures) show: The 2005 Human Development Index (HDI) declared many sub-Saharan African countries as poor countries.⁷ The HDI figures measure and show the deteriorating human conditions and welfare with regards to income, health and education and exposes the ever widening poverty gap between the developed and the developing countries. The current surge of African migrants to Europe which is a huge problem to receiving countries is a clear indication of further deteriorating human conditions and welfare, and a sign that poverty has worsened across Africa since 2005.

According to the report of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM)⁸, job and income/wage disparities, unemployment rate, differentials in life expectancy and education gaps between rich and poor countries are critical issues that inform people's decision to migrate in search of better opportunities. Whilst more than 45.7% of people earn less than \$1 per day in sub-Saharan Africa, only less than 10.4% in Europe may earn \$20 per day. Migrants moving from Africa can earn 20 to 30 times as much when they find job in Europe, where unemployment rate could also be as low as 6.6% compared to 12.2% in Africa⁹. Although life expectancy may largely depend on people's lifestyle and not necessarily on economic factors, research has shown that people living in high income countries tend to live

longer than in low income countries, where over 90% of the people may live below subsistence levels.¹⁰ And whilst literacy rate may be as low as 58% with only 76% primary school enrolment, there is almost full (100%) literacy and enrolment in high income countries.

People from poor African countries choose to migrate because the potential benefits are perceived to outweigh the investment, hardship, risk to life, and potential rejection or exploitation in the destination country. For example, the best recorded Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per Capita in Ghana since 1960 was 775.46 USD in 2014, compared to 39,717.70 USD in Germany in the same year¹¹. That implies while a skilled laborer in Ghana takes home 775.46 USD for a year's income, an unskilled day laborer, perhaps an irregular migrant in Germany can earn that much in less than one month. Even if income increases in the country of origin, continuing wage disparities would exert a considerable influence on the decision to migrate, and hence the 'exodus'¹².

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES OF IRREGULAR AFRICAN MIGRANTS

In discussing the challenges of African migrants in the destination countries, it is important to note that migration is usually handled more from the interest of states, employers, business owners, and the receiving communities, and less from the interest of migrants. This section of the paper looks at the economic and social challenges of irregular migration at the following levels:

In the Hands of Residents

Naturally limited options for legal migration leads to an increase in the abuse and exploitation of particularly irregular migrants. On their arrival they often fall prey to unsuspecting people who may come to them for the purpose of offering genuine hospitality. In the process they may assist the migrants to have a place of abode and to secure a job, but at a higher price than what a regular migrant would have obtained. The vulnerable new comer, often with no knowledge at all of the new environment, would often have no option than to accept an offer on any condition. Thus at the end of the month an irregular migrant who manages to find job takes home not more than

900 Euros as unskilled laborer. They soon realize this amount is not enough to meet their basic needs. Thus begin their frustration and disappointment as they struggle to find daily bread.

The situation becomes worse for them when they are confronted with the reality of not being able to send money home to the family left behind nor call them regularly to keep in touch. This experience becomes, perhaps, their first cultural shock in the 'Promised Land' they had dreamt. They may realize too late that the picture of the 'Promised Land', as they saw before setting off, might not be real. Or even if it is as they saw, it is so only for the regular residents. And so in order to become a regular migrant to also enjoy the fruits of the 'Promised Land' on which they now live, they need to work towards transforming their resident status at any cost, no matter how high the price to pay.

The challenges come to them from two fronts. First is the harsh treatment that they experience from the host country as irregular migrants. The second group is the men and women from their home country who had come ahead of them as irregular migrants, and have managed to survive the challenges. For instance, the first thing irregular migrants from Ghana would do is to approach fellow Ghanaian irregular migrants who have graduated to the level of regular migrants for assistance. Sadly in most cases the old migrants tend to abuse and exploit their fellow Ghanaians instead of genuinely assisting them. The attitude that seems to fuel the chain of exploitation in the migrant communities is the saying, "as others did unto you, do unto others who arrive later".

For many irregular migrants in Europe, Hoeffner and Pistone's comment below makes regularization of status a mask:

For immigration in many countries, regularization of status, especially the grant of permanent status, constitutes a powerful legal incentive to migration. Conversely, the prospect of irregular status - with its attendant string of legal sanctions and disabilities (for example, the threat of deportation, ineligibility for many government programs, limited employment options and labor rights, and greatly circumscribed political rights) is a powerful legal disincentive¹³.

For the above reason irregular migrants would go to any extent to regularized their status and the processes involved present another set of challenges. The 'family process' for instance, usually take advantage of the family immigration laws of the host country. Yet, it can become so frustrating and in their desperation, the aiding parties often tend to exploit and abuse the needy migrants. But without regular status they may remain outside the protection and support of the authorities. And therefore, even in the midst of exploitation and abuse, they would still do everything to change their status.

In the Hands of Governing Authorities

Michael Nausner mentioned the economic argument (the argument that migration benefits the receiving countries) as the only effective and legitimate argument for liberalizing immigration policies. "We are entitled to the wealth we have acquired, and we allow them to come in only insofar as they benefit our economy."¹⁴ He explained that it is of economic reasons that the borders of EU are not sealed off entirely, opening portions to serve as tools to sort out desirable from undesirable migrants. But once the 'undesirables' also manage to sneak in, the unwelcomed guests are treated by the authorities as people who do not deserve a fair share of what the 'desirables' are given.

Attitude of governments toward irregular migrants may again be analyzed at the level of macroeconomic forces, which states that the key feature of modern migration consists of 'migration of labor, and not of people'¹⁵. A person with the desired economic skill is permitted to come in as a regular migrant and another without the required skill is rejected. In the destination countries, immigration policies of governments may only favor the 'skilled' migrant workers and not the irregular who are often categorized as 'unskilled' due to their economic and social circumstance. Such irregular migrants are often used cheaply by business men to maximize their profit. At this experience we take a look in the last section of the discussion - the challenges of irregular migrants in the hands of employers.

In the hands of employers

Like the treatment of the Jews in captivities in Egypt, "policies of exclusion, based on maximizing the interest of all except the poor migrant, tend to get as much as possible out of migrants while giving

them the barest minimum¹⁶. Generally, the risk of exploitation and abuse increases with the employer in whose hands, it seems, the fate of the poor migrant lies.

For instance, with the increased number of Germany's unskilled and semi-skilled migrants competing for the same job offers, the irregular stand the risk of getting no job at all, rendering them unemployed and chattering their dreams of the 'promised land'. If they find job at all, it may be menial, mini and temporal with no working conditions at all, and the employer may terminate the appointment at his whim and caprice. Perhaps, we may compare their working conditions, if they have any at all, to the migrants who worked in the Nazi war economy in Germany as described by Fritz Sauckel, the Plenipotentiary for Labor in Hitler's government: "All the men must be fed, sheltered and treated in such a way as to exploit them to the highest possible extent at the lowest conceivable degree of expenditure."¹⁷ By that statement, Sauckel meant housing workers in barracks under military control, the lowest possible wages (or none at all), appalling social and health conditions, and complete deprivation of civil rights. Sauckel is reported to have said in a speech to employers, "I don't care about them (foreign workers) one bit. If they commit the most minor offence at work, report them to the police, hang them, and shoot them. I don't care. If they are dangerous, they must be liquidated"¹⁸.

Today, many foreign workers in Europe, especially the irregular migrants, earn so little that they are not able to meet their expenses for the month. Migrant workers may not be housed in Barracks under military control, and yet all they may afford for housing is no better than an abandoned Barrack. Sometimes, to avoid the possibility for migrants to grow in their jobs, gain much experience in their skills for better economic opportunities, employers limit the duration of contracts¹⁹. As governments continue to apply strict state control of labor recruitment to ensure that irregular migrants are not illegally employed, and sanctioning employers who may flout this regulation, life becomes more and more unbearable for them.

But do we blame African migrants for their predicaments in the destination countries? The answer, for me, lies in the conditions of the originating countries as described below:

“[Many] have no possibility of acquiring the basic knowledge which would enable them to express their creativity and develop their potential. They have no way of entering the network of knowledge and intercommunication which would enable them to see their qualities appreciated and utilized. Thus, if not actually exploited, they are to a great extent marginalized; economic development takes place over their heads, so to speak.”²⁰

Hence their bitter experience in foreign lands where they seek sustenance.

THE GOD OF THE MIGRANT – SOME THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

The Story of Abraham in Egypt raises some questions for theological reflection on migration (Genesis 12: 10-20). Abraham was promised a land with great blessings by God (Gen 12:1f.), and in obedience to God's directives he left Haran with the entire family and arrived in Canaan (12: 5-7). What is fascinating is that even though Abraham was on the Promised Land he had some challenges. There was severe famine that threatened his livelihood (Gen. 12:10). According to Daniel Carroll the climatic conditions in that part of the land of Canaan where the family had earlier settled was precarious, and nomads were particularly at risk there²¹. Abraham being a nomad, might have felt that he had to abandon Canaan and looked for sustenance in Egypt. Was Abraham's decision to migrate to Egypt indicative of his lack of faith in God's ability to provide for his economic needs in the Promised Land? Was the migration to Egypt contrary to God's original plan for Abraham? Did Abraham seek to hear God's voice or direction in the midst of his crises, particularly the famine? So could Abraham have migrated to Egypt purely for economic and security reasons just as many modern migrants do? To put it differently, could genuine human needs which compel many migrants to embark on perilous journey have also compelled Abraham and family to travel to Egypt? As a result of hunger for basic necessities of life, many people travel in search for sustenance - economic and social security. Yet, economic and social security are not easily obtained without challenges.

In his attempt to seek more favorable conditions of life in Egypt, Abraham faced challenges which could have endangered his marriage to Sarah and for that matter the promise of progeny²², but for God's timely intervention (Genesis 12:17). Being worried about his own safety and that of his family due to the exceptional beauty of his wife, Abraham lied when he asked Sarah to present herself to Pharaoh as his sister²³ (cf. Genesis 12: 13). His motive was certainly to ensure the safety of the entire family. But is this deception justified? What were the immediate consequences of Abraham's decision on Pharaoh and his household? We are told that Abraham was well received as a result of the false information that was provided. To some extent Abraham's fears were real (Gen. 12:14-16). To what extent is deception permissible when migrants are considering their safety and that of their family?

Indeed, many migrants would do something similar to what Abraham did. They may choose any action that will provide them safety in the destination country, especially if they consider that such an action will ultimately yield economic benefits for themselves and their families left at home.

Abraham's story poses several other questions when we consider the long term consequences of Abraham's sojourn to Egypt after they had returned to the Promised Land? In Genesis chapter sixteen, Abraham and Sarah had taken Hagar as maidservant from Egypt. Unable to bear children at this time, Sarah suggests that Abraham takes Hagar as mistress and build a family through her. Perhaps, she had thought God's promise would come true this way (Gen. 15:4). It is particularly insightful when one considers the message of the angel of God to Hagar, part of which reads: "I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count" (Gen 16:10). Abraham agrees to the proposal and Ishmael is eventually born to him. What are some of the relevant contemporary challenges that the birth of Ishmael and his ancestry have brought to the whole issue of global migration today?

Conclusion

In this paper I have explored the problems of irregular migration with reference to Africans in Europe. In the face of myriads of challenges, many would do everything possible to regularize their status and secure the better life they seek. Due to limited options, they mostly take advantage of the family immigration laws of host countries. More often than not, even in the untrue stories they tell, migrants succeed in getting protection, security, social welfare support, and other assistance from the host state for the wellbeing of their families. In any case cannot we argue that God in his mercy protects and provides for the needy and vulnerable migrants, and saves them from harm?²⁴ In the midst of all the challenges that confronted Abraham, God did not abandoned him and his family. The Lord stood with them and ensured that Pharaoh sent them out in a dignified manner²⁵. Indeed, Abraham left Egypt a wealthy man (Genesis 12: 16, 20). No wonder that there are some migrants today, when reflecting on Abraham's story acknowledge God as the architect of their success stories.

Notes

- ¹ The term "irregular" is used to refer to people who travel from one country to another without proper travel authorization. Hence the term "irregular migrants." Others may prefer to use the terms "undocumented" and "illegal" to refer to the same people.
- ² Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action (Report of the Global Commission on International Migration), October 2005. 13 (Source: www.gcim.org.)
- ³ Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_immigration_to_Europe. (Accessed on 20th January 2015).
- ⁴ Koser, K. International Migration: *A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 30.
- ⁵ Groody, D. G. „Dying to Live: *The Undocumented Immigrant and the Paschal Mystery*“, in Migration in a Global World – 2008/5 edition of Concilium, Solange Lefebvre and Luiz Carlos Susin (eds). London: SCM Press, 2008, 116

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- ⁶ Delorey, M. "International Migration: Social, Economic, and Humanitarian Considerations" in *And You Welcomed Me – Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*, ed. Donald Kerwin and Jill Marie Gerschutz. United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2009, 31. She also notes that out of the almost 200 million worldwide international migrants, the vast majority are economic migrants, many with few options to escape grinding poverty and to remain in their countries of origin.
- ⁷ Koser, 29.
- ⁸ Report of the GCIM, 84.
- ⁹ Report of the GCIM, 12. Compare, <http://www.kansascityfed.org/PUBLICAT/SYMPOS/2004/pdf>;
- ¹⁰ Hoeffner, J. J. and Pistone, M. R., "But the Laborers Are ... Many? Catholic Social Teaching on Business, Labor, and Economic Migration" in *And You Welcomed Me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*, ed. Donald Kerwin and Jill Marie Gerschutz. United Kingdom: Lexington Books, 2009, 57.
- ¹¹ Source: www.tradingeconomics.com/ghana/gdp-per-capita (accessed on 16th May 2015).
- ¹² By Exodus I refer to the situation where people leave one place of difficulty for a land believed to be flowing with milk and honey. Refer to Exodus 1; 12: 31-42.
- ¹³ Hoeffner and Pistone, 68-69.
- ¹⁴ Nausner, M. Migration, "Faith and Action: Shifting the Discourse" A paper delivered at Oxford University, May 8, 2014.
- ¹⁵ Trager, L (ed). *Migration and Economy: Global and Local Dynamics*. Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2005, 13.
- ¹⁶ Battistella, G. „Migration and Human Dignity: From Policies of Exclusion to Policies Based on Human Rights “in a Promised Land, A Perilous Journey-Theological Perspectives on Migration, ed. Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 2008, 180.
- ¹⁷ Castle, S., De Haas, H and Miller, M. J. *The Age of Migration*

– *International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Palgrave Macmillan (5th edition), 2014, 98.

¹⁸ Ibid, 98.

¹⁹ Battistella, 179.

²⁰ Hoeffner and Pistone, 88.

²¹ M. Daniel Carroll, R. M. D. *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible*. Brazos Press, 2013

²² Barton, J and Muddiman, J (eds). *The Oxford Bible Commentary*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, 49.

²³ Barton and Muddiman, 49.

²⁴ Towner, 142.

²⁵ Ibid, 49.

SERVING GOD IN A MIGRANT CRISIS¹

Patrick Johnstone

Key words: *Migration, globalization*

Introduction

There are few more emotive topics in the world today than the subject of migration. It has risen to the top of the world's political agenda as the world's leaders seek to grapple with the massive flows of population from rural to urban life, from country to country and continent to continent. The flows of these waves of migrants are hugely disruptive for the societies involved – the social cost, the cultural changes, the economic pressures and the raw human emotions felt cannot be ignored. Pass laws in apartheid South Africa, fences along the US border with Mexico, navies patrolling the Mediterranean and Pacific have done little to stem the flow. In our globalized world where news is instantly available this is likely to continue through much of the 21st Century.

As Christians we are just as affected – perhaps more so. Our concerns and fears are influenced by conscience – we know we have a responsibility towards these migrants to seek their physical and spiritual good. Yet too many try to hide from the problem and hope someone else will come forward with solutions. Their comfort zone is threatened. Those solutions will need to be faced by our church congregations, our Christian leaders, and by the way we train and disciple leaders for future ministry. We need to see also that these migrations are a God-given opportunity to disciple peoples little exposed to the Gospel. This is my aim in this paper.

My reason for writing this paper

1. I am a migrant and descendent of migrants. My father was Irish – the descendent of the Irish Scotti migrants from Ireland to what became Scotland, whose descendants returned to Ulster in Ireland a millennium later in the 17th Century (think of the disruptive effects of this in Irish politics to today!). He migrated to England

to work as a doctor. He then married my mother. She was Dutch and she became a marriage migrant to England in 1937! We are all descendants of migrants!

2. I migrated to Africa after university to serve as a tent evangelist in South Africa and what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and our main work was among the millions of Africans who had migrated to the slums in cities in that part of the world. I married a Californian bride who has now become a British citizen.
3. In my latter years of ministry my wife and I were responsible for the oversight of all the work of our mission agency, WEC International, in Europe – a ministry we recently handed over. The major component of our strategic thinking was how to help:
 - a. firstly **indigenous European churches and agencies** become involved in migrant outreach and discipling (few churches are committed or even equipped for this) and
 - b. secondly **expatriate agencies and immigrant churches** from Asia, Africa and Latin America to begin to make an impact on the spiritually needy indigenous Europeans. The need for effective co-operation between indigenous and migrant churches and for a multi-cultural approach became plain.
4. I see the migrant crisis as a great opportunity to start multi-cultural teams planting multi-cultural churches that are relevant and spiritually effective in the demanding environment of today's globalized world.

Facts about migration

1. Our Bible is full of facts about migration from beginning to end – God was displeased when people did not migrate and he stopped the building of the Tower of Babel² in order to scatter the people. We now have to cope with the results – 7,000 languages and about 13,000 ethnic groups³. Abram was a migrant in Canaan, the Israelites were migrants from slavery in Egypt, the Samaritans a medley of enforced migrants, the huge Jewish Diaspora was a chief channel for the Gospel to the Gentiles in the early Church. Jesus Himself, as a child, was a refugee in Egypt. Then the Bible is full of how we, as believers, should treat the “stranger”⁴.

2. History records many migrations – the Roman Empire fell because of German tribal migrations, Arab migrations under the flag of Islamic jihad radically changed our world, European colonialism sparked numerous migrations – the worst aspect being the slave trade from Africa to the New World. North America became two nations with populations almost entirely made of migrants – with sad effects on the original inhabitants.
3. In modern times, the post-war migrations have been dramatic – Afro-Caribbeans and South Asians to Britain, Turks to Germany, North Africans to France and Belgium, the Korean Diaspora and Vietnamese “boat people” after their lands had been devastated by war. These have significantly changed Europe, North America and Australasia.
4. This century has produced one of the most severe dislocations through the turmoil caused by economic stress and wars in the world of Islam. The developing crisis in the latter since 2010 has severely threatened the political status quo in the West, and may be a big factor in a possible implosion of the European Union itself.
5. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) was set up in 1951 to cope with the resettlement of 1 million people after the Second World War. That number has increased to 15.1 million in 2015, which is the highest level ever. A further 5.1 million registered refugees are looked after in some 60 camps in the Middle East by United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which was set up in 1949 to care for displaced Palestinians. The refugees of concern to UNHCR are spread around the world, with the largest number in sub-Saharan Africa (4.1 million), followed by Asia and the Pacific (3.8 million), Europe (3.5 million), the Middle East and North Africa (3.0 million) and the Americas (753,000). They live in widely varying conditions, from well-established camps

and collective centres to makeshift shelters or living in the open.⁵ Since these figures were published we have seen the escalation in the number of Syrian civil war refugees with a total of about 11 million (over half the population, of which 6.5 million are within the borders of Syria itself).

No one knows the number of illegal immigrants in the world today. This could be in excess of 30 million – an estimated 10 million Central Americans in USA, several million sub-Saharan Africans in Europe and now millions of Afghans, Iraqis, Syrians, Somalis and Eritreans flooding into Europe across the Mediterranean. People smuggling is now a bigger business than drug trafficking. In 2010 the prestigious journal, the Economist, estimated that there were 400,000 to 500,000 migrants smuggled into the European Union every year, and this had increased to 1 million in 2015⁶. The UN Office for Drugs and Crime reckon that it costs between \$2,000 and \$10,000 for every illegal immigrant to reach their destination⁷. This means that these 30 million illegals have netted criminals \$60-100 billion, and few of the criminals are ever caught. The flow is virtually unstoppable and is likely to continue for another generation. The very poor living at subsistence level cannot afford to migrate, so the relative lessening of poverty in the last decade has actually increased the number of migrants. Note how many of the migrants have smart phones as an essential component of their escape tooling.

How can we, as Christians, exercise a ministry that addresses the root causes and devastating effects of this massive flow of people – especially those who are labelled ‘illegals’? Some pointers are given in this paper.

The reality is that large-scale migration will continue to be a factor in our lifetime. Falling birthrates in nearly every EuNAPa (Europe, N America, Pacific)⁸ and many developed Asian countries are leading to massive population deficits with work forces too small to support an ageing population. That deficit is a vacuum that will be filled from AfAsLA (Africa, Asia and Latin America) countries whether we like it or not. We cannot hide our head in the sand; we need to face up to the challenge and see it as an opportunity for the Gospel since the majority will come from closed lands with few Christians.

Addressing the causes of migration

The push factors:

1. **War** has displaced millions in recent years. In this century alone we have had tragic genocidal wars in Africa – Rwanda and Burundi, the Somali civil war, Boko Haram in Nigeria and beyond and in the Muslim World in turmoil with the conflict between Sunni and Shi'a Islam (impacting Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Afghanistan and Pakistan), and the tensions between jihadist Islamists and the wider body of Sunni Islam.⁹ Christian ministries have been effective in giving physical and spiritual help to some, but labourers are few, and financial aid to such ministries are declining through donor fatigue. On a wider scale these Muslim-originating conflicts have given unprecedented openings for the Gospel as many turn from the unending violence and vengefulness displayed to seek the Prince of Peace¹⁰. We reckon that in 1960 there were less than 100,000 individuals and their offspring that were once Muslim but were then Christians. This number has grown to around 10 million today, with a great global acceleration since "911". Now is the time to reach out in love to our Muslim neighbours. The challenge is that few have the understanding and training to adapt and minister effectively.
2. **Tyranny** is another major factor in stimulating legal and illegal emigrations. Sadly such misrule has devastated many African countries – Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Libya, etc. provoking millions to flee. How are these distraught people to be ministered to? How can our churches disciple those able to become honest leaders for their people?
3. **Corruption** has crippled many countries around the world in developing the infrastructure or income-generating industries. I only know of one African country that has taken a strong stand against corruption – Botswana – and this poor desert land has benefited. It is amazing to see how many Africans and South Asians become wealthy and influential when they emigrate to lands where corruption is lower and social networks do not stifle them. Too few Christians take a strong stand against this evil.

4. **Natural disasters** – Growing populations make the 21st Century likely to have mass movements of population through drought (Yemen¹¹, Pakistan¹², the Sahel), from super-volcanoes, possible sea-level rises with global warming and new diseases like Ebola¹³. How do we prepare our people for coping with such unexpected events?

The pull factors

1. **Education** – millions of students go annually to study in other countries – especially in the West. Many do not return to their homelands, but find good jobs in their adopted lands. Since 1980 millions of Chinese have studied outside China. It is reckoned that possibly 30% do not return home and about 20% become Christians during the course of their studies. This highlights two areas of important ministry for Christians – how to improve the well-being and educational standards of their country to slow that brain drain that the country can ill afford? And how to evangelise those migrant students who are not believers – many countries have been blessed through students who return home to proclaim their faith.
2. **Freedom** – Persecution has grown significantly since the fall of Communism. Communists severely persecuted and marginalized all religions – especially Christians. Many thought that persecution would then decrease. This has proved otherwise, but the persecutors have changed. Jihadist Islam has decimated the indigenous ancient Christian population of the Middle East – especially in Iraq and Syria. However in some countries such as Iran and Algeria, the number of believers has grown in dramatic church growth in the past decade despite persecution, but many have had to flee for their lives. There is also severe persecution by Sunni Muslims of the Baha’i and Ahmaddiya and Shi’a Muslims, and Rohingya Muslims by Buddhists in Myanmar. Many have sought refuge in the West.
3. **Economic betterment** – It astonishes me how willing millions of Africans are prepared to cross the Sahara, suffer in Libya and risk their lives on overcrowded boats to cross to Europe, or millions of Pakistanis to leave their homelands and travel across the war-torn

Middle East and suffer constant indignities and likely repatriation as “just” economic refugees ineligible for asylum. Many want escape from grinding poverty exacerbated by corruption, social injustice, and limited opportunities for betterment. We have so many failed states facing a bleak future. I am passionate about the power of the Gospel to save, to heal, to bring change in broken lives, but I am also concerned that our application of the Great Commission has individualised the application of the Gospel that we leave out the changing of society. Our English Bibles have emphasised this because we do not have an English verb “TO disciple”. The beginning phrase of Matthew 28:19 is thus distorted to “... Go and make disciples of all nations....”, when the Greek says, “...in going disciple all nations...”. Too little has been preached in Africa about the Gospel as nation building, and culture transforming. Creating a redeemed culture and rebuilding nations on the foundation of the Gospel is also part of the Great Commission! This would decrease the need for people to leave their homeland.

The benefits deriving from immigration

- 1. Improved productivity:** Countries that have welcomed and integrated large migrant populations have seen great improvements in their economies. I am British and I do not know how we would manage without Indian medical workers and shopkeepers and Central European agricultural workers. Well educated Nigerians, Zimbabweans and Ghanaians are numerous in many top professional roles. The problems come if the immigrant populations do not integrate as has happened too often with Pakistanis in Britain, North Africans in France and Turks in Germany – and most of these are Muslims.
- 2. Dynamic Christian migrants:** Well over half the immigrants to EuNAPa are at least nominally Christian, but also with a higher proportion of active, born again believers. The number of immigrant churches has multiplied across EuNAPa countries. This is an enormous potential asset for receiving countries, and has potential for re-energising indigenous churches with new spiritual life.

- 3. Opportunities for the Gospel:** The immigrant Christians are evangelizing both the increasingly secularizing indigenous populations and also the non-Christian migrants. This has global implications. It was only in 2001 that the first virtually complete listing of all the world's languages and peoples was published.¹⁴ The most accessible list is that of the Joshua Project¹⁵. The total number of people groups in the world is 13,000 – 16,000 (depending on definitions). These can all be grouped into 256 People Clusters and then these into 15 Affinity Blocs of peoples. The 256 Clusters generally have names we all recognise such as the Fulbe/Fulani, Mande in the sub-Saharan Africa Affinity Bloc, The Berbers and Levantine Arabs in the Arab Affinity Bloc, and the Kurds and Tajik of the Indo-Iranian Affinity Bloc. This theme is more fully developed in my book *The Future of the Global Church*¹⁶. Most of these Clusters have emigrant communities in continents around the world – many in countries open for the Gospel, but from countries that have raised strong barriers to the preaching of the Gospel. We need global strategies for globalizing peoples. So from a Kingdom perspective these immigrant communities present a vital and strategic opportunity that will deeply impact their original homelands. Let us enlarge our vision and use this opportunity for God's Kingdom!

Overcoming hindrances to ministry to or by migrants

- 1. Attitudes:** For many years the Homogenous Unit principle was pushed¹⁷ as the best approach for church planting. People prefer to live alongside and worship with those most like themselves. This worked reasonably well in homogenous rural tribal situations, but it does not in our urbanizing world. Too many indigenous and immigrant churches practice this, but it makes outreach to other sections of society or to (other) immigrants very difficult. This strategy is the opposite to that of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The very fact that those apostles spoke in other languages as the Spirit gave them utterance is His message to us – this Gospel must go into other languages – an aspect few Pentecostal churches have highlighted. Contrast the Jerusalem Church with its favouring of Hebrew speakers and holding on

to Jewish cultural traits and the Antioch Church with its multi-cultural leadership and membership and the mission movement that spread out across the known world of that day. It requires good teaching of what the Scriptures say about the stranger and exemplary modelling by church leaders. It requires time and patience to overcome the fears and prejudices so prevalent among Christians. The fear is greatest when people are confronted with those who deliberately refuse to adapt culturally. How do people react to a woman wearing a niqab or a man with a bushy black beard and skull cap?

2. **Culture:** Christians must be willing to carefully assess the impact of their own cultural emphases (often not biblical!) in their Christian worship and outreach. I remember the bewilderment of Southern Chad Christians living in the Muslim North of their country when they found a negative attitude to open air preaching. I see the frustration of African churches in Europe with their exuberant dancing and singing repelling indigenous people. How willing are we to go along with the challenge of the East African Revival 70 years ago – “Tribalism was crucified on the cross with Jesus!”? We must adapt for outsiders to feel welcome and yet give freedom for treasured aspects of home cultures to find expression.
3. **Governments:** There must be controls. Governments do need to scrutinise all who desire to enter their lands. Yet for refugees and legal immigrants this must be done with sensitivity and reasonable speed. All too often the behaviour of governments has been cruel, inconsistent, and subject to interminable delays. Christians should be spokespeople for those abused and press for humane changes.
4. **Lack of Training:** In 2007 we estimate that for the first time the number of people living in the world’s cities became more than those in rural areas. This is likely to rise to a 90% urban population in 2100. We are going to see massive language extinctions in the coming decades as more and more migrate to cities. Urban churches have to adapt, or die as they will lose their children to majority urban or global languages. Yet few of those in training for ministry in seminaries and Bible schools are given any tools to

cope with urban ministry and planting or growing multi-cultural churches. It is a scandal to send out those who will pastor a church but not be able to minister effectively in a 21st Century world.

Possibilities for ministry to migrants

1. **At a personal level:** the friendliness and hospitality of local Christians to immigrants has had a dramatic impact in bringing people to faith in Christ. This has been especially true for foreign university students. Yet sadly so many study in the West but in all their years of study, never receive an invitation into an indigenous home.
2. At a congregational level much can be done. Every church that is being effective in witness, whether immigrant or indigenous should have a congregation that increasingly reflects the age patterns, social levels and ethnic diversity of their local areas. Action steps that should be initiated:
 - a. A strong focus on prayer for the communities in the area.
 - b. A visionary leadership that is able to motivate and activate the congregation into a real concern for the strangers in their midst.
 - c. An effective training for the leadership and membership to be confident to reach out to other cultures in the area. This could be done by members with cross-cultural expertise or by Christian mission agencies.
 - d. Finding effective ways of connecting with (other) immigrant cultures. These could include:
 - i. Giving host language teaching – maybe separately for men and women
 - ii. Running Mums and Toddlers groups
 - iii. Offering help with filling out immigration and government papers and dealing with officialdom or the legal system – especially with those seeking asylum
 - iv. Assistance to help immigrants find employment.
 - v. Engage in sporting activities
 - vi. Finding housing

- vii. Holding special events – Christmas and Easter, picnics, outings.
- viii. Encouraging invitations to private homes.

All these give opportunities for developing deeper relationships and opportunities to speak of the Lord and to disciple these people from even before their conversion.

- e. A possible partnering with a Christian agency with expertise in, say reaching Muslims, or Buddhists. This could involve a missionary being part of the leadership team, or a combined church-mission team for specific ministry outreach.
- f. Networking with local indigenous and immigrant churches, and possible forming of combined teams.
- g. Developing a strategy of how to disciple and integrate immigrant community Christians into the wider church life. This could take a number of formats:
 - i. Disciple or Bible Study groups, alpha courses, etc in an immigrant or indigenous language
 - ii. Hosting an immigrant church to use the indigenous church facilities for their meetings.
- h. A long-term plan for integration by immigrant churches as the second generation becomes more comfortable in the host culture. Too many immigrant churches collapse after a generation because their children do not feel at home.

In recent years I have been involved in a number of conferences in which mission and church leaders have gathered to pray and strategize about how to cope with the growing migrant crisis in Europe.

The cry from African pastors was for closer fellowship with indigenous churches, how to reach the indigenous population of post-Christian Europe and how to ensure that they did not lose their children who no longer fitted into their parental culture. The plea of indigenous church leaders was for help on how to reach out to immigrants, how to disciple those who sought the Lord and what pattern of church should emerge from such outreach.

I am convinced that multi-cultural teams are essential – but that too is a challenge! We need the knowledge and expertise of the local Christians and we need the innovation and energies of immigrant Christians who actually expect that God answers prayer, and that enthusiastic witness will win the lost and that deliverance from sickness and demons is possible through the power of the Holy Spirit. Local Christians rarely have an understanding of immigrant cultures and are often the least able to get alongside them, but working with other immigrant believers gives both an entrance and an effectiveness that brings results.

For this to happen Christian leaders of all cultures in the area need to build strong relationships based on prayer and their common relationship to the Lord Jesus. In some cities this has happened, but far too many multi-cultural cities do not have such networks.

Notes

- ¹ This is the title of my most recent book, written with Dean Merrill. I have taken some of the thoughts from this book and adapted them for this article. Here I seek to look at the crisis and opportunities more from an African perspective and the contribution that could be made through African churches and mission agencies. Johnstone, Patrick with Merrill, Dean. *Serving God in a Migrant Crisis*, 2016, Global Mapping International, Colorado Springs.
- ² Genesis 11:1-9
- ³ Mandryk, Jason, *Operation World*, 2010, Biblica then 2011, Intervarsity Press. Downers Grove, IL, USA.,⁴ Leviticus 19:33-34; 24:22; Exodus 23:9; Matthew 25:35; Hebrews 13:1-2.
- ⁵ <http://www.unhcr.org/>
- ⁶ *The Economist* 2010 and 6th Feb 2016
- ⁷ <https://www.unodc.org/toc/en/crimes/migrant-smuggling.html>
- ⁸ I avoid using other common terms (Developed and Developing World, Global South, West/non-West, etc.) because they are either patronising or inaccurate. AfAsLA and EuNAPa are simply geographical descriptors which I used extensively in publications in recent years.

- 9 Johnstone, Patrick. *The Future of the Global Church*; Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2011, USA, 77, .
- 10 Ibid., 78.
- 11 Yemen's present civil war between the Shi'a Houthis and Sunni tribes has already reached the limits of its water resources. We could see millions of refugees fleeing to East Africa.
- 12 Pakistan will have nearly ½ billion people in 2050 – all depending on one river, the Indus. If the monsoon fails we may see 20-50 million water refugees.
- 13 Ibid Ch 1.
- 14 Ibid Ch7, 168
- 15 <https://joshuaproject.net>
- 16 Ibid Ch 7
- 17 Dr. Donald McGavran's definition of a homogeneous unit is "a section of society in which all members have some characteristic in common." In plainer terms, a homogeneous unit is a group of people that have ethnic, linguistic, social, educational, or vocational similarities. In terms of a church congregation, ethnic, social, and educational commonalities are the most important. This can be helpful in the initial evangelistic and discipling process, but is not so helpful as a stable fellowship emerges.